



# Birmingham Peoples Centre

Putting People First



## 2020-2021 Annual Report and Financial Statements

Charity Number 1157384

Company Number 08021913

## **Report of the Trustees**

*“In presenting and recommending this Annual Report, I cannot do so without mentioning and crediting all the people involved in making Birmingham Peoples Centre the success that it is, and what it is.*

*So, I want to thank everyone of our volunteers, whether client facing or not; I want to thank our staff and project manager; and I want to thank my fellow Board members. Importantly, I actually want to thank them too for working through the adversity and new challenges of a global pandemic, finding a way through that disruption to carry on providing an excellent service to our clients, and steering the Centre through yet another year.*

*Whilst we continue to operate on a hand to mouth basis in terms of funding, I do want to mention the contribution our funders make to our success. Without them, whether statutory body or charity body funder, and indeed those who donate what they can either regularly or if they win their case with our assistance with a one-off donation, we would simply not be here. If we were not here then some £500,000 worth of justice we have secured over the past year would not be possible. So, our funders role is vital too and we are grateful for their support whether small or large.*

*Nevertheless, we are always looking for ways to improve our funding income because the need has never been more apparent in Birmingham and beyond for access to justice for employees and workers. The pandemic has only exacerbated that need and we see the continuing struggles for many from disadvantaged communities that both long term issues and the pandemic have created.*

*Of course, in many senses, the ongoing injustices for these communities are laid bare in this Report and so it speaks for itself on why the Centre is needed. It also highlights why the work we do is vital for our local communities with our record of success. Communities and our clients rely on us not just to assist them, but vitally to show them a pathway to self-empowerment in their workplace struggles. As long as that requirement exists, then we will exist, and we will continue to provide clients with the workplace justice they seek. That is both an endorsement and a mission for the Centre and we are proud to carry that torch”*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Brown', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephen Brown  
Chair of Birmingham Peoples Centre

**Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited (A Company limited by guarantee)**

**Report and accounts**

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**Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited (A Company limited by guarantee)**

**Legal and administrative information**

**Trustees**

Mr S Brown

Mr R S Brenchley

Ms L Foster

Mr AM Keen

Ms SR Ahmed

**Accountants**

Price Bradshaw Whitehouse

42 Marsh Green Road

Elworth

SANDBACH

CW11 3BQ

**Bankers**

Barclays plc

LEICESTER

LE87 2BB

**Registered office**

Room 118 Gazette Buildings

168 Corporation Street

BIRMINGHAM

B4 6TF

**Company Registered number**

08021913

**Charity Registered number**

1157384

**T**he Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021. The Trustees, who are also the directors of Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited for the purposes of company law and who served during the year and up to the date of this report, are set out on page 2.

## STRUCTURE

Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited is a registered company limited by guarantee under number 08021913 on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2012 and obtained charitable status under number 1157384. It is governed by a Memorandum & Articles of Association. The registered office of the company and the principal office of the charity is Room 118, Gazette Buildings, 168 Corporation Street, Birmingham B4 6TF.

## GOVERNANCE

The Charity believes that it is important to have the requisite range of skills and experience represented on the Board of Trustees and this is reflected in the current membership. The Charity continues to seek additional trustees to further strengthen the Board and is keen to hear from people interested in becoming a Trustee.

## MANAGEMENT

The full Board meets every 2 months, and a sub-committee meets in-between to address operational and financial issues. The Project Coordinator attends

but is not a Board member. The Board is responsible for the strategic direction and policy of the Charity. A scheme of delegation is in place and day-to-day responsibility for the provision of the service rests with the Project Coordinator, who supervises the part-time caseworker, the team of caseworker volunteers and ensures that they develop their skills and working practices. The Project Coordinator is supported by the Deputy Project Coordinator.



Trevor, our Project Coordinator

## RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board regularly reviews the major risks which the Charity faces. A risk register has been developed and is updated at least annually. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate risks. External funding risks have been addressed by identifying and applying to various sources of funding and the Charity has introduced a supporters' scheme, which allows people who support our work to make a regular monthly contribution. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for



authorisation of all transactions and projects. Procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the Charity and a staff handbook was produced during the year. The Charity can access professional support as and when necessary.

