



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2018 – 2019



***Photo:  
CHOICE IN HACKNEY Team***

During the above period CHOICE IN HACKNEY received funding from: Allen & Overy: Ben Ogden Memorial Fund, Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales, London Catalyst, Mayor's Office for Policing & Crime, National Lottery Awards for All, People's Postcode Trust, Santander Foundation, South Hackney Parochial Charity and The Advocacy Project via London Borough of Hackney.



***Photo:  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Standing from left to right:  
Mary Julian, Geoffrey Chilkes, Patricia Charlesworth,  
Malcolm Aickin (Treasurer), Debra Schiman and;  
Seated: Anita Ceesay (outgoing Chair)***



***Sandra Rennie (Chair)***



***Standing: Paula Smith; and  
Seated: Lydia Warren***

## **CHOICE IN HACKNEY**

CHOICE IN HACKNEY is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales No. 3423122. Registered Charity No. 1077287.

Governed by the memorandum and articles of association as agreed on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1996 and amended on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2008.

Constituted as a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales no: 3423122 and a registered Charity no: 1077287.

The objects of the association are:

- (A) To relieve disabled persons in Greater London who require assistance to realise their full potential and lead fulfilling lives. In particular, by the provision of a service that assists such persons to obtain their full rights and privileges as citizens.
- (B) To advance the education of the general public as to the needs and interests of disabled people.

The association achieves these objectives by securing funds and employing staff to provide advocacy and independent living services, as well as promoting the rights of disabled people in the community.

The Director is responsible to the Board of Trustees for the day-to-day management of the association.

## **CHOICE IN HACKNEY**

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Website: [www.choiceinhackney.org](http://www.choiceinhackney.org)

## 2. **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

### **OFFICERS:**

Chairperson : Anita Ceesay – resigned 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018  
: Sandra Rennie – appointed 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018  
Vice-Chairperson : Patricia Charlesworth – appointed 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018  
Treasurer : Malcolm Aickin

### **BOARD MEMBERS:**

Geoffrey Chilkes  
Mary Julian  
Jo Panter - resigned 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018  
Debra Schiman  
Paula Smith  
Grizelda Walker - resigned 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018  
Lydia Warren

The Board of Trustees is elected each year at the Annual General Meeting of the association of:

## **CHOICE IN HACKNEY**

### **Company Secretary:**

Caroline Nelson

### 3. **ABOUT US**

CHOICE IN HACKNEY (CHOICE) is a voluntary organisation, which provides Active Lifestyle, Advocacy, Advocacy Training & Employment, Befriending Plus / Volunteering and Disability Hate Crime to disabled people in London. CHOICE supports disabled people from all communities to obtain the services they need to live independently, with dignity and to make choices about their lifestyles. CHOICE is a user-led organisation - run by disabled people, for disabled people. Our mission is to:

- Build disabled people's knowledge and confidence about rights and opportunities to achieve independence, control and choice over how they live their lives;
- Create opportunities for disabled people to fulfil their ambitions and take an active part in their community.

#### **We achieve this by:**

- Providing high quality services such as Advocacy, Advocacy Training & Employment, Befriending Plus / Volunteering, Disability Hate Crime and Active Lifestyle.
- Actively involving and engaging with disabled people to gather their views and aspirations.
- Collaborating with others from the voluntary, statutory and private sectors to shape and influence policies and procedures.
- Creating and maintaining a sustainable organisation through professional working, sustainable funding, efficient and effective systems in place.

## Our values are:

- Working to the Social Model of disability. This model puts forward the view that it is the way that society is run and organised that is the problem and not the individual disabled person. Therefore, these barriers (environmental, institutional, attitudinal), must be removed so as to allow for full participation of disabled people;
- Total equality relating to all aspects of life;
- Inclusiveness, which means having a say in how we run our lives; “nothing about us, without us”; and
- Diversity - valuing differences and seeing it as a collective strength.





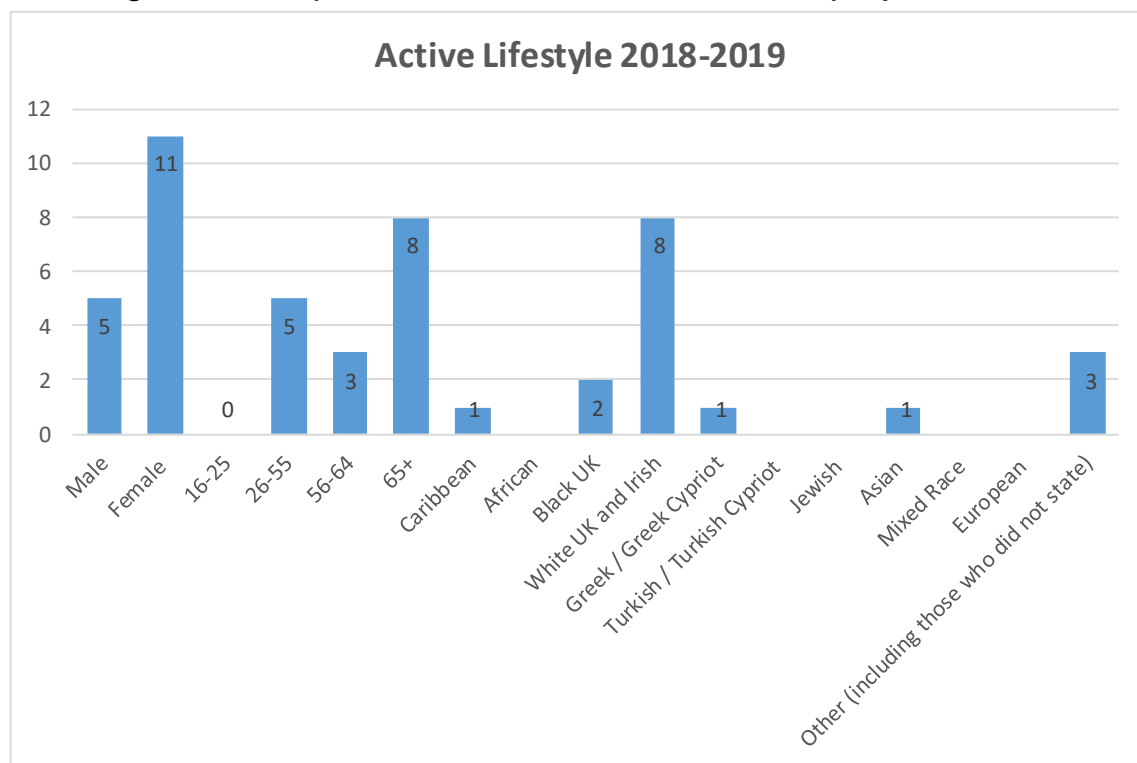
## 4. PROJECTS

### a) **Active Lifestyle Project:**

After substantial fundraising efforts, the project was awarded a small contribution towards its running costs from London Catalyst; the remainder of its costs came from CHOICE's reserves. This allowed us to continue to provide local sports and recreational activities to disabled Hackney residents including:

- Boccia sessions – this ball game is similar to bowls and specially adapted to meet the needs of disabled competitors;
- Coffee Club – weekly get-togethers are held where attendees take part in mood-lifting activities such as sing-alongs and theatre workshops; and
- Seated SOSA which stands for “Solo Salsa” sessions – meaning dances have been adapted for solo dance so no partner is required to take part. This low-impact dance fitness programme has proved popular with disabled people - it is very engaging regardless of impairment or fitness levels and participants remain seated throughout.

16 disabled people (14 in 2017-2018) enjoyed activities arranged by the project and reported improved physical and mental wellbeing. The following bar chart presents statistical data for the project:



b) **Advocacy:**

We are pleased to report CHOICE remains part of a strong network of local community organisations, who operate within London Borough of Hackney's advocacy service. The Advocacy Project (TAP) continued as the lead provider and we worked very closely with them to ensure we aligned ourselves to changes to the eligibility criteria. Our transition from "community" to "non-statutory" advocacy, though bumpy was helped by open dialogue between all parties.

We are grateful to have been in receipt of continued funding from Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (HUHFT) during the year to provide health advocacy. This includes relaying the options and choices available to the service user regarding health services and attending health appointments with them where necessary. This helps to shift the unbalanced relationship between service users (particularly those from different impairment, ethnic and cultural backgrounds). Health advocacy aims to empower users to access health services on an informed and equitable basis.

CHOICE advocates support our disabled service users to obtain the services needed to live an independent and dignified lifestyle in the community. The Advocate works in 'partnership' with the disabled user to obtain his/her rights.

During the period under review, our Advocates supported service users to target services that enabled them to enhance their quality of life whilst also meeting their needs. In order to fit within the non-statutory eligibility criteria, this meant we could only work with disabled people who:

- Were located within or came under the responsibility of London Borough of Hackney;
- Were known to Adult Social Care teams (i.e. care management, occupational therapy, sensory services);
- Were vulnerable, unable to speak up for themselves, unbefriended; and
- Required support with a specific advocacy issue.

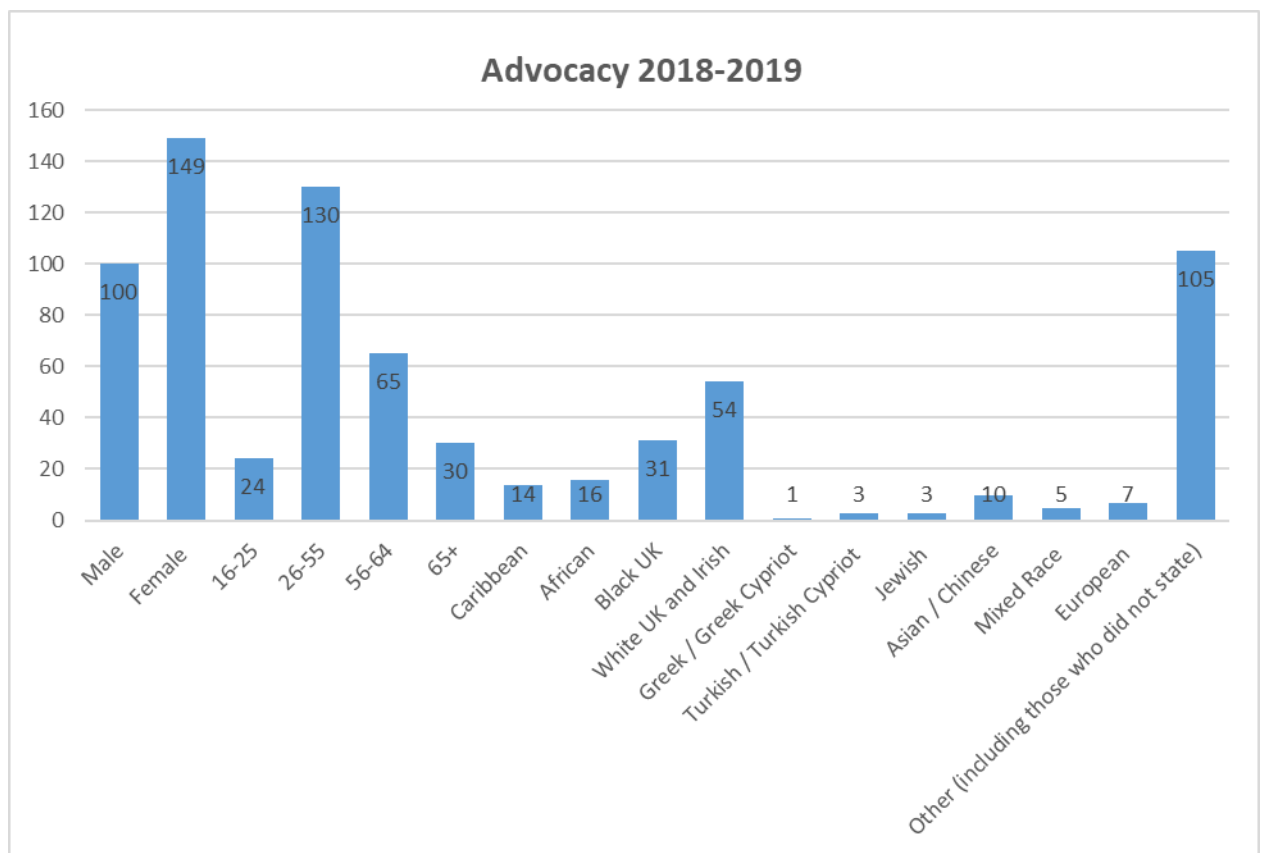


b) **Advocacy continued:**

During the year, CHOICE provided Advocacy support to 249 disabled people aged 18 plus (190 in 2017-2018). The number of issues dealt with in the year included:

- 70 which related to housing;
- 66 where our service users wanted access to health related services;
- 22 related to parenting; and
- perhaps most worrying were the 5 safeguarding issues raised in the year.

The following bar chart presents statistical data for the Advocacy Project:



c) **Advocacy Training & Employment Project:**

The Advocacy Training & Employment (AT&E) project continued to provide its service to disabled Londoners thanks to 3-years match-funding from the Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales and part-funding from Ben Ogden Memorial Fund, People's Postcode Trust, South Hackney Parochial Charity and Santander Foundation. 2018-19 will be the final year of funding with the above funders and so a concerted fundraising effort has already started. We are hopeful that we will be able to continue this remarkable project going forward.

The project continues to provide:

1. 13-week classroom-based training on the principles of advocacy. This training is held one-day per week and includes tuition, written exercises and tests. Also included are practical exercises on job search skills: writing applications / CVs and interview techniques.
2. 12-week+ work placements in the voluntary, statutory and private sectors. This allows our trainees to get a feel of the world of work and aids their employment prospects.
3. Ongoing support including coaching sessions that assist trainees with careers advice, job retention and continued confidence building. Provision of a monthly e-newsletter, which provides vital information to our trainees in relation to current job vacancies, self-employment opportunities etc.

We continue to be affiliated with the Open College Network Credit4Learning (OCN) as a training college. OCN provide accredited certificates to our trainees, offering our trainees a pathway into higher education. For many years now we have noted that our trainees come from very diverse backgrounds and this is also true of their academic achievements. We have enrolled disabled people who have no formal qualifications as well as those with postgraduate degrees.

Whilst it has sometimes been challenging trying to adjust the pace and style of the training to accommodate all trainees, we have also received feedback from the majority of trainees who want to gain an award, which is higher than the existing Level 3. Consequently, we are in the process of enhancing the academic element from Levels 1-3 to Level 4, which is Diploma level. This will give our trainees further opportunities to become gainfully employed and/or enter further education.

c) **Advocacy Training & Employment project continued:**

We always like to take our trainees feedback on board and our steering group, which consists of past and present trainees, a CHOICE Board member, the Director and the trainer has proved an excellent platform in order to facilitate this feedback. This is a real service-user led approach to shaping the design and development of the project where all suggestions are welcomed.

This project is ever evolving and moves with the times. In particular, hate crime and domestic violence against disabled people are on the rise and it is important that there are enough fully trained disabled people available to support the victims of such crimes. As such, future developments for this project includes introducing a new element to the classroom-based component in the form of disability hate crime and/or domestic violence modules, which can be studied as stand-alone elements. Further details of this will be provided in next year's annual report.

