TONBRIDGE WELCOMES REFUGEES ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR 1ST APRIL 2021 TO 31ST MARCH 2022

TONBRIDGE WELCOMES REFUGEES charity number 1173758

TONBRIDGE WELCOMES REFUGEES

Trustees' Annual Report for the Financial Year from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

Reference and administration details
Tonbridge Welcomes Refugees
c/o Burns & Co
2a Bank Street
Tonbridge TN9 1BL

Registered charity number: 1173758

Trustees:	Term(s) of office:
Jane Blessley (Chair)	January 2019 -January 2022 and January 2022 -
Ruth Connelly	July 2017- July 2020, July 2020 -
Jan Lloyd	January 2020 -
Nicky McGregor	December 2018 – December 2021 and January 2022 -
Lee Mead (Treasurer)	August 2020 -
Fiona O'Brien	July 2017 – July 2020, July 2020 -

Structure, governance and management
Tonbridge Welcomes Refugees was registered with the Charity Commission as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) on 11 July 2017. Our governing document is our constitution (foundation model).

Appointment of trustees

The charity's first trustees were Johanna Elderfield, Fiona O'Brien and Ruth Connelly (serving from July 2017 for an initial period of three years). Subsequent trustees are appointed by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity's trustees for a term of three years. Nicky McGregor was formally appointed a trustee at the AGM on 11th December 2018. Jane Blessley was appointed trustee at a trustees' meeting on 17th January 2019. Jan Lloyd was appointed as trustee in January 2020 and Lee Mead became trustee and Treasurer in August 2020. Fiona O'Brien and Ruth Connelly were reappointed trustees in July 2020. Nicky McGregor and Jane Blessley were reappointed trustees on 6th January 2022.

Objectives and Activities
Our charity's objects, as set out in our constitution, are as follows:

1. For the relief of those granted refugee status and their dependants, or those seeking asylum living (temporarily or permanently) in Kent.
- The relief of financial hardship;
- The preservation and protection of their physical and mental health;
- The advancement of their education and training so as to advance them in life and assist them to adapt within a new community.

2. To advance the education of the public in general about the rights and needs of refugees and asylum seekers.

Overview – TWR's objective 1 to provide relief for refugees.

Most of the refugees supported by the charity have reached the UK under one of the Government's Resettlement Schemes. At 31st March 2022, Tonbridge Welcomes Refugees was supporting ten families living in Tonbridge and Malling and Maidstone who had arrived under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons' Resettlement Scheme (SVPRS) and its replacement, the UK Resettlement Scheme 2021 (UKRS). 9 families were from Syria and a further one from Sudan. The charity also supported two Syrian families who had claimed asylum and a further Syrian family who had reached the end of the five-year period under the SVPRS and had indefinite leave to remain.

Two Afghan families arrived in Tonbridge and Malling and Maidstone (in December 2021 and February 2022) who had been evacuated from Afghanistan under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy 2021 (ARAP).

At 31st March 2022, the total number of individuals supported was 75.

TWR works closely with Kent County Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) and staff from KCC's appointed social care provider, Clarion, to support refugees resettled under the SVPRS, the UKRS and the ARAP in our area of Kent. As Maidstone does not have a Welcomes Refugees Group, we have a group of volunteers working to support families within the Maidstone Borough Council area. Our Maidstone volunteers also work with some of our SVPRS families in TMBC, as sometimes their location is closer to Maidstone. The Maidstone team of volunteers complete their DBS with us. We also work very closely with our sister charities, Tunbridge Wells Welcomes Refugees and Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees.

Support provided

- **Befriending.** Each refugee family is assigned a small team of volunteers to assist them on arrival. Whilst the Clarion Support Officers manage applications to schools, to GP registers, to the Home Office and to the DWP for benefits, the volunteer teams make welcoming and befriending visits. The support is tailor-made to the family, but often includes such matters as explaining the transport services locally, explaining how the NHS operates or the refuse and recycling system. Families are often taken out to visit local attractions or to be shown the shopping facilities. Befriending volunteers can appeal by means of WhatsApp groups for household items needed by the families or apply to the trustees for funding for an item, if a suitable donation cannot be found.

- **English teaching.** In addition to befriending support, there is an experienced and dedicated team of teachers who supplement the English lessons provided under the various resettlement schemes by local adult education providers. Often the small group teaching or individual coaching TWR provides is more

successful, especially with those who have limited experience of education or who are illiterate in their first language.

At 31st March 2022, most adult teaching was happening online, using laptop computers provided with grants to TWR. However, some was taking place in person and volunteers were once again going in to provide support in schools, both primary and secondary. This school support is especially important as many children are placed straight into mainstream classes where they are unable to access the curriculum because their English is so weak.