The Charity has in place the necessary insurance cover, including professional indemnity insurance, trustee insurance employer and public liability insurance.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The full name of the Charity is Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited. The Charity has the following Objectives:

- (1) The prevention or relief of poverty in Birmingham by the provision of legal advice, information, assistance and support.
- (2) To develop the capacity and the skills of the members of the socially and economically disadvantaged communities in Birmingham in such a way that they are better able to identify and help meet their needs and to participate more fully in society.

The Charity assists people who live or work in Birmingham with free employment rights advice. Clients are supported face-to-face, over the telephone and by email. The issues we deal with include: unfair dismissal, wrongful dismissal, unpaid wages, holiday entitlement, redundancy, discrimination in the workplace, disciplinaries and grievances. We carry

out casework and offer representation at the Employment Tribunal.

## PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Trustees believe a great deal of public benefit has been achieved from the services provided by the Charity during the last year.

The period covered by this report has been very demanding due to the impact of COVID19. Despite the various challenges presented by the pandemic we are proud that we were able to provide an uninterrupted free employment rights service, although for much of the year the service was provided remotely. The Charity's staff and volunteers were determined to continue meeting the needs of local people in these unprecedented times and embraced new working practices.

Due to the commitment of the Charity's team of advisers, the Centre provided much needed support to over 1,000 clients who had no other place to turn to for help. The team consists of dedicated volunteers and paid members of staff.



Amaya, our Deputy Project Coordinator and Sue, a dedicated volunteer.

During the year we were pleased to continue our relationship with Aston University, which has enabled us to, once again, offer a placement to one of their excellent students.

Our work benefits the individual clients we assist by helping them to retain their employment, supporting others to raise a grievance when things go wrong at work, ensuring our clients receive the correct amount of money and helping them to obtain their employment rights through the employment tribunal.

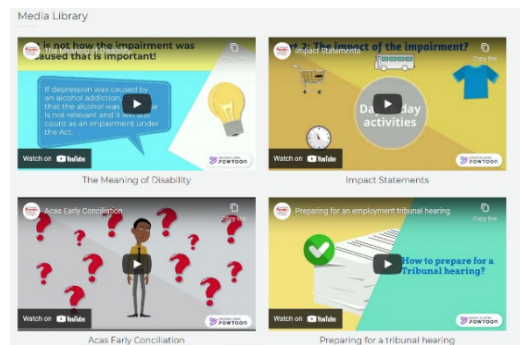
The benefits of our employment rights service are not restricted to the workplace and has a wider impact. For example, our activities help people avoid debt and financial hardship that the loss of employment can lead to. We also provide much needed support to those who are experiencing mental health issues because of problems at work or caused by the stress of navigating the employment tribunal process.

Most of our clients receive the National Minimum Wage and are employed in those sectors of the economy that are insecure such as care, security and hospitality. Without our support many of our clients would not be able to obtain redress when things go wrong at work.

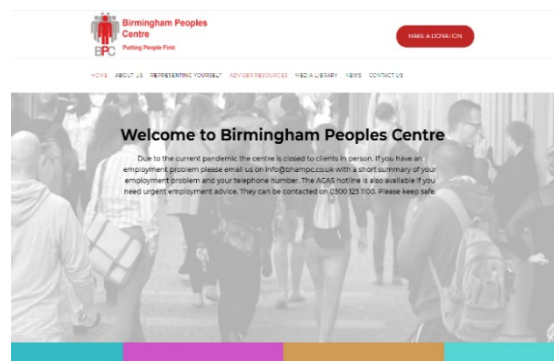
During the year, we helped our clients obtain over £500,000 in unpaid wages, notice and holiday pay, settlement agreements and tribunal awards. In the previous year we helped clients obtain just over £400,000.

We were pleased to collaborate with an excellent group of students from Birmingham University. The students produced videos and factsheets on specific employment issues which can be accessed from our website. We aim to produce additional videos and

resources to assist litigants in person in the coming year.