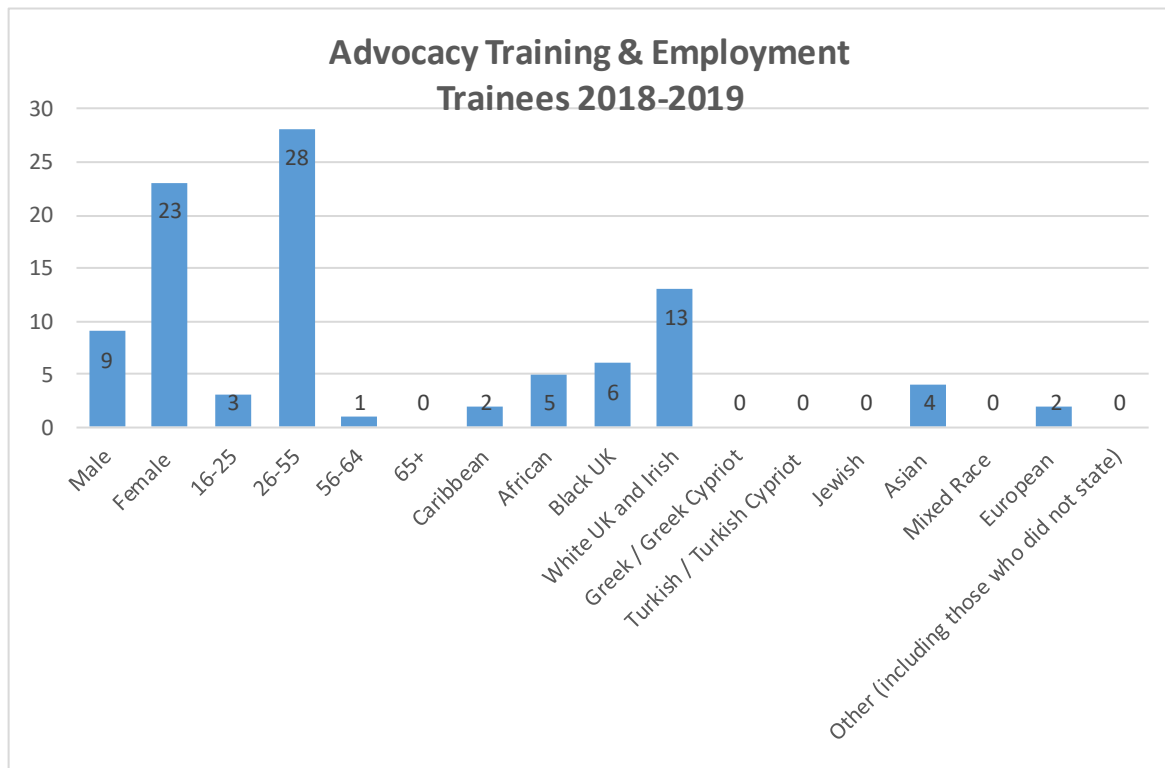
Our main successes during the year include:

1. Training 32 disabled adults to better advocate for themselves and others. This in turn enabled them to improve their confidence and find fulfilling careers in the year;
2. Surpassing our funder's target of moving disabled people into work from 33% to 43%;
3. Offering job coaching and support to 7 ex-trainees, which helped them to realise their career goals;
4. Our greatest achievement in the year was receiving feedback from our trainees about their high levels of satisfaction with the course. This was recorded on feedback forms and during one-to-one sessions: it is always rewarding to hear the difference our course has made to disabled people's lives.

c) **Advocacy Training & Employment project continued:**

The AT&E project successfully ran 3 training programmes this period training a total of 32 disabled people (30 in 2017-2018). A significant proportion of our trainees (43%) have gone on to gain employment.

The following bar chart presents statistical data for the Advocacy Training & Employment Project:



d) **Befriending Plus / Volunteer Project:**

The Befriending Plus / Volunteer project received part-funding from London Catalyst and National Lottery Awards for All during the year to support disabled people in a number of areas:

1. Within the community - visiting them in their homes for a chat and supporting them to meet their Information Communications Technology needs; escorting them to appointments, parks, concerts and other social/leisure activities;
2. Gardening - supporting disabled people to maintain their outdoor spaces by matching them with our team of volunteer gardeners. This team is growing and with many of them committing to clear more gardens than is necessary, it has meant that more and more disabled people have enjoyable outdoor spaces to socialise and relax in; and
3. From the CHOICE office - our administrative volunteers supported CHOICE in its core functions by providing a range of administrative tasks including note-taking, reception duties, answering the telephones, filing, photocopying, taking referrals, carrying out research, recording petty cash, social media skills by i.e. contacting service users by telephone, Twitter, email, Facebook etc.

During the year under review, we had the opportunity to survey our volunteers. In particular, data was collected to measure the increase in volunteer skill development i.e. whether they had a better insight into the issues faced by disabled people. This data was collected from volunteer entry interviews or application forms and were compared with volunteer exit interviews or surveys. A sample of the data is as follows:

- 83% said they had better insight into issues faced by disabled people.

For our service users, data was collected to measure increased feelings of health, wellbeing or confidence as a result of the Volunteer Project. We also asked whether they experienced any increased quality of life through going outside more or attending activities (such as those run by its sister project, the Active Lifestyle). This data was gathered using surveys and Active Lifestyle Feedback forms.

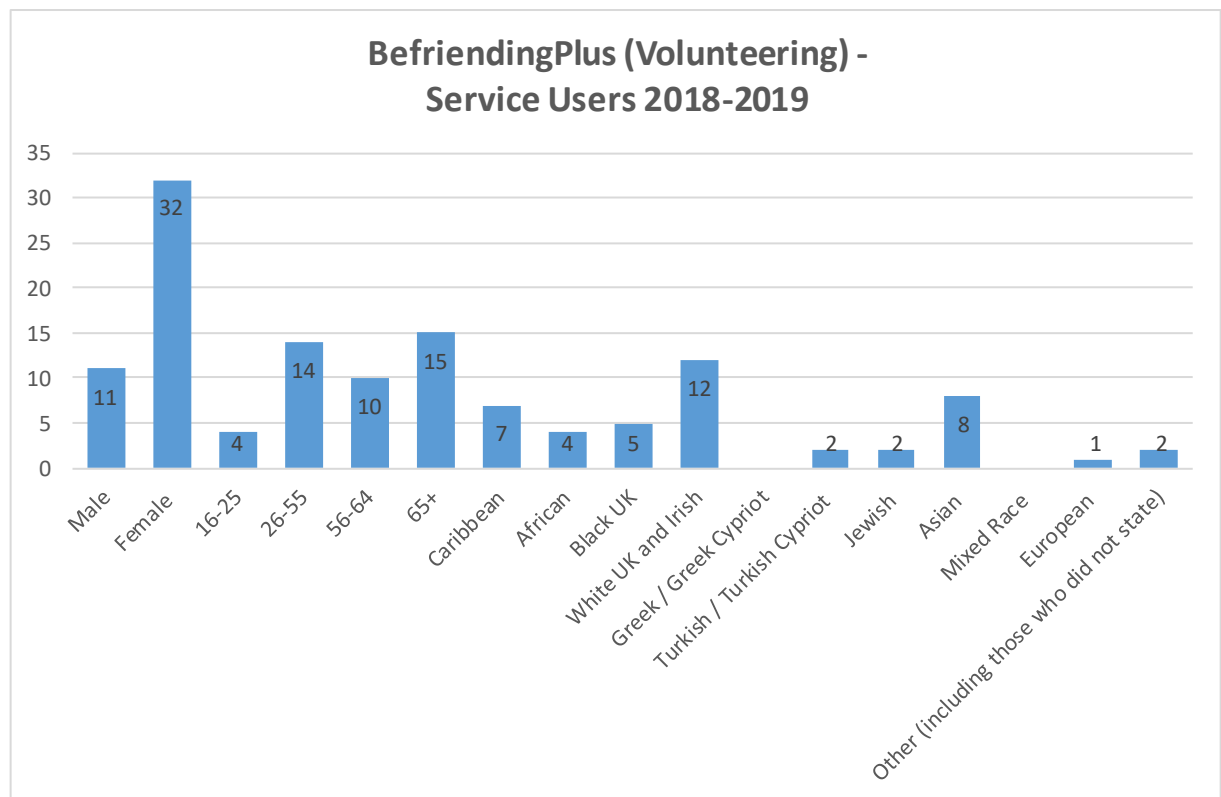
d) **Befriending Plus / Volunteer Project continued:**

We are pleased to confirm:

- 87% of our service users reported increased feelings of health, wellbeing or confidence as a result of the Volunteer Project; and
- 87% also reported increased quality of life by going outside more and attending activities.

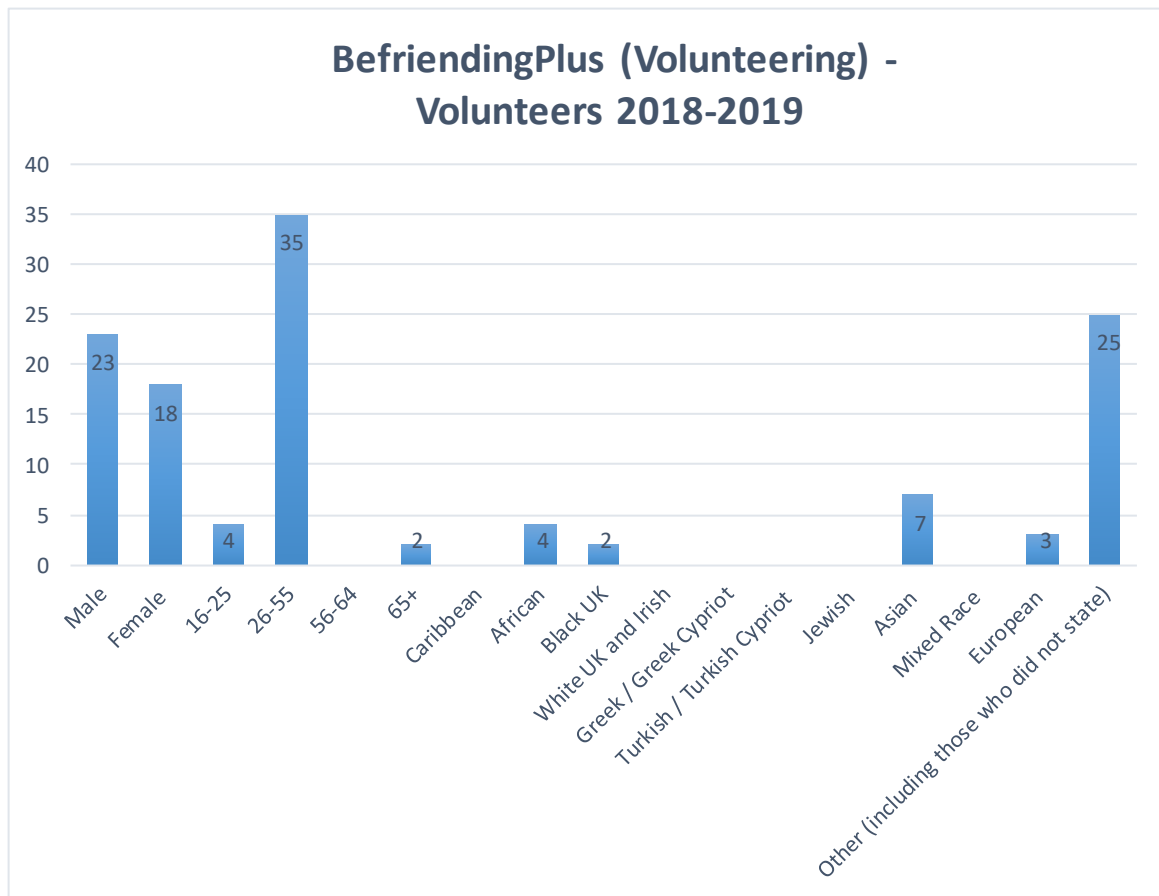
The Community Volunteer Officers continued to run the project and we are pleased to be able to reward our volunteers with Volunteer Social events, where they can get together for a meal / drink and mingle with the other volunteers and their service users. We remain indebted to all our volunteers for their help and support throughout the year. A total of 41 volunteers (37 in 2017-2018) volunteered in this period. This work benefited not only the 43 service users (30 in 2017-2018) but their friends and family members too.

The following bar chart presents statistical data for the Befriending Plus / Volunteer Project:



d) **Befriending Plus / Volunteer Project continued:**

The following bar chart presents statistical data for the Befriending Plus / Volunteer Project:





e) **Disability Hate Crime:**

We are pleased to report that CHOICE remains part of a consortium funded by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) entitled "Community Alliance To Combat Hate" (CATCH). This advocacy hate crime project continues to work within a network of community organisations who specialise in supporting people who have experienced a hate crime due to their: race, faith / religious, sexual orientation (including attacks based on homophobia and transphobia) and/or disability.

The CATCH partnership work together to tackle hate crime, discrimination and abuse within the protected characteristic equality strands and have on occasion come together to work intersectionally: raising awareness amongst partners of each other's struggles. In particular, CHOICE's hate advocate will identify the support needs of individuals and enable them to access other services. The advocate will also:

- Assist with reporting incidents;
- Support individuals through criminal justice processes;
- Deliver outreach to communities impacted by hate crime to promote the service; and
- Share good practice internally within the partnership.

Initially, CHOICE supported service users in Hackney and Westminster, however, due to the success of the pilot project, the funder has increased our reach and we are pleased to be able to support more disabled people in Hackney and surrounding boroughs. This is very welcome as there have been reports in the media about the increase in hate crimes, particularly post-Brexit – when anyone who is seen as "different" is an easy target for perpetrators of hate.

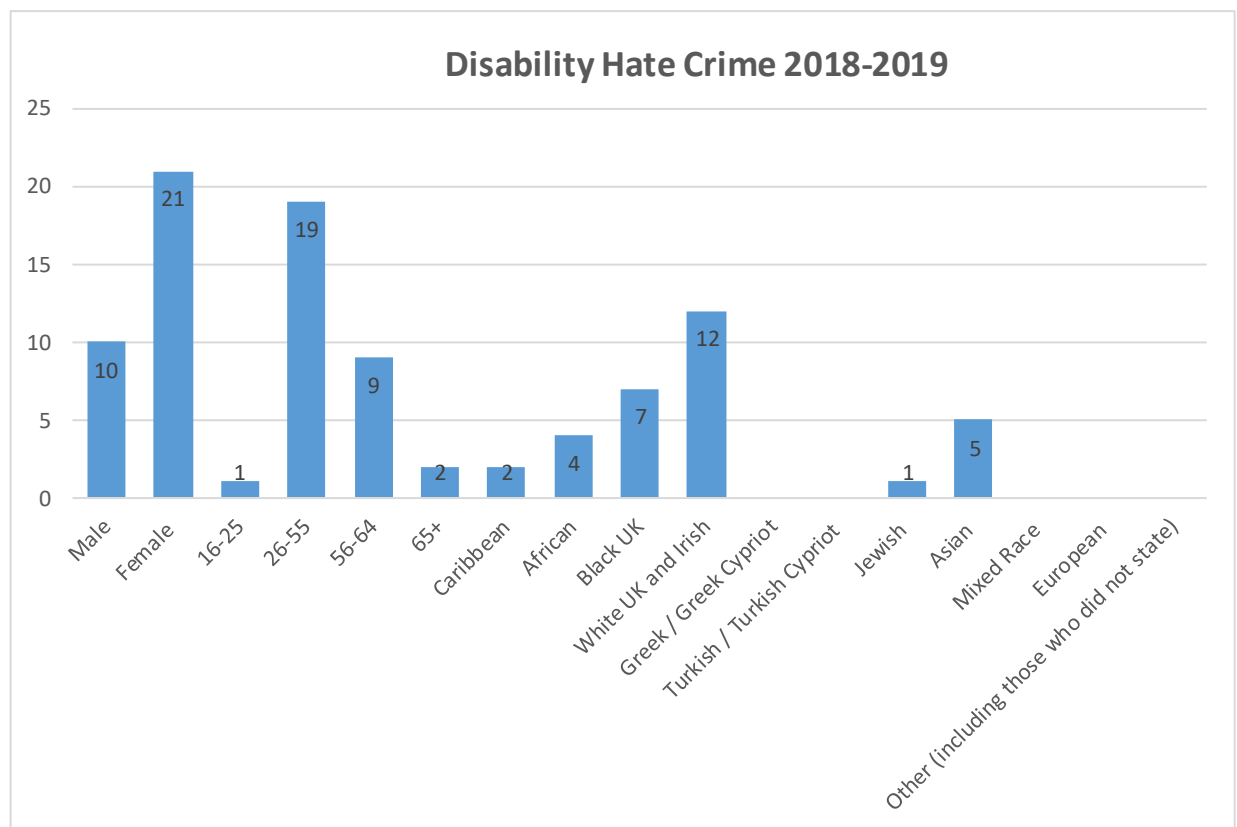
This rise in hate crime has also increased the number of service users who have approached us for support. There are so many examples where disabled people have developed a general distrust of "institutions". So much so that many of them will not want to approach these institutions (i.e. the police) for fear of reprisals or not being taken seriously.

e) **Disability Hate Crime continued:**

We are pleased that our service users feel confident and comfortable to approach us to gain the support they need to record and report such crimes. We encourage all disabled people who need this type of service to make use of it in order that we can provide up-to-date statistics to our funder, so that they in turn can appreciate the need for this service.