- **Social Support.** The charity normally tries to organise social gatherings and events, but the pandemic lockdowns and restrictions on gatherings in Spring 2021 meant that the usual Eid Picnic could not be held. The trustees reviewed the feasibility of gatherings on a number of occasions, but concluded that since many of the refugees have complex medical conditions, it would be wise to wait until the risks of infection subsided. In the meantime, volunteers kept contact with refugee families either remotely or by doorstep or garden meetings or socially distanced coffees. Some family teams arranged out door visits to Hastings or the Hop Farm for their families. However, in March 2022, the trustees decided it would be possible to hold a celebration of the Afghan/Iranian New Year at Now Ruz, 20th March. The newly arrived Afghan families in Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling, Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone were invited and brought to Tonbridge where celebratory refreshments were provided as well as activities for the children – art and craft and a seed planting activity.

  The trustees had planning underway to celebrate Eid with the usual picnic in May 2022.

- **Transport.** It is often difficult for the charity's beneficiaries to get to medical or dental appointments or to social gatherings held by the charity by using public transport. TWR maintains a WhatsApp group of volunteers who are willing to provide lifts for these appointments or occasions. The charity also provides bicycles and related safety equipment for beneficiaries where this is needed and, for some beneficiaries, the trustees have agreed to provide some assistance to fund driving lessons. This is so expensive that it has been limited to cases where the beneficiary needs to drive in order to work or where the beneficiary is already a driver and only needs a few refresher classes to enable a UK driving test to be taken.

Overview – objective 2 to advance the education of the public about the position and needs of refugees and asylum seekers

In summer 2021, TWR started to participate in events once again. The following opportunities were taken to publicise the plight of refugees and asylum seekers in the months up to 31st March 2022:

- In August 2021, TWR had a stall at Tonbridge Calling on the theme of 'What would you take?' The aim was to make the choices faced by refugees real to the public. The event coincided with the fall of Kabul to the Taliban and the activity required people to decide what they would take/leave. Items were displayed to make the choices more real. It initiated some touching conversations with adults and children. There was a photographic display showing the meagre belongings that many refugees left their homes carrying.
- In September 2021, the Dragon Boat Races again provided an opportunity to engage with the public and inform them about our work in addition to its primary purpose of fund raising.
- In October 2021, the Chair made a presentation to the congregation at Tonbridge Parish Church about the work of the charity and wrote an article for the December 2021 Parish Church magazine, Perspectives.
- In early 2022, a trustee made a presentation to the congregation at St. Stephen's church.
- In early 2022, a trustee made a presentation at Hillview School for Girls about the life of a refugee.
- A further assembly was led by two trustees at Sussex Road Primary School
- The Chair was invited to the FEAST Food Larder with one of our beneficiaries to explain the requirements for a halal diet so the Larder could more effectively stock for refugees suffering hardship.
- The Chair and several volunteers were involved in a campaign with Citizens' UK to persuade MPs to support an initiative to regularise the position of undocumented migrants. The aim is to protect them from modern slavery and exploitation and allow them to take a proper place in the workforce benefiting from the protection of employment laws. It provides a societal benefit too because of tax and National Insurance payments and by filling jobs in those sectors now suffering manpower shortages, such as agriculture or care sectors.

Management and day to day running of the charity

The Trustees normally hold a monthly trustees' meeting and in this financial year these were online. Three or four times a year, there is an Open Meeting for the charity's supporters and again these were online. Reports of the charity's activities were given and supporters invited to ask questions. In months where there is an Open meeting, a trustees' meeting is not always held. The AGM was held on 7th December 2021 online.

There are no employees and all the support given to beneficiaries and the administration of the charity is carried out by volunteers. Volunteers can reclaim expenses and a mileage allowance, but many volunteers simply carry those expenses themselves.

There were six trustees at the 31st March 2022. In addition, there were approximately 65 volunteers including trustees and further supporters and donors of household

items. Any volunteer who has direct contact with refugee families through befriending, teaching or giving lifts follows a recruitment process involving an application form, an interview with two trustees and the taking up of two references. They must also have an enhanced DBS certificate to cover both vulnerable adults and children and agree to the confidentiality, data protection and safeguarding policies.

Family teams deal directly with the beneficiary families, but report regularly to the trustees on what is needed. The two teaching coordinators also report back to the trustees on a regular basis. This is made easier because many of the trustees are themselves on family teams or are teachers.

Thanks to a grant from KCC to provide safeguarding training, volunteers who work closely with families were placed on online safeguarding courses to cover the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and the Safeguarding Lead and her deputies took further additional courses. Not all these were completed by 31st March, but in many cases they had been.