Throughout the year we have regularly received positive feedback from clients about the usefulness of the resources on our website. The website is increasingly used by clients to access our services and in the year, it was visited 6,177 times. Of those that visited our website almost 4,500 accessed the site via a search engine, which shows that the Centre is highly visible when people are searching for free employment rights advice in the Birmingham area.



The public benefit of our work is demonstrated by the following examples:

#### *Helping a client get their job back*

It appears that some employers have been using the pandemic to reduce their workforce. We assisted a distressed client who had been made redundant and thought that it was not a real redundancy situation. They thought the real reason for their dismissal was their disability. We intervened on behalf of our client and secured their reinstatement.

### *Empowering our clients*

We helped a barmaid who had not received all her wages, holiday pay, notice pay. The employer was not willing to settle the matter, so we helped our client prepare for her tribunal hearing. An experience that she initially found daunting but with our guidance and support our client successfully represented herself at the hearing and was successful on every count. A good example of how our work empowers clients and has a longer-term impact on their self-confidence.

### *Being there all the way*

During the year we eventually secured redundancy payments for 8 clients who worked for a series of companies that the Redundancy Payment Office (RPO) refused to accept were linked. To get the RPO to pay we had, over 3 years, attended the tribunal 4 times, produced a hearing bundle exceeding 600 pages, prepared witness statements and other documents to support their claims. Our clients would simply not have been able to complete the paperwork or navigate the tribunal process unaided.

Our future plans involve identifying new organisations that we can work with to promote our services and can help us meet the need for free employment rights advice.

We would not be able to assist as many people as we do without the commitment of the law students that spend time with us. We are pleased to provide students with a valuable experience and an understanding of the importance of access to justice. We hope to be able to offer even more opportunities to students to spend time with us during the forthcoming year.

*"Throughout my placement the experience I have gained is invaluable. I have learnt so much in such a short time and I don't think I would have gained this experience anywhere else. I don't believe I would have had my own clients or have so much responsibility so early on, it is a really unique experience. I have learnt how to communicate professionally with clients and colleagues and my confidence has improved massively. And I couldn't ask for a better team to do it with!"*

**Our placement student**

## **FUTURE PLANS**

We want to assist as many people as possible and one way to achieve that is by supporting clients to manage their own cases with our support. Our future plans involve continuing to develop our resources to enable clients to act as a litigant in person.

We will continue to review how best to provide our services. The last year has forced us to work differently and we aim to keep the positive changes which enable us to work more efficiently and make us more accessible.





## **SOME COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE YEAR FROM OUR CLIENTS**

*"Thank you, Trevor and the team, for everything you do."*

*"Thank you to Susan for all her time, energy and support - it is most appreciated."*

*"Thank you Birmingham Peoples Centre for your advice and assistance and getting us back to work with our employer after being laid off due to COVID-19."*

*"The support I've received from Birmingham Peoples Centre has been second to none. Without them I feel I wouldn't have been able to continue with my employment tribunal."*

*"Thank you for your professional support and responding so quickly each time."*

*"Thank you for listening."*

*"Birmingham People Centre provided excellent service and help. I am thankful for their excellent work!"*

*"Thank you for the advice you've given us for our case, we would have been so lost without you. We really appreciate it! Many thanks."*

*"Thank you, I can't thank you enough absolutely fantastic people at Birmingham Peoples centre, I dealt mainly with Amaya and Trevor. For*

*saying these people give free advice, there time and are a 100 percent committed to helping you with your case is fantastic. Amaya has been there to advise me every time I've needed it and she really knows her employment rights. This charity runs on donations and what an amazing thing to do for anyone who is at their wits end like I was. I cannot recommend them highly enough thanks all."*

## **THANK YOU**

We would like to say a very big thank you to everyone who supported us financially during the year. Such support is vital for us to continue to provide our integral service. Our supporters' scheme is a valuable source of income, which enables those who support our aims to make a regular monthly contribution.

We are grateful for the many clients who generously donated, so we can assist others in need.