During the period under review a total of 31 disabled people (21 in 2017-2018) received support with their disability hate crime matter.

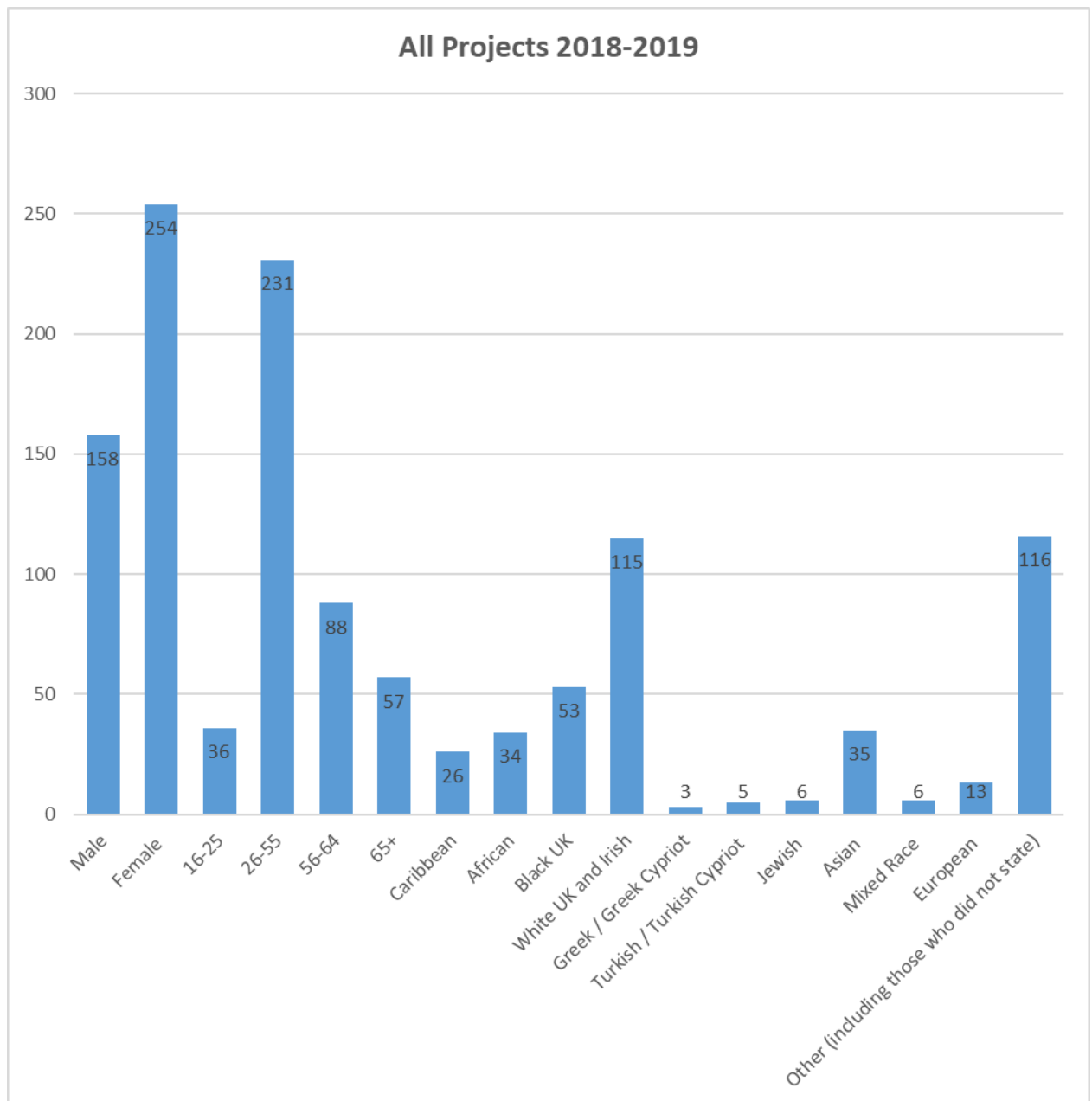
The following bar chart presents statistical data for the Disability Hate Crime Project:



## 5. PEOPLE USING CHOICE SERVICES

A total of 412 people had direct access to CHOICE services from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018–31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 (411 in 2017-2018). This figure however, does not include the numbers of people who indirectly utilised our services, which includes – professionals, friends, family and the general public. Were these groups of people to be included, this figure of 412 would have tripled.

The breakdown is as follows:



## 6. REPORTS

### a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT** by Caroline Nelson

This time last year I was pleased to report on CHOICE IN HACKNEY's (CHOICE) 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in our 2017-2018 annual report. It's strange to think that's it is now 27-years since we started, when it all seems like it happened yesterday! It is a real honour for me to still be with the organisation, which started as a niche charity serving the needs of the disabled community in Hackney and has now grown into the well-known and respected organisation it is today.

Despite all the time that has passed, the charity's mission remains the same i.e. to:

- *Build disabled people's knowledge and confidence about rights and opportunities to achieve independence, control and choice over how they live their lives; and*
- *Create opportunities for disabled people to fulfil their ambitions and take an active part in their community.*

I am pleased to report that we have remained true to our mission despite all of the turbulence that we have experienced as a small charity working in the voluntary and community sector. It is a sign of our resilience, strength and determination that we have been able to weather that rollercoaster ride; celebrating our successes and learning valuable lessons along the way. Some of the highlights of that rollercoaster year include:

### **HIGHS POINTS OF THE YEAR:**

#### **ADVOCACY:**

Providing high quality advocacy services to disabled adults has always been a staple of CHOICE and we are pleased to be able to still provide this valuable service. Initially, CHOICE was funded directly by the local authority to provide this service and it included anything from community care to welfare. However, over the years we have seen the service stripped back with different elements i.e. welfare provision being commissioned separately and instead of working directly with the local authority, we joined very diverse consortiums.

a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Caroline Nelson continued:**

**Advocacy and housing matters:**

You may recall there were real concerns raised in last year's report about the restrictive nature of the non-statutory advocacy service. We found we were having to turn disabled people away who badly needed support but because they were not known by Adult Social Care teams, couldn't access the service. These changes came about after Hackney Council recommissioned its advocacy service opting for The Advocacy Project (TAP) to be the new provider. I am pleased to report that the tight eligibility criteria has now been relaxed to include advocacy issues such as housing.

This addition came about as a result of our open dialogues with Hackney Council and TAP – who were eventually receptive to our suggestions as to how to make the service more inclusive. This type of policy work took up a great deal of both my own and our advocates' time and although it was unfunded, it was a very worthwhile undertaking as it forced a shift in the way the local authority / lead provider viewed disabled people; we are not passive recipients of services but individuals with their own distinct needs who deserve to have services available to them that are accessible to meet those needs.

We are pleased that our Hackney-based service users who are receiving ongoing support in the form of a package of care from Adult Social Care or community mental health teams will be able to benefit from our advocates working with them on their issue-based Housing matters if their housing situation is having a substantial impact on their health and wellbeing. This addition is key to the needs of our service users – some of whom spend a great deal of their time at home but if their homes are inaccessible, don't meet their needs and are having a bad impact on their health and wellbeing – whatever the successes for such service users, the affects will have been minimised. It could be argued that everyone deserves to have a home where they feel comfortable and welcome – especially disabled people who need a safe accessible place to retreat to.

a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Caroline Nelson continued:**

**Advocacy and child protection matters:**

Child protection is the protection of children from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. During the year, we undertook a lot of child protection matters, with some success. As CHOICE works with disabled adults, our advocates offered support to the disabled parent(s) of the child – many of whom had learning disabilities.

We were aware that there was a gap in the non-statutory advocacy service to support parents with learning disabilities and again, approached the local authority / TAP highlighting this groups' unmet needs. Thankfully, as these parents were already receiving support from both Children's *and* Adult Social Care teams, they were able to access the non-statutory advocacy service following our intervention.

It should not be taken for granted that because a person has an impairment (whether it be physical, sensory or related to their mental health), they don't have a desire to start their own family. With the right support particularly at the onset, that disabled parent can go on to continue to maintain their family to good or satisfactory standards and keep their children within the family home.

This area of work can be time-intensive particularly when support is offered to the parents before, during and after court hearings. We are uncertain whether the existing provision is wholly satisfactory and as such will seek funding to fill that gap. We will also continue our dialogue with the local authority / lead provider to ensure unmet needs are highlighted and wherever possible, included within our contract.

The number and diversity of service user issues dealt with over the period has increased substantially with advocacy issues becoming more and more complex. In particular, mental health issues are rising, which is understandable due to the many frustrations disabled people undergo in order to obtain their rights. This has shown itself not only within non-statutory advocacy issues but also hate crime – where disabled people are seen as “easy targets” to be set upon. More and more of our service users have announced that they experience “depression” or “anxiety”. This leads me neatly onto my next point – our entry into the world of statutory advocacy.

a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Caroline Nelson continued:**

**Statutory advocacy:**

We pride ourselves on providing a seamless holistic service, which meets all the needs of our service users. As such we are delighted to announce that two of our disability rights advocates are undertaking statutory advocacy training. This will mean that as our non-statutory provision reduces each year, we will be able to take on more work in the area of Independent Care Act Advocacy (ICAA). Watch this space for further developments in this area.

**HEALTH ADVOCACY:**

We are pleased to have continued to receive funding from Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (HUHFT) to offer our service users a health related advocacy service that includes:

- Providing options and choices available regarding services.
- Attending health appointments with patients where necessary.

In the year, the service was provided from accessible venues including hospitals, General Practitioners (GP), home visits were offered to people who are not mobile, remotely (i.e. via telephone / email / Skype) as well as through office visits.

This is a valuable service in its own right which has been running for many years and we are extremely grateful to HUHFT for their continued support. This is particularly the case as there are disabled people who often find it difficult to speak up for themselves independently of an advocate. This is important for our disabled service users as it was only recently that Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) was introduced. Even so, not every service user has the confidence to be part of such a service. As such, the idea of our advocacy service being the buffer between the service user and healthcare service is an obvious need, which we provide. There are many ways in which our service users and advocates can interact with individuals and organisations outside of the healthcare system to affect both health and healthcare service outcomes for the better.



a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Caroline Nelson continued:**

**ADVOCACY TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT (AT&E) PROJECT:**

Thanks to match-funding from the Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales and part-funding from Allen & Overy: Ben Ogden Memorial Fund, People's Postcode Trust, Santander Foundation and South Hackney Parochial Charity, the Advocacy Training & Employment (AT&E) project continued to run 3-programmes per year.

Thirty-two disabled people were able to undertake the course this year, which included classroom-based training, work placements and ongoing support. This project has proved invaluable to disabled people who want to change or enter a new career, understand their entitlements and rights as well as build their knowledge and skills base.

It was really important that we keep it going and, as the above funding was due to expire later in the year, a concerted fundraising effort was carried out to great success. We are pleased to report that Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales agreed to continuation funding of a further 3-years, which will allow us to expand the project to include hate crime and domestic violence training. A further 3-years funding was also received from Henry Smith Charity, which has allowed us to continue the generic training but also change the project's name and scope.

**Choices into Work:**

The first of these changes is that the project is now a department, which includes projects such as Choices into Work. We plan to expand the AT&E department to include other elements of training and development for disabled people. Currently, the Choices into Work project provides:

- 13-session classroom-based training including topics on case management, statutory authority services and disability-related legislation. Also included is a job search workshop, where trainees are supported to develop good interview techniques and job application skills;
- Work placements – these last for 12-weeks+ and provide our trainees with opportunities to put into practice some of the skills they acquired through the training; and
- Ongoing support - including coaching sessions that assist trainees with careers advice, a monthly e-newsletter providing information on current job vacancies etc.

a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Caroline Nelson continued:**

**Choices into Work team:**

The team is run by the Advocacy Training & Employment Coordinator who trains up to 30-disabled people per year. A Work Experience Coach develops effective job coaching and employment plans with trainees – assisting them to discover and overcome their personal barriers and better understand their goals / ambitions. The Advocacy Mentor works with trainees encouraging them towards achieving their goals in particular, supervising them and volunteers whilst on placement in group and one-to-one settings. The role is an inspirational one as the post-holder acts as a guide and trusted resource for trainees – sharing knowledge or life experiences.

**Trainees on placement:**

The trainee work placement is a reciprocal arrangement where:

- Trainees volunteering at CHOICE and host organisations gain hands-on experience of the world of advocacy work by taking on light cases; and
- The host organisations have the support of a highly skilled trainee who can complete tasks that would not ordinarily fit funder's criteria i.e. completing a Blue Badge application form or applying to charities for funding on behalf of service users.

**Extended accreditation:**

The fully accredited training programme trains up to 30-disabled people per year in advocacy and employment issues. On successful completion of the course, trainees are awarded 20 credits at the equivalent of an "A" Level qualification, from the Open College Network Credit 4 Learning. An area of expansion for the project will include offering trainees the opportunity to undertake additional elements to obtain a higher, Diploma level award.

AT&E continues to go from strength to strength and I am pleased to report that during the year, 43% of our trainees moved into work. This is a significant increase of 10% from last year.

a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Caroline Nelson continued:**

**DISABILITY HATE CRIME:**

I am pleased to report that this project, which started in the financial year 2016-2017, has secured further and increased funding from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC). This has meant that more and more disabled people can access the service to report a disability-related crime made against them as well as receive safety plans as to how to keep themselves safe.



Since inception, the numbers of disabled people accessing this service has increased exponentially since 2016-2017 when we saw 17 disabled people; in 2017-2018 there were 21; and this year, 2018-2019 we saw a record 31 disabled people accessing it. This steady increase is due in part to our partnership working with other network members within the Community Alliance To Combat Hate (CATCH) making cross referrals into our services and/or CHOICE's projects also referring their service users into it.