Financial Review for the year ended 31st March 2022.

The Accounts are attached and show net income of £31,153.87. Of this, £29, 098.91 was from donations, including proceeds from the Dragon Boat Race, some large individual donations and £2000 in grant income. Some of these donations were to a restricted fund to pay for a student's university fees.

The Charity's running costs amounted to £1611.35. This represents a payment of £1170.00 to pay for safeguarding training for all volunteers who were actively involved with refugees as befrienders or teachers. £215.04 was paid as an insurance premium for the charity's public liability insurance. This leaves administrative costs at £226. 31 and shows the trustees' focus on efficiency.

A total of £6026.78 was paid direct to, or for the benefit of, refugees as resettlement costs. This included payments for IT equipment and funding broadband, payments for driving lessons, assistance for paying household bills, clothes, furniture and travel costs for such things as Family or Young Person Railcards. £440 was paid for clubs and activities for school children and £385 for educational resources as part of the English teaching programme. This was not a normal year because of the effects of the pandemic and expenditure on activities for children and on teaching resources would usually be higher.

The trustees of TWR reviewed the procedures for making payments in February 2022 to ensure that the charity's funds were safeguarded. Every payment made from the bank account must be second authorised by one of three trustees after the payment is input by the Treasurer. A trustee may authorise expenditure up to £50, but above £50 a second trustee must agree in advance.

TWR does not have any outstanding guarantees to any other person or organisation. It does not have any debts secured by a charge on property. None of the trustees or persons related to them receive remuneration in any form and there are no transactions with any trustee or related parties.

The trustees aim to retain a reserve of six months' average expenditure in the bank and this was adhered to in the financial year 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022.

Achievements and Performance

1. Despite the continuing restrictions necessitated by the pandemic, TWR maintained its record of support to refugees arriving in Tonbridge and Malling and Maidstone sourcing or purchasing household items, clothing and shoes, bicycles and safety equipment and issuing hardship payments in cases of need.
2. Volunteers kept in touch with families through phone calls, WhatsApp messages and (when permitted under Covid regulations) by doorstep or socially distanced visits. They offered lifts for important medical appointments and made vaccination appointments for their beneficiaries and gave lifts to those appointments.
3. The adult and school teaching teams continued teaching by adapting to teach online when that was necessary or by returning to the school environment as soon as they reopened.
4. Despite anxieties about the effect of the pandemic on fundraising, TWR was successful in increasing its funding for the financial year by a combination of record proceeds at the Dragon Boat Race, the kindness of regular donors and grant income.

Strategic Aims at 31st March 2022.

1. To continue welcoming refugee families, including through our befriending and English programmes.
2. To support refugees with educational and vocational courses
3. To maintain a hardship fund for families struggling financially
4. To encourage families to set and achieve their own goals, encouraging self sufficiency
5. To share more responsibility with family teams and other volunteers

This report was approved by the trustees at a meeting on 1st December 2022 and signed on their behalf by

J. M. Blossley

Chair of Trustees

CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of	Charity Name Tonbridge Welcomes Refugees
On accounts for the year ended	31st March 2022 — **Charity no (if any)** 1173758
Set out on pages	1-6, 8, 9 (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 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 no concerns and 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.

Signed:	MSL	**Date:**	6-DEC-22
Name:	Matthew Sellen		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	Fellow of the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants		
Address:			

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name	No (if any)
TONBRIDGE WELCOMES REFUGEES	1173758

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date
	01/04/2021		31/03/2022

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					
One off donations (inc fundraising)	15,566	9,506	-	25,072	7,862
Regular giving	4,027	-	-	4,027	2,691
Sales (greeting cards)	55	-	-	55	477
Grants	2,000	-	-	2,000	8,490
		-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
***Sub total** (Gross income for AR)*	21,648	9,506	-	31,154	19,520
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	21,648	9,506	-	31,154	19,520
A3 Payments					
Running costs	1,611	-	-	1,611	439
Refugee support	6,028	-	-	6,028	13,848
Acitivity fund	440	-	-	440	126
Teaching resources	385	-	-	385	312
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	8,464	-	-	8,464	14,725
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	8,464	-	-	8,464	14,725
Net of receipts/(payments)	13,184	9,506	-	22,690	4,795
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	11,052	1,070	-	12,122	7,327
Cash funds this year end	24,236	10,576	-	34,812	12,122

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	Cash at Bank	24,236	10,576	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	24,236	10,576	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK

	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds 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			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	L. R. Mead	Lee Mead	
	J. M. Blessley	J. M. BLESSLEY	1/12/2022