Our funders during the year included **Heart of England – Coronavirus Resilience Fund, CAF Coronavirus Emergency Fund, National Lottery Community Fund, Eric F. Sparkes Charitable Trust, Matrix Causes Fund, Edward Cadbury Charitable Trust and YAPP Charitable Trust.**

We are grateful for the assistance provided by **Ibraheem** in supporting and continuing to improve our website.

We would also like to thank **Paul** for freely giving his time to upgrade our IT systems and to answer our computer related questions.

We are also grateful for the support and advice provided by our accountant,

**Graham**, who is always willing to answer questions and provide guidance on our finances.

Our internet-based telephone system is provided by Voipfone and we are grateful to them for providing the service at no charge because we are a charity.



## FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial statements, including the notes, have been prepared in compliance with the Statement of Recognised Practice “Accounting and Reporting by Charities.” The analysis of income and costs reflects the classification of activities, together with costs of administration.

The Charity has benefited from securing income from a variety of sources. These include donations from clients, fees for advising on settlement agreements, grants and sponsored activities. The Trustees will continue to explore additional sources of income.

## RESERVES POLICY

The level of reserve as at the year-end is shown in the financial statements. The Charity does not have a formal reserves policy in place but attempts to hold sufficient reserves to ensure that it can cope with unexpected events.

## STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Trustees (who are directors of Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

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 charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial comments, and

- Prepare the financial statements on the going concerns basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

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

## **SMALL COMPANY PROVISION**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the board on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 and signed on its behalf.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Brown', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stephen Brown

Chair

## **Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited (A Company limited by guarantee)**

### **Independent examiner's report to the trustees**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited for the year ended 30 April 2021.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act')

I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

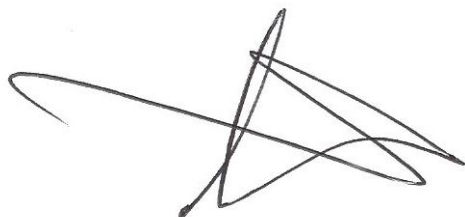
### **Independent examiners statement**

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

(i) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep proper accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requires of section 396 of the Companies act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities have not been met: or

(ii) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Graham J Whitehouse  
Independent examiner  
42 Marsh Green Road Elworth  
SANDBACH  
CW11 3BQ

23rd June 2021

**Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited (A Company limited by guarantee)**  
**Statement of Financial activities (including Income and Expenditure Account**  
**for the year ended 30 April 2021**

		<b>Unrestricted Funds 2021 £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds 2021 £</b>	<b>Total Funds 2021 £</b>	<b>Total Funds 2020 £</b>
	<b>Note</b>				
<b>Incoming resources</b>					
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds</b>					
Voluntary income	2	16,875	61,950	78,825	39,195
<b>Activities from generated funds:</b>					
Fees from legal services		3,550	-	3,550	4,900
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>20,425</b>	<b>61,950</b>	<b>82,375</b>	<b>44,095</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>					
Staff costs		628	49,450	50,078	17,042
Travel and subsistence		579	-	579	1,603
Training costs		838	1,700	2,538	312
Rent, rates and service charges		1,365	4,000	5,365	5,886
Light and heat		280	-	280	338
Insurance		1,874	-	1,874	1,344
Fundraising costs		1,000	1,000	2,000	557
Accountancy fees		470	-	470	405
Other legal and professional		13	-	13	66
Telephone, postage and stationery		583	3,000	3,583	3,638
Information and publications		2,276	750	3,026	2,997
Website and marketing costs		228	1,000	1,228	89
Software costs		2,938	250	3,188	3,042
Repairs and renewals		93	-	93	88
Equipment expended		2,260	-	2,260	1,122
Depreciation		129	-	129	448
Sundry expenses		949	-	949	563
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>16,503</b>	<b>61,150</b>	<b>77,653</b>	<b>39,540</b>
<b>Net income for the year before transfers</b>		<b>3,922</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>4,722</b>	<b>4,555</b>
Total funds brought forward		10,454	8,273	18,727	14,172
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>14,376</b>	<b>9,073</b>	<b>23,449</b>	<b>18,727</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.



**Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited (A Company limited by guarantee)**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**as at 30 April 2021**

	Notes	£	2021 £	£	2020 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	4		-		128
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	5	1,088		759	
Cash at bank and in hand		23,198		18,375	
		<u>24,286</u>		<u>19,134</u>	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	6	(837)		(535)	
<b>Net current assets / (liabilities)</b>			23,449		18,599
<b>Net assets</b>			<u>23,449</u>		<u>18,727</u>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	7		14,376		10,454
<b>Restricted funds</b>	7		9,073		8,273
<b>Total funds</b>			<u>23,449</u>		<u>18,727</u>

The trustees are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the requirement to obtain an audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Act.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.



Stephen Brown  
Chair  
Approved by the board on 23 June 2021

**Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited (A Company limited by guarantee)**  
**Notes to the Accounts**  
**for the year ended 30 April 2021**

**1 Accounting policies**

**a) Basis of preparation**

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' issued in March 2005 (SORP 2005).

**b) Incoming resources**

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included in these accounts.

Incoming resources from the charities trading activities are accounted for when earned.

**c) Resources expended**

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

**d) Fixed assets**

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected useful life, which in all cases is estimated at 3 years.

**2 Voluntary income**

	<b>Unrestricted 2021</b>	<b>Restricted 2021</b>	<b>Total 2021</b>	<b>Total 2020</b>
Donations	12,890	-	12,890	10,957
Fundraising	-	-	0	2,488
Other income	1,185	-	1,185	-
Grants:				
Midland Legal Support Trust	-	-	-	1,500
Heart of England - Harry Payne Fund	-	-	-	1,000
Saintbury Trust	-	-	-	5,000
National Lottery Community Fund	-	-	-	10,000
The Eric F Sparkes Charitable Trust	300	-	300	250
Matrix Chambers - Causes Fund	-	-	-	2,500
Souter Charitable Trust	-	-	-	1,000
William A Cadbury Charitable Trust	-	-	-	1,500
Grimmitt Trust	-	-	-	1,500
Heart of England - Covid-19	-	10,000	10,000	1,500
Matrix Chambers	-	2,500	2,500	-

**Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited (A Company limited by guarantee)**  
**Notes to the Accounts**  
**for the year ended 30 April 2021**

CaF	-	3,750	3,750	-
YAPP	-	3,000	3,000	-
The Edward Cadbury Trust	-	3,000	3,000	-
Access to Justice	2500	29,700	32,200	-
Awards for All	-	10,000	10,000	1,500
		<b>16,875</b>	<b>61,950</b>	<b>78,825</b>
				<b>40,695</b>

**3 Taxation**

The charity's activities are exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or s256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects. Accordingly, there is no taxation charge in these accounts

**4 Tangible fixed assets**

	<b>Plant and machinery etc. £</b>
<b>Cost</b>	
At 1 May 2020	2,153
Additions	-
Disposals	-
At 30 April 2021	<u>2,153</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>	
At 1 May 2020	2,025
Charge for the year	128
On disposals	-
At 30 April 2021	<u>2,153</u>
<b>Net book value</b>	
At 30 April 2021	-
At 30 April 2020	<u>128</u>

**5 Debtors**

	<b>2021 £</b>	<b>2020 £</b>
Trade debtors	-	-
Prepayments	1,088	759
	<u>1,088</u>	<u>759</u>

**6 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	<b>2021 £</b>	<b>2020 £</b>
Other taxes and social security costs	352	130
Accruals	485	405
	<u>837</u>	<u>535</u>

**Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited (A Company limited by guarantee)**  
**Notes to the Accounts**  
**for the year ended 30 April 2021**

<b>7 Movement in funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>
At 1 May 2020	8,273	10,454
Incoming resources	61,950	20,425
Outgoing resources	(61,150)	(16,503)
Transfer between funds	-	-
At 30 April 2021	<u>9,073</u>	<u>14,376</u>

**8 Status of the company**

Birmingham Peoples Centre Limited is a company limited by guarantee and accordingly does not have a share capital.

At 30 April 2021 there were 5 members of the company (the directors). The liability of the members is limited and each has undertaken to contribute a sum not exceeding £1.00 in the event of the winding up of the company.