**QUALITY MARK:**

You may recall that in last year's report, I had mentioned we had been awarded the Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (PQASSO) quality mark; the most widely used quality system within the third sector. Our external accreditors, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) are now using a different logo to the one shown in last year's report (see logo to the right). CHOICE is now known as a "Trusted Charity", which gives us real credibility and recognition as a small third-sector charity.



a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Caroline Nelson continued:**

**MENTORING:**

I am pleased to report that I am continuing to be mentored by Chris Tucker, who has been with Lloyds Bank Group since leaving school – starting branch level and has worked at the Group's Head Office in central London since 2001. His career spans Commercial Banking (companies turning over £2m / £25m), Credit Management (oil and gas sector), Risk Management, working in the part of the Group dealing with companies in financial distress just after the financial crisis (where he managed a team of 25 over 4 different locations), Change and Project Management as well as several years in the groups Human Resources in Reward and Performance Management. Chris remains in a senior management role at Lloyds Banking Group.

From that long list of experiences and skills, I am sure I don't have to tell you that Chris has been a real asset to me and the organisation as a whole! We started our mentoring relationship in 2017 and since then I have asked funder, Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales if I can keep him: year in and year out! We work well together and I am pleased to report that the relationship is not all one-sided – Chris has also said that he gains a lot from working with me in the voluntary and community sector as it is a real change from his regular work. I am glad that he sees it as a reciprocal relationship – where we both learn from and bounce ideas off each other.

Here is Chris in his own words encouraging his peers to also take up a mentoring role:

- ***“You have more to share than you realise - Depending on your background, you will have probably employed more people than your mentee or have more experience managing change, projects and risk. A lot of the skills and knowledge mentors might take for granted can be highly valuable for a charity which will know how to help service users amazingly well but may be less well-versed in some of the disciplines and practises mentors are familiar with. Never underestimate the knowledge you can share”.***

Thanks Chris, your input is much appreciated.

a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Caroline Nelson continued:**

**LOW POINTS OF THE YEAR:**

As I mentioned in the introduction to my report, this has been a rollercoaster year and at first glance, it appears that there were more "highs" than "lows". This may be true however, the depth of those lows when compared to the highs are what causes us the greatest anxiety. Here are some of those lows:

**ACTIVE LIFESTYLE AND VOLUNTEER PROJECTS:**

These are valuable projects which have been running for many years however, just like other projects within CHOICE, they depend on funding. There is no doubt that the projects are needed as they attract more and more service users and volunteers over many years.

Despite our best efforts, we have been unable to source anything other than part-funding for these projects. We arrived at a dilemma: whether to continue the projects whilst fundraising; or discontinue them altogether. The latter would mean disappointing not only our volunteers and service users but also the coaches and members of staff who manage the projects.

We came to the decision that it would be better to continue the projects but on a limited basis and once again, found ourselves dipping into our limited reserves in order to do this. The consequence of that is that the organisation's reserves have dwindled down to their lowest level.

This situation is unsustainable however and Trustees have some very difficult decisions to make moving forward.

**CHANGES TO OUR ADVOCACY SERVICE:**

You may recall that last year, I discussed the vexatious issue of our new non-statutory advocacy service. In particular, I was very critical of it seeming to adopt the private sector ethos of "time is money". Our advocates were limited to working on issue based matters for a maximum of 12-hours.

a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Caroline Nelson continued:**

**CHANGES TO OUR ADVOCACY SERVICE continued:**

There was also the issue of non-statutory advocacy funding being reduced over time to make way for an increased focus on statutory advocacy (which includes Independent Care Act Advocacy (ICAA), Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA) and Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA)). Whilst our advocates will benefit from undertaking training in this area, there is still the matter of where disabled people who need a reliable professional disability-related advocacy service should go?

It is appreciated that non-statutory advocacy aims to empower its existing service users to enable them to self-advocate however, not all disabled people have the confidence or will to tackle what are sometimes very complex advocacy issues themselves. These are really contentious issues for us. Fortunately, we are resilient and have adapted to changes to the contract. This was particularly due to keeping an open dialogue between the lead provider TAP and the funder, London Borough of Hackney.

**WELCOMES AND GOODBYES:**

**Staff:**

Warm welcomes are extended to our part-time Disability Rights Advocate, Lucia Bellini who joined the team in October 2018. Lucia is an experienced advocate who previously worked with the organisation in the same capacity and as a Support Brokerage & Support Planning Officer. With her experience in child protection and domestic violence advocacy, Lucia is a welcome addition to the team.

We are also joined by two employees who form part of the Choice's Into Work Project (part of the Advocacy Training & Employment (AT&E) Department). Anthonio Igbon is our new Advocacy Mentor. Anthonio is a former trainee who successfully completed the AT&E course and joined us as a paid advocate after fulfilling his volunteering role. His new role includes supervising some of the trainees who complete the AT&E course – giving them hands-on experience of actual advocacy work.

a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Caroline Nelson continued:**

**WELCOMES AND GOODBYES continued:**

Huguette Kuza is our new Work Experience Coach who joined CHOICE with a wealth of valuable experience, which includes her previous role as a Job coach and Job coach lead where she facilitated and supported special educational needs young adults in work experience and beyond. Huguette was also a community learning champion, where she recruited students at local events and engaged students at open evenings. She will provide coaching and guidance to our trainees, supporting them to get the most out of their careers. These new posts add real value to the support already offered by the project and we are sure our trainees will make good use of the services available to them.

**Trustees:**

We welcome our new Chair, Sandra Rennie who was appointed to the role on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018 having joined the Board in 2016-2017. Sandra holds many roles in her community – including being Chair of Newham Patient Forum, a Member of Newham Healthwatch, a registered General Nurse and also former Trainee Advocate.

Fond farewells are extended to former Chair, Anita Ceesay who resigned on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018. Anita has been a part of the organisation for many years and will be missed. Jo Panter, a well-known figure in the disabled community and one of the primary users of the organisation's services 27-years ago and Grizelda Walker who is an experienced counsellor also resigned on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018. We wish them all well and they are of course welcome to utilise our services in future.

**PARTNERSHIP WORKING:**

CHOICE continues to strengthen and grow its network of partners, which includes disability related organisations. Partnership work remains integral to the CHOICE ethos of "Nothing about us, without us" and we are pleased to be able to build our connections to other disability-related organisations.



a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Caroline Nelson continued:**

**PARTNERSHIP WORKING continued:**

CHOICE and its partners can share lived experience of disability, knowledge, training opportunities, services, a loyal customer base as well as join together to strengthen consortium-based funding applications.

Our network of organisations includes the Alliance for Inclusive Education (ALLFIE), DeafPLUS, Department for Work & Pensions, Gay London Police Monitoring Group (Galop), Hackney Council for Voluntary Service, Hackney People First, Health & Social Care Forum, Inclusion London, the Metropolitan Police Service, Mind in the City, Hackney & Waltham Forest, Stay Safe East and the Supported Employment Network.

Working in partnership is aimed at securing the rights of disabled people as full citizens, improving their quality of life and promoting an inclusive society where disabled people can participate fully and equally.

**STAFFING:**

I would like to thank all CHOICE staff and volunteers for their hard work and commitment to the smooth running of the organisation. You have all made valuable contributions, which are very gratefully received.

**TRUSTEES:**

A very big thank you to all our Trustees (new and old) for their valuable contributions throughout the year. They gave 520 hours in the year and have been a solid bedrock to what was sometimes a very shaky foundation. In particular the Personnel and Finance Sub-Group members who have been very supportive in ensuring that the organisation can maintain its high standards across staff and its finances.

a) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT by Caroline Nelson continued:**

**FUNDERS:**

Thank you to all our supporters, donors, funders and contractors who gave their time and money to CHOICE (both individuals and organisations), which included:

ALLEN & OVERY



The level of funding in the year allowed CHOICE to provide support to 412 individuals (411 in 2017-2018). This was in spite of the organisation having stopped an unfunded project during the year – the Support Planning & Support Brokerage project.

b) **ACTIVE LIFESTYLE PROJECT by Community Volunteer Officers, Paul Salt and Daniel Toby:**

**Activities:**

We provide local sports and recreational activities to disabled Hackney residents including Boccia, a weekly Coffee Club and a seated exercise class called SOSA.

**Engaging disabled people:**

Too often disabled people are excluded from health and community activities and we are pleased to be in the position to provide them with this type of service.

The benefits of a robust health programme are wide ranging, including improved mental wellbeing, social skills and engagement in the community. These types of benefits have real advantages for disabled people who regularly struggle to access community services as they come up against barriers. These barriers are not only in the physical environment (i.e. local leisure centres being completely inaccessible) but also in the attitudes of staff towards disabled people, who for one reason or another (i.e. ignorance or a general unwillingness to learn) do not meet the needs of disabled people.

**Service user feedback:**

Our service users enjoy our health and wellbeing sessions, as some of the following feedback confirms:

- *“My favourite thing is the activities we do and the people I meet”*
- *“It gets me out of my flat and meeting people”*

16 people now regularly participate in our service. With further work and a committed publicity drive, we can expand the service to include people from various communities.

We currently run Coffee Club sessions once a week with monthly SOSA sessions delivered by our partner, Michelle Felix. We would be thrilled to see these sessions used as an opportunity to promote and publicise SOSA.

b) **ACTIVE LIFESTYLE PROJECT by Community Volunteer Officers, Paul Salt and Daniel Toby continued:**

**Publicity:**

We regularly take photographs of SOSA sessions, which produces excellent images to bring attention to CHOICE IN HACKNEY as an organisation run by and for disabled people as well as to promote our mission to build disabled people's confidence, achieve independence and create opportunities for them to take an active part in their community.

What could represent the organisation and its vision more appropriately than a group of disabled people enjoying their lives and each other's company? Each feeling included, each feeling empowered.



***Photograph: A group of disabled people engage in SOSA.  
Under their seats are maracas, which forms part of the  
choreography and are utilised to keep up with the salsa beat!***

We aim to have our sessions bring more people together. In feedback, many of our participants expressed they wanted more activities participants to engage with, more people to talk to and to befriend. In a divisive time, our project can give its users common goals and experiences. It cannot only introduce disabled people to a world of fitness previously denied to them, but it can also introduce them to each other.

c) **THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING ADVOCACY SUPPORT by Lucia Bellini**

It is great to be back at CHOICE IN HACKNEY (CHOICE) after leaving the organisation three and a half years ago. Despite all that time passing, I can still see the need for providing an advocacy service to disabled people, perhaps now more than ever. Services such as Community Care and Housing continue to be cut and the most vulnerable people are left without knowing where to go and what to do.

**Statutory advocacy training:**

Thanks to the non-statutory advocacy lead provider, The Advocacy Project (TAP) and CHOICE, I have started my Care Act training to become a statutory advocate. In this work, I am working with several service users who are being told that they are not entitled to care packages – this is despite having physical impairments which means they are not able to manage their personal care to an acceptable standard.

Practices are not being carried out correctly and service users are being turned down without having access to their assessments neither to the reasons why decisions are being made. They are not informed of how they can appeal these decisions. I have been working on three complaints to specifically challenge the way Care Act assessments are being carried out and how vulnerable service users are being left without care.

**Child protection proceedings:**

We have had a number of service users whose children are subject to Child Protection processes and others who are in court proceedings facing the prospect of their children being taken into care. This is a very involved process and takes up a lot of time. As an advocate, we attend many appointments with the service users including Child Protection meetings, parenting assessments, psychological and psychiatric assessments, meetings with their solicitors and court hearings. We spend a lot of time going through legal documents and reports with the service users to ensure they understand the concerns raised by the local authority and are able to give the necessary information to their solicitor who can put together statements for the court.

c) **THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING ADVOCACY SUPPORT by Lucia Bellini continued:**

**Accessible housing:**

Lack of accessible housing continues to be a big problem for many of our service users (SUs). We have SUs who are physically disabled and trapped in their homes, which has no lift and they are unable to walk down stairs. Housing departments are not able to deal with them sufficiently and if SUs are not able to provide the correct information in very little time, they close their applications. I have successfully appealed these decisions and challenged Housing due to the way they have not taken the access needs of SUs into account.

**Mental health support:**

Another big problem is the lack of mental health support available to those who really need it. Five of my SUs have been given a diagnosis of Emotional Unstable Personality Disorder, which they do not understand. The common feeling is that this is a way of telling a SU that they cannot be treated. It also means that they are not entitled to one-to-one therapy, but are forced to have therapy in a group. This does not work for many SUs who either have additional learning disabilities, social phobias or who just do not feel comfortable in groups. They are then discharged from the mental health team and left unsupported. I have been appealing some of these decisions and trying to push the mental health team to support SUs, especially when they are vulnerable and suicidal.

Below is a case study, which highlights many of the above points.

**Case Study:**

I have a SU who is trans-male, has mental health issues, learning difficulties and physical impairments. He came to us needing to be re-housed with specific equipment in his home and a care package. When I started working with him, I found that as well as needing support with the above, many more issues came to the surface. This included support to deal with debt collectors. This was due to him spending a lot of money that he didn't have and getting into debt when he has a mental health crisis. Due to his learning difficulties, he is not able to work out a reasonable payment plan that he can afford to pay back.

c) **THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING ADVOCACY SUPPORT by Lucia Bellini continued**

**Case Study continued:**

I supported him through a community care assessment and an assessment with occupational therapy. He is happier now as he has equipment in his home which makes particular tasks easier for him. He was however, been turned down for a care package I was informed because “he does not meet the criteria”; even though he struggles with maintaining his personal care and taking the correct amount of medication every day. For example, because he is trans-male, part of this process means he has to take hormones which he sometimes forgets to do, which in turn affects his mental and physical health.

During the assessment, we were told that the SU should be entitled to a care package, however when his social worker left the service, the case was closed. We did not receive a copy of the assessment and I did not get a reply to any of the numerous emails I sent requesting an update.

I am in the process of making a complaint and submitting an appeal against that decision. I am also still trying to get the SU moved from his current accommodation, as he was a victim of a hate crime for which the perpetrator was given a prison sentence. The SU is very grateful for the advocacy support we are providing to him.

**Eligibility:**

Working with TAP was a challenge at the beginning of the year. We needed clarity in relation to the work we would be funded to carry out. Many meetings were held with TAP: I would leave these meetings feeling extremely confused and unclear about what we should be doing. I would ask questions about whether certain clients would be eligible for advocacy support. The reply would almost always be “no”. I would then ask for explanations regarding what would be eligible and the answer I was given was something along the lines of “you know the needs of your SUs.” I did not find these responses helpful. However, I feel our relationship with TAP has since improved and things are much clearer to me.



c) **THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING ADVOCACY SUPPORT by Lucia Bellini continued**

To conclude, we continue to receive SUs who come to us with multiple issues who need advocacy support. I am aware that the way advocacy is provided in Hackney is constantly changing as less money is put into non-statutory and more money is going into statutory advocacy services. This will mean that more and more people will lose out on support which in many cases, is essential.

I have enjoyed being back at CHOICE and I am grateful to be able to continue to support the people who need and benefit from our support.

d) **ADVOCACY REPORT by Jimmy Telesford**

I am pleased to continue to assist disabled people with every day independent living tasks. Unfortunately, nothing has become easier for the people I assist: each year they just have to fight that little bit harder than they did the year before and 2018-19 has been no different.

**Housing issues:**

As always, housing issues, in their many different forms, remains top priority for many of CHOICE IN HACKNEY's (CHOICE) service users. A small number of service users (although their numbers are ever-increasing) have received my support as they have been either evicted from their homes or seen as making themselves "intentionally homeless". People with hidden disabilities appear to make up the bulk of these people. More often than not, their hidden disabilities have not been taken into account when eviction proceedings are started.

I do think statutory services need to do more work around making sure its staff understand that hidden disabilities can have as much of an impact on a person's life as those disabilities that are easily seen. It is unfair if a person loses their home simply because they do not meet the threshold for support (as they are not able to adequately convey the impact their hidden disability has on them).

As a powered wheelchair user, I am acutely aware that if I became homeless tomorrow, it would be easier for me to get accommodation than many of my service users who don't have any physical problems but do have hidden disabilities. This imbalance in the housing system can see many of these service users ending up street homeless which in turn can see them being placed in unsafe situations. That is to say nothing of these disabled people having to live in totally unsuitable environments.

I currently have a service user who sometimes has to sleep in such an unsuitable environment because local shelters are full or she doesn't have enough bus fare to get to a shelter where they have a space. If this individual's disability had been recognised and supported earlier, there would have been no need for them to become street homeless: a situation that will do nothing but further damage their already poor mental health.

d) **ADVOCACY REPORT by Jimmy Telesford continued**

**Successes during the year:**

I am pleased to be able to share some good news - because of the work of the CHOICE Advocacy Project, a family that I'm working with will be provided with much needed accommodation. This will not only help a young child with hidden disabilities but also the siblings to have a much more comfortable living environment.

**Advocacy volunteers:**

As a CHOICE advocate, I am always pleased to get help and support from our team of advocacy volunteers. They have proved invaluable in supporting many disabled people obtain funds, enabling them to i.e. furnish their new homes. Often, the service user is someone who has either not lived by themselves previously or for a long time - they are always keen to have their own front door and sense of independence.

**Community care:**

I am presently helping a number of service users challenge their community care charges. This type of work, like housing, if successful, has an immediate impact on the resources that disabled people have at their disposal. If Hackney's disabled people find paying their community care charges difficult, they should always seek support. CHOICE is a good place to start.

I continue to benefit from the support and hard work of the trainees from CHOICE's Advocacy Training & Employment Project for which I am most grateful, as they have supported many of my service users to bring about real changes in their lives. I would like to wish all my service users all the best going forward.

e) **ADVOCACY TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT PROJECT by Haq Ismail**

CHOICE IN HACKNEY's (CHOICE) Advocacy Training & Employment Project has been running for 10-years. It has run 33 courses and seen over 300-trainees improve their knowledge, skills and confidence. After 10-years of helping disabled people to find work, placements and move into further education, the project is now extending its scope.

**New look project:**

Now branded the "Choice's Into Work Project", we are joined by two new employees. Anthonio Igbon is our new Advocacy Mentor. After trainees complete the course, a few will be offered the opportunity to be supervised by Anthonio and participate in actual advocacy work here at CHOICE. Hugnette Kuza is our new Work Experience Coach. She will provide coaching and guidance to trainees supporting them to get the most out of their careers. These new positions have broadened the support offered by the project.



***Photo: Advocacy Training & Employment Co-ordinator, Haq Ismail (centre) with new members of his team: Work Experience Coach, Hugnette Kuza (left) and Advocacy Mentor, Anthonio Igbon (right)***

**Accreditation:**

The project is accredited by Open College Network Credit4Learning (OCN). This means that whilst our trainees undertake the classroom-based component of the course, they carry out a range of assessments which includes a portfolio, group presentations and written tests. The outcome of the assessments determines the overall level of award (ranging from Level 1-3) for each trainee. The award is the equivalent to an "A" level, which for some of our trainees is their first experience of a further education.

e) **ADVOCACY TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT PROJECT by Haq Ismail continued**

**Accreditation continued:**

We have long felt that the level of award inadequately reflects the high quality of our trainees' competency skills and classroom-based work. As such, we are now in the process of applying for Level 4 accreditation, which will elevate our highest level of award to the standard of a Higher Education Certificate, typically achieved after one year of university. This will ensure that our training has a bigger impact with employers and other academic institutions. These are exciting new developments, which have contributed to the overall success of the project.



**Photo:**

***Advocacy Training & Employment (AT&E) Coordinator, Haq Ismail (standing) with a selection of trainees during the classroom-based element of the AT&E course***

**Successes during the year:**

During the financial year, the project exceeded its target, training 32 trainees (as opposed to the target of 30). We have improved our relationships with our partners: Department for Work & Pensions, Disability Action in Islington, Teviot Community Centre and Hackney Opportunity Hub which have yielded trainee referrals, training venues and more opportunities to reach disabled Londoners. The waiting list for future courses has never looked healthier.

e) **ADVOCACY TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT PROJECT by Haq Ismail continued**

**User involvement:**

We continue to be led by our trainees and have welcomed new members to the steering group. Their input continues to develop the course and has a huge impact on the way in which we deliver to the next generation. We are also now encouraging trainees to review us on Google, which not only improves the visibility and reputation of the project and organisation but also helps us shape the trainee experience according to that feedback.

**Training venues:**

New training venues at Disability Action in Islington and Hackney Opportunity Hub have allowed us to hold the course on different days of the week. This will help us to facilitate a broader range of trainees who found our traditional training day, Friday, to be difficult. These new training venues also saw us moving to other locations: within Hackney and Islington, increasing transport choices for local disabled people. Whilst we continue to treasure our relationship with The Teviot Centre, with whom we are entering our third year of collaboration, we recognise that we also need to bring the course to a new audience of disabled people in other locations.

Looking to the future, CHOICE has the opportunity to develop its training course even further. New certificates will be awarded for Hate Crime Advocacy and Domestic Violence Advocacy. We will work closely with our accreditors Open College Network Credit4Learning to ensure these awards have the necessary academic weight behind them to greatly improve the employability prospects of our trainees. After ten-years of reliable service, our newly revamped Choice's into Work project is only growing stronger. We look forward to meeting the next 300 trainees over a further ten-year period!

f) **BEFRIENDING PLUS / VOLUNTEER PROJECT by Community Volunteer Officers, Paul Salt and Daniel Toby**

CHOICE IN HACKNEY's (CHOICE) Volunteer Project continues to offer volunteering opportunities and services to disabled Hackney residents. Our extraordinary volunteers have befriended socially isolated disabled people, rejuvenated outdoor greenspaces to aid service users' wellbeing and mental health as well as performed vital administrative services for CHOICE both virtually and from our office.

**Befriending:**

The Befriending service continues to pair volunteers with disabled Hackney residents. Our volunteers are often young professionals who want to give back to their community or who find themselves removed from family and friends. They have proven dedicated and reliable in the services they offer. Our befrienders greatly appreciate the service and the opportunities it affords as they support service users to access their communities, get online and express themselves.

**Gardening:**

Our gardening project has grown considerably over the year. With nearly twice the gardeners of last year, we have started taking on more ambitious projects. By arranging several gardeners at once, and even holding corporate volunteer days, we have restored gardens that were completely unusable, back to a comfortable and manageable place. Impassioned volunteers have been moving from one garden to the next, helping to create peaceful places for our service users to enjoy nature and spend time with their families.



***Photo: A selection of volunteer gardeners clearing a service user's overgrown garden***



f) **BEFRIENDING PLUS / VOLUNTEER PROJECT by Community Volunteer Officers, Paul Salt and Daniel Toby continued**

**Volunteer administrators:**

CHOICE would not be able to operate as it does without our volunteer administrators. By taking on the responsibility of managing incoming calls and post, working with our projects, filing and undertaking complex research tasks, our volunteers not only save the office a great deal of time but frequently form the face of the organisation to the public and other organisations. Many of our great volunteers have found work this year. As new volunteers join us, we look forward to seeing the same high standard of work.

41 people have donated their time to CHOICE this year, with more applications being received every day. Community Volunteer Officers are committed to seeing this project grow and continue to support disabled people to both receive and offer volunteer services.



***Photo:  
Community Volunteer Officers:  
Paul Salt (left) and Daniel Toby (right)***



g) **DISABILITY HATE CRIME REPORT by Jimmy Telesford:**

Since my last report on the work of the Hate Crime Project, CHOICE IN HACKNEY (CHOICE) has assisted 31 people between the period April 2018 and March 2019.

**Police service's evidence-based work:**

We continued to support disabled people to make complaints to the Metropolitan Police Service, however, the police were often reluctant to investigate a crime due to a lack of evidence. This led to many of the disabled people using the service having the view that reporting a crime to the police will not give them the outcome they want. This is a barrier that still needs to be overcome. How this will be achieved is hard to say presently.

**Successes:**

During the course of the year, some of the involvement of the police has simply been to provide a crime reference number so that our hate crime victims could i.e. find alternative accommodation. There have been some successes in this area - a number of disability hate crime victims have been able to leave behind bullying and threatening neighbours. I am very proud to have been able to support our service users to achieve this outcome. However, it is something that is still far from satisfactory because it is always the disabled person who has to leave and not the perpetrators.

**Work in progress:**

The last twelve-months has seen the hate crime project help more and more victims of hate crime who have mental health issues. This particular group of people have faced a particularly unpleasant form of discrimination. They faced accusations that their claims of being victims of a hate crime are not based on reality, but are an outcome of their impairment. I don't think such a response is helpful because it demonises the service user and also leaves them open to further abuse from the alleged perpetrators – this is something I have witnessed for myself. I am pleased to say that in some cases where this kind of discrimination has taken place, I have helped the service user overcome such demonisation. However, in other cases tackling this type of demonisation of mental health service users remains a work in progress.

g) **DISABILITY HATE CRIME REPORT by Jimmy Telesford continued**

The idea that you can simply dismiss somebody's allegation of a hate crime on the basis of that person's mental health is not only discriminatory, I would go as far to say it is another type of crime and very short-sighted. No one should be denied support and understanding or dismissed simply because of their disability, which happens far too often with mental health service users who have experienced a hate crime.

**Holistic service:**

Due to the lack of support in other areas of their lives, many of the disabled people who come to CHOICE for help with a disability hate crime also need assistance with other aspects of living constructively within their community. This can include assistance with maximising their income so they can purchase equipment to make them feel safe in their homes or in some cases service users have purchased equipment so they can gather evidence that they can take to the police as evidence.

Supporting disabled people to collate and present evidence to the police that they will take seriously is a task in its own right. As a result of my work in the area of hate crime, I am becoming conscious that a possible reason for the victimisation of some service users has to do with the lack of support that many disabled people receive from statutory services. It is obvious to me that there is a very strong correlation between service users having no support for years and being victims of a hate crime.

Recently, I assisted an individual who experienced a hate crime at work. This person was able to provide a sworn statement from an individual (a member of the public who witnessed the hate crime). The police dismissed this evidence suggesting that the witness was a pre-existing friend of the victim, something that the victim absolutely denied. I have to say, given that the witness statement was something that would be deemed as truthful in a court of law, I'm at a loss to see the relevance of the relationship between the victim and the witness. As I said in a recent presentation to police officers who specialise in hate crime, the police still have a lot to do when it comes to supporting disabled victims of hate crimes and evidence.

g) **DISABILITY HATE CRIME REPORT by Jimmy Telesford continued**

**Safety planning:**

On a more positive note, over the last 12-months, the project has helped more and more victims of disability hate crime draw up Safety Plans. This has been necessary for two reasons – firstly because of the lack of support from statutory services to those in immediate danger; and also because such an exercise has proven useful to those who feel they want to take more control of their lives. I have found these plans are not merely a practical device, they also give the service user the opportunity to take control of their situation and respond constructively to the hate crime they are facing. I find once I've explained what a safety plan is and come up with a few suggestions, most of the hate crime service users I have assisted in this area are more than capable of coming up with ideas both to keep themselves safe and also to continue to thrive, even whilst they are still living in a very difficult environment. This has taught me that safety plans for disabled hate crime victims have more than one function.

I would like to finish on a positive note – at the time of writing, CHOICE's Hate Crime Project will be funded until September 2020 and as a consequence of this, the project now has two workers, myself and Lucia Bellini. I am looking forward to working with Lucia and supporting more disabled people to have their voices heard when they are victims of a disability hate crime.

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**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**(Company Limited by guarantee)**

**TRUSTEES REPORT**  
**AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**COMPANY NO: 03423122**  
**CHARITY NO : 1077287**

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**TRUSTEES REPORT**  
**AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

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**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.

**LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

**Trustees**

Anita Ceesay	Chair – resigned 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
Sandra Rennie	Chairperson – appointed 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
Patricia Charlesworth	Vice-Chairperson - appointed 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
Malcolm Aickin	Treasurer
Geoffrey Chilkes	
Mary Julian	
Jo Panter	- resigned 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
Debra Schiman	
Paula Smith	
Grizelda Walker	- resigned 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
Lydia Warren	

**Company Secretary and  
Executive Director**

Caroline Nelson

**Company reg.no.**

03423122

**Charity reg.no.**

1077287

**Registered Office**

CHOICE IN HACKNEY  
 Defoe Block, Ground Floor  
 50 Hoxton Street  
 London  
 N1 6LP

**Auditors**

Knox Cropper LLP  
 65 Leadenhall Street  
 London  
 EC3A 2AD

**Bankers**

Barclays Bank PLC  
 3-5 Kingsland High Street  
 London  
 E8 2JT



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

The trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of the Companies Act) present their combined directors' report and trustees' report, as required by company law, together with the audited financial statements of Choice in Hackney (the Charity) for the year ended 31 March 2019. The trustees confirm that the trustees' report and financial statements of the Charity comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the Charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

**Administration Details of the Charity, its Trustees and Advisors**

Administration details relating to CHOICE are set out under Legal and Administrative Information, on page 1.

**Structure, Governance and Management**

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Trustees are recruited from members of the Charity, ex-employees and from the wider community. They are elected and co-opted under the terms of the company's Articles of Association. Users are represented on the Board of Trustees. At the Annual General Meeting, the Board of Trustees is elected by the members of the Charity and serves from the close of that meeting until the close of the succeeding Annual General Meeting. The Board of Trustees consists of not less than 3 members and until otherwise determined by a General Meeting, not more than 12 members.

The Trustees were given an induction to the work of CHOICE by the Executive Director and introduced to all staff members. The formal policies and procedures are reviewed annually.

The Management of the Charity is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. Operational decisions are taken by the Executive Director and staff. Strategic decisions are made by the Board of Trustees in consultation with the Executive Director. The Board of Trustees meets at least 4 times a year and the Executive Director normally attends all meetings.

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and in particular, to those related to its operations and finances of the Charity, and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks. A review of the risk assessment was carried out by members of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Director during the year.

**Public Benefit**

In reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities, the Trustees refer to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

**Objectives and Activities**

CHOICE has the charitable objects of working with disabled, Greater London residents by providing Independent Living Services such as: Advocacy, Befriending Plus, Advocacy Training & Employment, Disability Hate Crime and Active Lifestyle.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

The objects of the Charity are:

- a) To relieve disabled persons in Greater London who require assistance to realise their full potential and lead fulfilling lives. In particular, by the provision of a service that assists such persons to obtain their full rights and privileges as citizens.
- b) To advance the education of the general public as to the needs and interests of disabled people.

From July 2008, The Charity Commission has allowed CHOICE to operate across Greater London and the company's Memorandum has been changed accordingly.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance:**

In the period under review, CHOICE promoted the following services to disabled Greater London residents aged 18 plus and their networks:

- Active Lifestyle;
- Advocacy;
- Advocacy Training & Employment;
- Befriending Plus / Volunteering;
- Disability Hate Crime.

We achieved this by providing the following services:

a) **Active Lifestyle Project:**

After substantial fundraising efforts, the project was awarded a small contribution towards its running costs from London Catalyst; the remainder of its costs came from CHOICE's reserves. This allowed us to continue to provide local sports and recreational activities to disabled Hackney residents including:

- Boccia sessions – this ball game is similar to bowls and specially adapted to meet the needs of disabled competitors;
- Coffee Club – weekly get-togethers are held where attendees take part in mood-lifting activities such as sing-alongs and theatre workshops; and
- Seated SOSA which stands for "Solo Salsa" sessions – meaning dances have been adapted for solo dance so no partner is required to take part. This low-impact dance fitness programme has proved popular with disabled people - it is very engaging regardless of impairment or fitness levels and participants remain seated throughout.



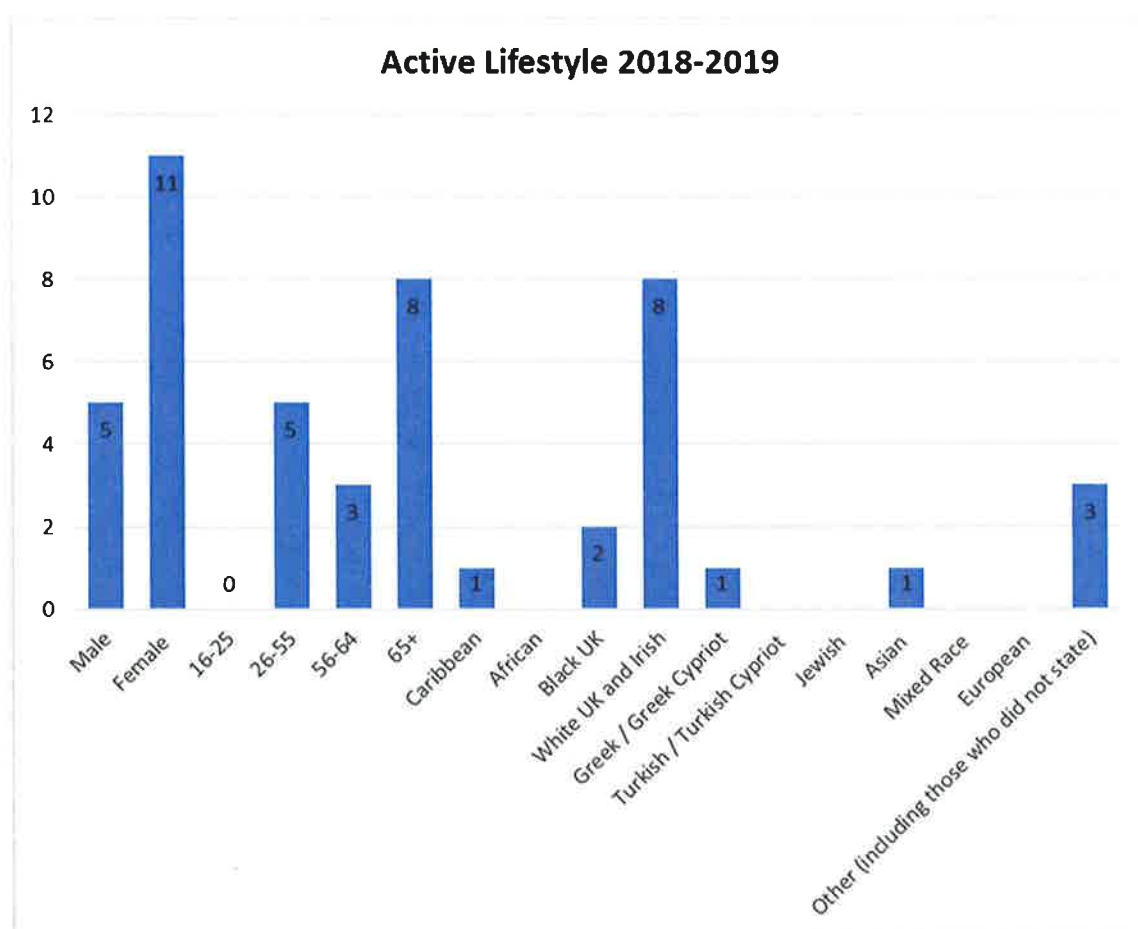
**Photograph: A group of disabled people engage in SOSA.  
 Under their seats are maracas, which forms part of the choreography  
 and are utilised to keep up with the salsa beat!**

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

a) **Active Lifestyle Project continued:**

16 disabled people (14 in 2017-2018) enjoyed activities arranged by the project and reported improved physical and mental wellbeing. The following bar chart presents statistical data for the project:



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

**b) Advocacy:**

We are pleased to report CHOICE remains part of a strong network of local community organisations, who operate within London Borough of Hackney's advocacy service. The Advocacy Project (TAP) continued as the lead provider and we worked very closely with them to ensure we aligned ourselves to changes to the eligibility criteria. Our transition from "community" to "non-statutory" advocacy, though bumpy, was helped by open dialogue between all parties.

We are grateful to have been in receipt of continued funding from Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (HUHFT) during the year to provide health advocacy. This includes relaying the options and choices available to the service user regarding health services and attending health appointments with them where necessary. This helps to shift the unbalanced relationship between service users (particularly those from different impairment, ethnic and cultural backgrounds). Health advocacy aims to empower users to access health services on an informed and equitable basis.

CHOICE advocates support our disabled service users to obtain the services needed to live an independent and dignified lifestyle in the community. The Advocate works in 'partnership' with the disabled user to obtain his/her rights.

During the period under review, our Advocates supported service users to target services that enabled them to enhance their quality of life whilst also meeting their needs. In order to fit within the non-statutory eligibility criteria, this meant we could only work with disabled people who:

1. Were located within or came under the responsibility of London Borough of Hackney;
2. Were known to Adult Social Care teams (i.e. care management, occupational therapy, sensory services);
3. Were vulnerable, unable to speak up for themselves, un-befriended; and
4. Required support with a specific advocacy issue.

During the year, CHOICE provided Advocacy support to 249 disabled people aged 18 plus (190 in 2017-2018). The number of issues dealt with in the year included:

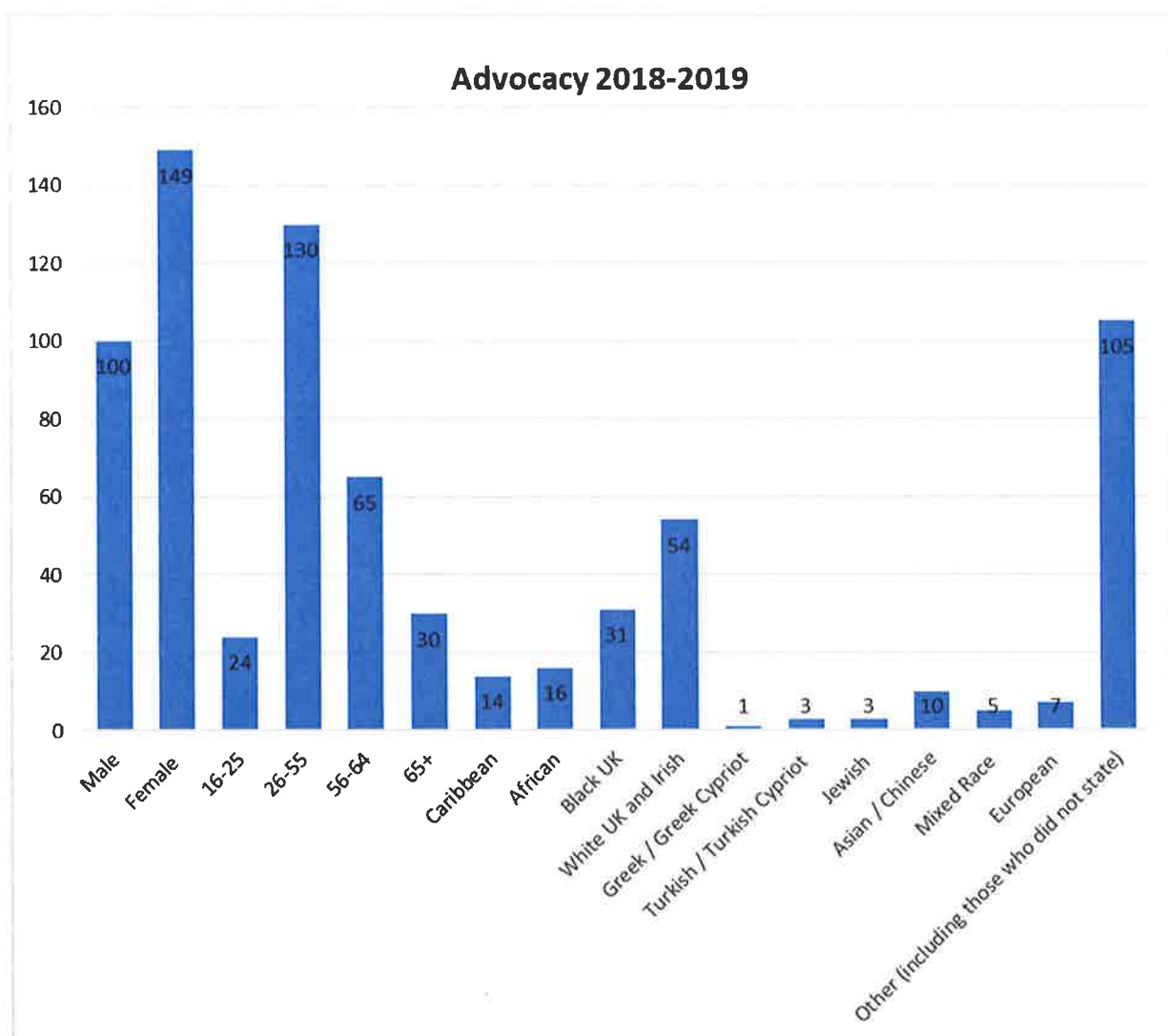
- 70 which related to housing;
- 66 where our service users wanted access to health related services;
- 22 related to parenting; and
- perhaps most worrying were the 5 safeguarding issues raised in the year.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

b) **Advocacy continued:**

The following bar chart presents statistical data for the Advocacy Project:



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

**c) Advocacy Training & Employment Project:**

The Advocacy Training & Employment (AT&E) project continued to provide its valuable service to disabled Londoners thanks to 3-years match-funding from the Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales and part-funding from Ben Ogden Memorial Fund, People's Postcode Trust, South Hackney Parochial Charity and Santander Foundation. 2018-19 will be the final year of funding with the above funders and so a concerted fundraising effort has already started. This includes applying for 3-years funding from Henry Smith Charity to continue the successful generic advocacy training and for continuation funding from Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales, which will enable us to expand the service to include training on hate crime and domestic violence. We are hopeful that we will be able to continue this remarkable project going forward.

The project continues to provide:

1. 13-week classroom-based training on the principles of advocacy. This training is held one-day per week and includes tuition, written exercises and tests. Also included are practical exercises on job search skills: writing applications / CVs and interview techniques;
2. 12-week+ work placements in the voluntary, statutory and private sectors. This allows our trainees to get a feel of the world of work and aids their employment prospects; and
3. Ongoing support including coaching sessions that assist trainees with careers advice, job retention and continued confidence building. Provision of a monthly e-newsletter, which provides vital information to our trainees in relation to current job vacancies, self-employment opportunities etc.

We continue to be affiliated with the Open College Network Credit4Learning (OCN) as a training college. OCN provide accredited certificates to our trainees, offering our trainees a pathway into higher education. For many years now we have noted that our trainees come from very diverse backgrounds and this is also true of their academic achievements. We have enrolled disabled people who have no formal qualifications as well as those with postgraduate degrees.

Whilst it has sometimes been challenging trying to adjust the pace and style of the training to accommodate all trainees, we have also received feedback from the majority of trainees who want to gain an award, which is higher than the existing Level 3. Consequently, we are in the process of enhancing the academic element from Levels 1-3 to Level 4, which is Diploma level. This will give our trainees further opportunities to become gainfully employed and/or enter further education.

We always like to take our trainees feedback on board and our steering group, which consists of past and present trainees, a CHOICE Board member, the Director and the trainer has proved an excellent platform in order to facilitate this feedback. This is a real service-user led approach to shaping the design and development of the project where all suggestions are welcomed.

This project is ever evolving and moves with the times. In particular, hate crime and domestic violence against disabled people are on the rise and it is important that there are enough fully trained disabled people available to support the victims of such crimes. As such, future developments for this project includes introducing a new element to the classroom-based component in the form of disability hate crime and/or domestic violence modules, which can be studied as stand-alone elements. Further details of this will be provided in next year's annual report.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

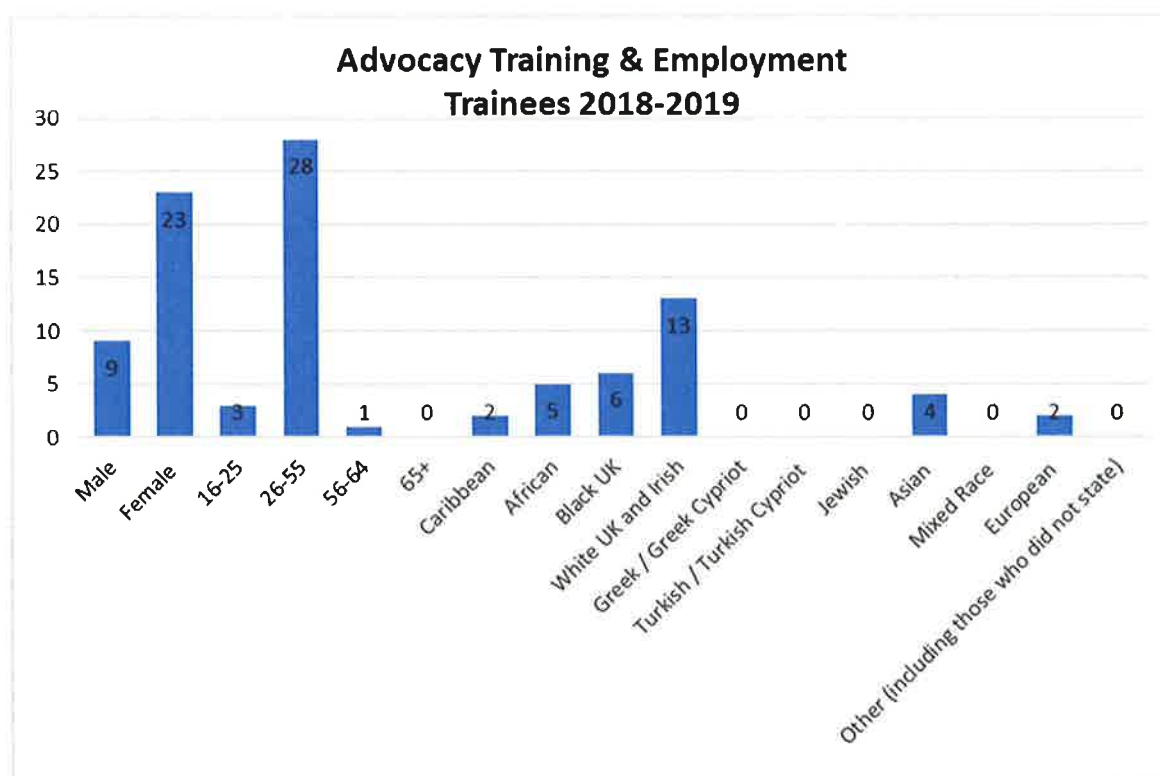
**c) Advocacy Training & Employment project continued:**

Our main successes during the year include:

1. Training 32 disabled adults to better advocate for themselves and others. This in turn enabled them to improve their confidence and find fulfilling careers in the year;
2. Surpassing our funders target of moving disabled people into work from 33% to 43%;
3. Offering job coaching and support to 7 ex-trainees, which helped them to realise their career goals; and
4. Our greatest achievement in the year was receiving feedback from our trainees about their high levels of satisfaction with the course. This was recorded on feedback forms and during one-to-one sessions: it is always rewarding to hear the difference our course has made to disabled people's lives.

The AT&E project successfully ran 3 training programmes this period training a total of 32 disabled people (30 in 2017-2018).

The following bar chart presents statistical data for the Advocacy Training & Employment Project:





**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

**d) Befriending Plus / Volunteer Project:**

The Befriending Plus / Volunteer project received part-funding from London Catalyst and National Lottery Awards for All during the year to support disabled people in a number of areas:

1. Within the community - visiting them in their homes for a chat and supporting them to meet their Information Communications Technology needs; escorting them to appointments, parks, concerts and other social/leisure activities;
2. Gardening - supporting disabled people to maintain their outdoor spaces by matching them with our team of volunteer gardeners. This team is growing and with many of them committing to clear more gardens than is necessary, it has meant that more and more disabled people have enjoyable outdoor spaces to socialise and relax in; and
3. From the CHOICE office - our administrative volunteers supported CHOICE in its core functions by providing a range of administrative tasks including note-taking, reception duties, answering the telephones, filing, photocopying, taking referrals, carrying out research, recording petty cash, social media skills by i.e. contacting service users by telephone, Twitter, email, Facebook etc.



**Photo: Selection of volunteer gardeners clearing  
a service user's overgrown garden**

During the year under review, we had the opportunity to survey our volunteers. In particular, data was collected to measure the increase in volunteer skill development i.e. whether they had a better insight into the issues faced by disabled people. This data was collected from volunteer entry interviews or application forms and were compared with volunteer exit interviews or surveys. A sample of the data is as follows:

- 83% said they had better insight into the issues faced by disabled people.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

**d) Befriending Plus / Volunteer Project continued:**

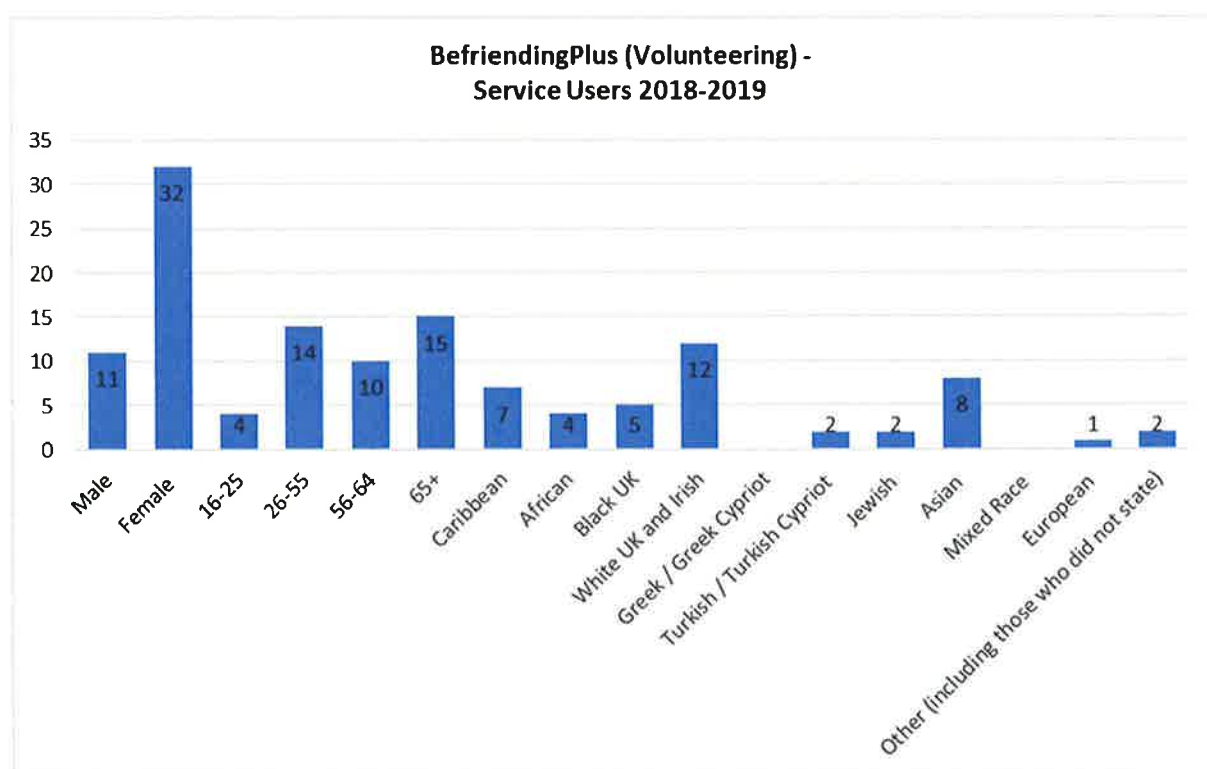
For our service users, data was collected to measure increased feelings of health, wellbeing or confidence as a result of their engagement in the project. We also asked whether they experienced any increased quality of life through going outside more or attending activities (such as those run by its sister project, the Active Lifestyle). This data was gathered using surveys and Active Lifestyle Feedback forms.

We are pleased to confirm:

- 87% of our service users reported increased feelings of health, wellbeing or confidence as a result of the Volunteer Project; and
- 87% also reported increased quality of life by going outside more and attending activities.

The Community Volunteer Officers continued to run the project and we are pleased to be able to reward our volunteers with Volunteer Social events, where they can get together for a meal / drink and mingle with the other volunteers and their service users. We remain indebted to all our volunteers for their help and support throughout the year. A total of 41 volunteers (37 in 2017-2018) volunteered in this period. This work benefited not only the 43 service users (30 in 2017-2018) but their friends and family members too.

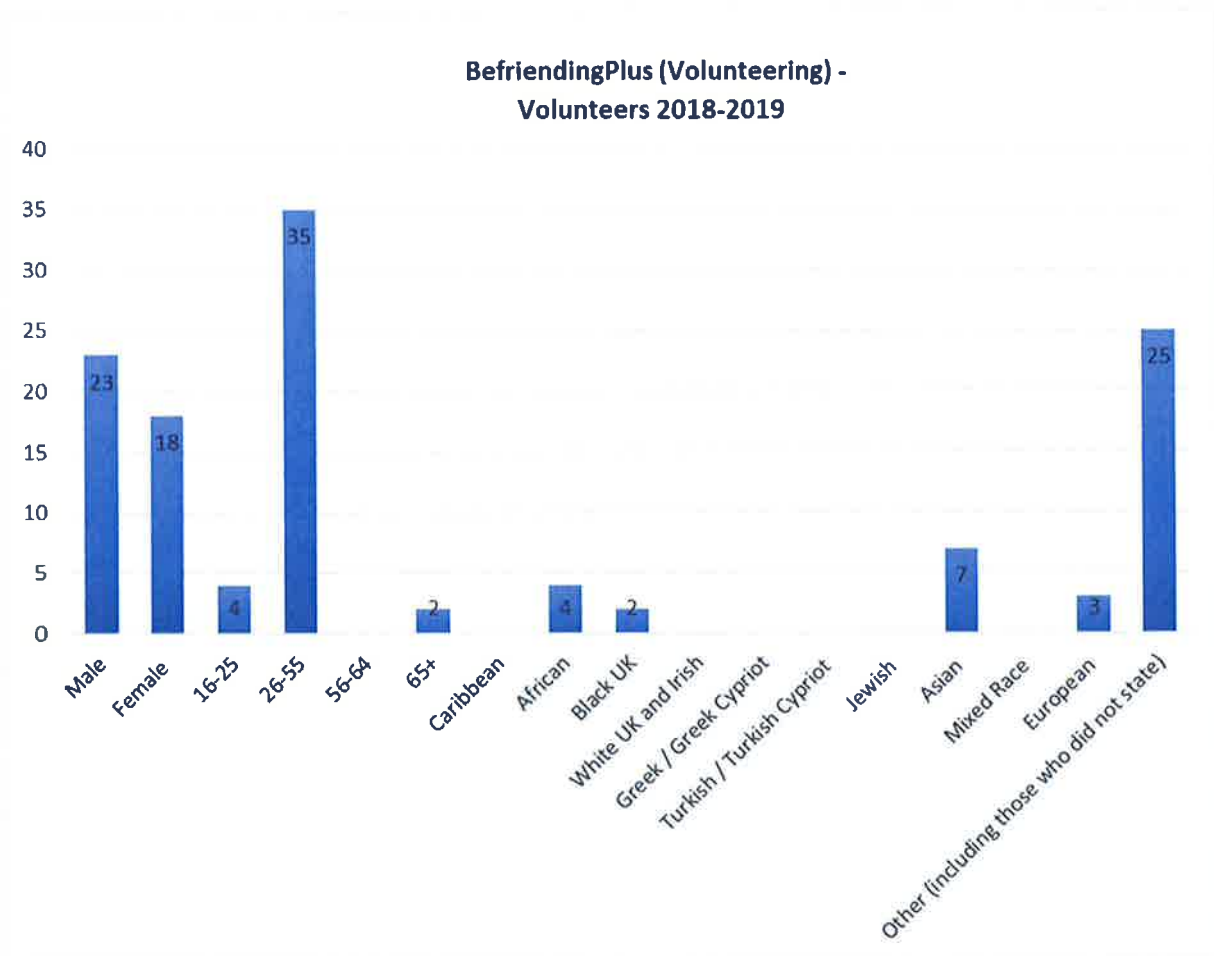
The following bar charts present statistical data for the Befriending Plus / Volunteer Project:



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

**d) Befriending Plus / Volunteer Project continued:**



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

**e) Disability Hate Crime:**

We are pleased to report that CHOICE remains part of a consortium funded by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) entitled "Community Alliance To Combat Hate" (CATCH). This advocacy hate crime project continues to work within a network of community organisations who specialise in supporting people who have experienced a hate crime due to their: race, faith / religious, sexual orientation (including attacks based on homophobia and transphobia) and/or disability.

The CATCH partnership work together to tackle hate crime, discrimination and abuse within the protected characteristic equality strands and have on occasion come together to work intersectionally: raising awareness amongst partners of each other's struggles. In particular, CHOICE's hate advocate will identify the support needs of individuals and enable them to access other services. The advocate will also:

- Assist with reporting incidents;
- Support individuals through criminal justice processes;
- Deliver outreach to communities impacted by hate crime to promote the service; and
- Share good practice internally within the partnership.

Initially, CHOICE supported service users in Hackney and Westminster, however, due to the success of the pilot project, the funder has increased our reach and we are pleased to be able to support more disabled people in Hackney and surrounding boroughs. This is very welcome as there have been reports in the media about the increase in hate crimes, particularly post-Brexit – when anyone who is seen as "different" is an easy target for perpetrators of hate.

This rise in hate crime has also increased the number of service users who have approached us for support. There are so many examples where disabled people have developed a general distrust of "institutions". So much so that many of them will not want to approach these institutions (i.e. the police) for fear of reprisals or not being taken seriously.

We are pleased that our service users feel confident and comfortable to approach us to gain the support they need to record and report such crimes. We encourage all disabled people who need this type of service to make use of it in order that we can provide up-to-date statistics to our funder, so that they in turn can appreciate the need for this service.

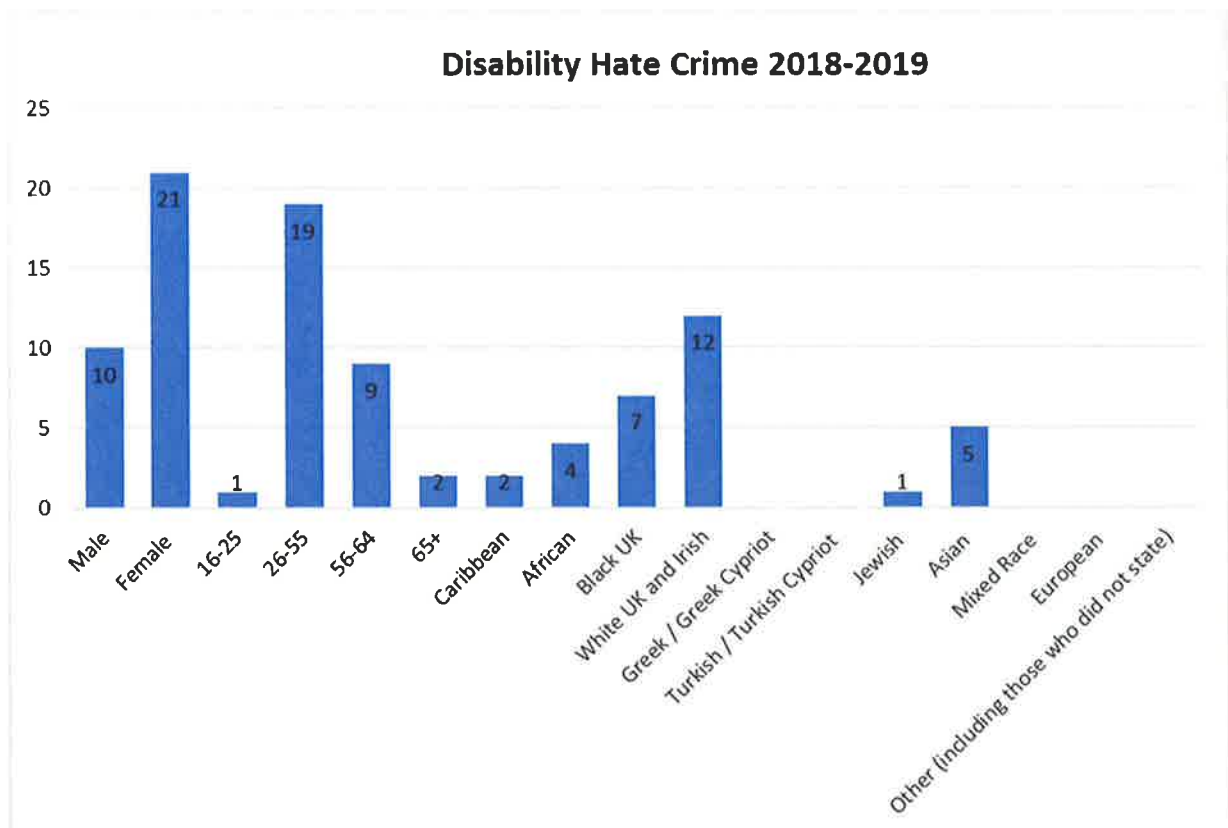
**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
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**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

e) **Disability Hate Crime continued:**

During the period under review a total of 31 disabled people (21 in 2017-2018) received support with their disability hate crime matter.

The following bar chart presents statistical data for the Disability Hate Crime Project:



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
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**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

f) **Partnership working:**

CHOICE continues to strengthen and grow its network of disability related organisations. Partnership work remains integral to the CHOICE ethos of "Nothing about us, without us" and we are pleased to be able to build our connections to other disability-related organisations. CHOICE and its partners can share lived experience of disability, knowledge, training opportunities, services, a loyal customer base as well as join together to strengthen consortium-based funding applications.

Our network of organisations includes Alliance for Inclusive Education (ALLFIE), DeafPLUS, Department for Work & Pensions, Gay London Police Monitoring Group (Galop), Hackney Council for Voluntary Service, Hackney People First, Health & Social Care Forum, Inclusion London, Metropolitan Police Service, Mind in the City, Hackney & Waltham Forest, Stay Safe East and Supported Employment Network.

Working in partnership is aimed at securing the rights of disabled people as full citizens, improving their quality of life and promoting an inclusive society where disabled people can participate fully and equally.

g) **Quality mark:**

Last year's report mentioned that the organisation had been awarded the Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (PQASSO) quality mark; the most widely used quality system within the third sector.

Our external accreditors, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) are now using a different logo to the one shown in last year's report (see logo to the right).

CHOICE is now known as a "Trusted Charity", which gives us real credibility and recognition as a small third-sector charity.



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

**h) Funders:**

In the year under review, CHOICE received funding from:

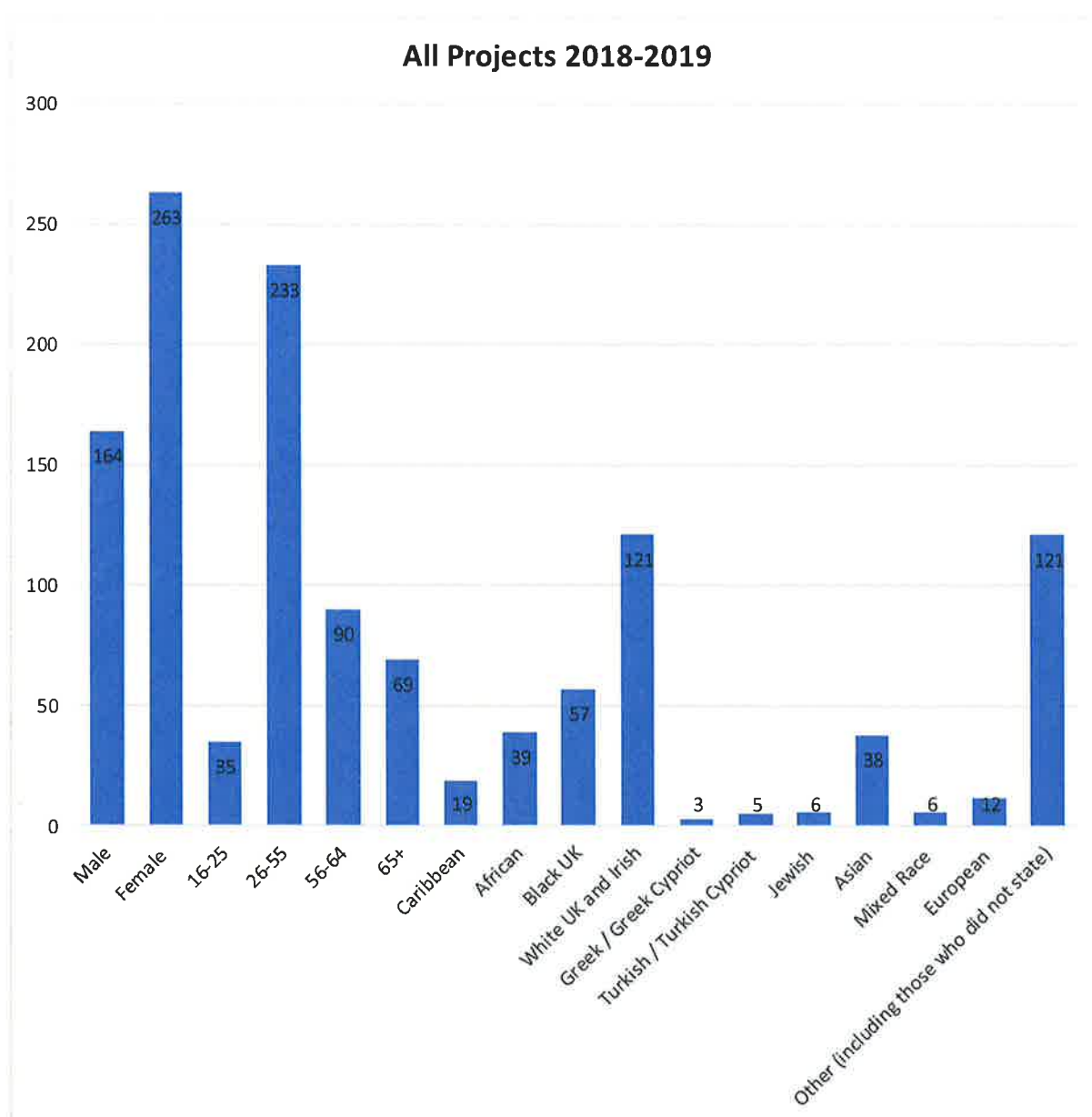
1. Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust – to provide health advocacy to disabled City and Hackney residents aged 18 plus.
2. London Borough of Hackney via The Advocacy Project (TAP) – to provide a non-statutory advocacy service to disabled and vulnerable Hackney residents who were known to Adult Social Care teams, un-befriended, unable to speak up for themselves and who required support with a specific advocacy issue.
3. Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales - to provide advocacy training and work placement leading to employment opportunities for disabled Londoners.
4. South Hackney Parochial Charity - to provide advocacy training and work placement leading to employment opportunities for disabled residents in the South Hackney area.
5. Santander Foundation - to provide advocacy training and work placement leading to employment opportunities for disabled Londoners.
6. People's Postcode Trust - to provide advocacy training and work placement leading to employment opportunities for disabled Londoners.
7. Ben Ogden Memorial Fund - to provide advocacy training and work placement leading to employment opportunities for disabled Hackney residents.
8. Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime – to provide disability hate crime advocacy to disabled people who live or work in Hackney and surrounding boroughs.
9. London Catalyst – to provide a Befriending Plus and Active Lifestyle services, which includes practical support (i.e. Information Communications Technology training) to disabled people.
10. National Lottery Awards for All - to provide a Befriending Plus and Active Lifestyle service, which includes practical support (i.e. Information Communications Technology training) to disabled people.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

The level of funding in the year allowed CHOICE to provide a total of 412 people with direct access to services from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018–31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 (411 in 2017-2018). This figure however, does not include the numbers of people who indirectly utilised our services, which includes – professionals, friends, family and the general public. Were these groups of people to be included, this figure of 412 would have tripled.

The breakdown is as follows:





**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance (continued):**

**Financial Review**

The total results of the year's operations are set out in the attached financial statements. Total incoming resources amounted to £170,725 (2018: £201,722) and total resources expended amounted to £187,504 (2018: £192,761). The net outflow of funds for the year amounted to £16,779 (2018: net inflow of £8,961).

The company made an unrestricted fund deficit for the year of £13,244 (2018: deficit £5,071). Restricted funds made a deficit for the year of £3,535 (2018: surplus £14,032). Please see note 12 of the financial statements for further information on the restricted funds carried forward.

**Risk:**

The most significant risk faced by the Charity is in maintaining sufficient funding to provide for the needs of its service users. The effects of a continuing period of financial austerity exacerbates this in two ways. Disabled people, our beneficiaries, have themselves been disproportionately affected by the financial downturn. In consequence, they have greater need of our services. At the same time, our funders have less money available and are looking for cost savings.

As we have previously reported, we have in the past dipped into our Reserves to maintain services however, this is not a sustainable solution. In consequence, as part of the Business Planning Process, a Fundraising Strategy has been developed. This strategy aims to expand the range of services and diversity of funding sources and the Trustees will regularly monitor performance against the fundraising strategy. In particular, Trustees will fully assess monitoring requirements before accepting contracts and ensure monitoring timeframes are adhered to. In order to reduce the administrative burden, we continue to explore the use of the Report and Accounts, the annual review, events and the website to keep funders up to date with what is happening in the organisation and to celebrate their support. In this way services can be delivered in a more cost effective fashion.

CHOICE remains committed to the ideals of a Disability User Led Organisation. This too presents its own risks in a period of financial austerity. In particular, that the costs of Reasonable Adjustments are no longer fully covered by Access to Work. This would raise unit costs of services and potentially make CHOICE less competitive than other providers. As a result our Business models and funding bids need to articulate the added value created by employment of disabled staff. We will work with others, such as Inclusion London, to campaign for Access to Work to cover full costs.

**Reserves Policy:**

The Charity sets aside funds, as unrestricted reserves, to meet future anticipated or contingent expenditure, in particular to cover staffing costs such as sickness, redundancy, to develop new activities and to ensure the continuity of services through difficult financial periods. The Board of Trustees, after review, decided that the Charity should aim for a level of the "free reserves", between 3 and 9 months recurrent expenditure, which equates to approximately £48,200 - £144,600. As in some previous years we have made use of Reserves to maintain services and to deliver projects with Restricted Funding where that funding proved insufficient to complete the project, in consequence, unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible assets ("free reserves") at the year-end amounted to £29,113 (2018 : £42,357). This is below the desired level and Trustees are mindful that it may be necessary to curtail some needed activities in order to ensure that the reserves are maintained to sustain the charity into the future.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

The trustees (who are also the directors of Choice in Hackney for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

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

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

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 to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

**AUDITORS**

On 31 March 2019, Knox Cropper, the Charity's auditors, transferred its business to Knox Cropper LLP, a limited liability partnership incorporated under the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2000. The Trustees have consented to treating the appointment of Knox Cropper as extending to Knox Cropper LLP.

The auditors, Knox Cropper, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

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

**APPROVAL**

This report was approved by the Board of Directors and Trustees on 4<sup>th</sup> Sept 2019 and signed on their behalf by:

  
 Sandra Rennie (Chair)

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT****TO THE MEMBERS OF CHOICE IN HACKNEY****Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of the Choice in Hackney (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2019 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2019 and of its incoming resources and application of resources for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

**Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

**Conclusions relating to going concern**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

**Other information**

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT**  
**TO THE MEMBERS OF CHOICE IN HACKNEY**

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing a strategic report.

**Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT**  
**TO THE MEMBERS OF CHOICE IN HACKNEY**

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken, so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report or for the opinions we have formed.

*Kevin Lally*

Kevin Lally (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
For and on behalf of Knox Cropper LLP, Statutory Auditor  
65 Leadenhall Street  
London  
EC3A 2AD

*4<sup>th</sup> September 2019*

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**(INCORPORATING THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

	Notes	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total 2019 £	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total 2018 £
<b>INCOME FROM:</b>							
Grants and donations	2(a)	80,353	2,413	82,766	98,330	1,854	100,184
Charitable activities	2(b)	-	87,892	87,892	-	100,972	100,972
Other trading activities		-	-	-	-	-	-
Investments		-	43	43	-	27	27
Other income		-	24	24	108	431	539
<b>Total</b>		<b>80,353</b>	<b>90,372</b>	<b>170,725</b>	<b>98,438</b>	<b>103,284</b>	<b>201,722</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON:</b>							
Raising funds	3	-	9,182	9,182	-	9,000	9,000
Charitable activities	3	83,888	94,434	178,322	87,982	95,779	183,761
<b>Total</b>		<b>83,888</b>	<b>103,616</b>	<b>187,504</b>	<b>87,982</b>	<b>104,779</b>	<b>192,761</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<b>(3,535)</b>	<b>(13,244)</b>	<b>(16,779)</b>	<b>10,456</b>	<b>(1,495)</b>	<b>8,961</b>
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	3,576	(3,576)	-
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>		<b>(3,535)</b>	<b>(13,244)</b>	<b>(16,779)</b>	<b>14,032</b>	<b>(5,071)</b>	<b>8,961</b>
Balances brought forward at 1 April							
<b>BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>21,033</b>	<b>42,357</b>	<b>63,390</b>	<b>7,001</b>	<b>47,428</b>	<b>54,429</b>
<b>AT 31 MARCH</b>		<b>17,498</b>	<b>29,113</b>	<b>46,611</b>	<b>21,033</b>	<b>42,357</b>	<b>63,390</b>

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****BALANCE SHEET****AS AT 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

	Notes	2019		2018	
		£	£	£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>	7		-		-
<b>Current Assets</b>					
Debtors	8	31,779		41,891	
Cash at Bank and in hand		40,250		44,086	
		<u>72,029</u>		<u>85,977</u>	
<b>CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	9	<u>(25,418)</u>		<u>(22,587)</u>	
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			46,611		63,390
<b>NET ASSETS</b>			<u>46,611</u>		<u>63,390</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>					
Restricted Funds	11		17,498		21,033
Unrestricted Funds					
Designated Funds					
General Fund	10		29,113		42,357
			<u>46,611</u>		<u>63,390</u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies.

Approved on 4<sup>th</sup> Sept 2019 and signed on behalf of the board



Chair: Sandra Rennie



Treasurer: Malcolm Aickin

Registered Company Number  
Registered Charity Number

03423122  
1077287

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019****1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES****a. Basis of Preparation of Accounts**

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

**b. Company Status**

CHOICE IN HACKNEY is a company limited by guarantee. In the event of the Charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the Charity.

**c. Fund Accounting**

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the objects of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements. Statutory grants which are given as contributions towards the Charity's core services are treated as unrestricted.

**d. Incoming resources**

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

**e. Resources expended**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expenses categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Governance costs include the costs of servicing meetings of the Board of Trustees, audit and strategic planning.

**f. Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation**

All assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised.

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the costs of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on:

Furniture/Fittings: 25% straight line basis

Office Equipment: 25% straight line basis

In preceding years depreciation was calculated on a reducing balance method.

Assets acquired during the year have been written off in full due to the fact that they apply to a restricted project.



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (Continued)****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019****g. Allocation of Overhead and Support Costs**

Overhead and support costs have been allocated between charitable activities and other expenditure on the basis of staff time. The allocation of overhead and support costs is analysed in note 3.

**h. Operating Leases**

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the statement of financial activities as they fall due over the term of the lease.

**2(a). INCOMING RESOURCES FROM GENERATED FUNDS****- Grants received**

	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2019 Un- Restricted Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2018 Total</b>
	£	£	£	£
Peoples Postcode	19,000	-	19,000	-
Awards for All	10,000	-	10,000	-
London Catalyst	3,000	-	3,000	-
Santander	4,669	-	4,669	-
Lloyds Bank Foundation	24,800	-	24,800	24,800
CATCH Mobilisation	17,551	-	17,551	14,181
City Bridge Trust	-	-	-	16,850
East End Community Foundation	-	-	-	2,500
Morrison Foundation	-	-	-	10,880
South Hackney Parochial	-	-	-	7,839
Homerton University Hospital	-	-	-	20,000
Hackney CVS	-	-	-	825
Beneficiaries income	1,333	670	2,003	1,280
Donations	-	1,403	1,403	1,029
Alliance for Inclusive Education	-	340	340	-
	<u>80,353</u>	<u>2,413</u>	<u>82,766</u>	<u>100,184</u>

**2(b). INCOMING RESOURCES FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES****- Contracts for services and performance related grants**

	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2019 Un- Restricted Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2018 Total</b>
	£	£	£	£
Outward Housing	-	-	-	1,800
City & Hackney Community Health Services – Advocacy	-	45,802	45,802	45,802
City and Hackney Mind – Advocacy	-	42,090	42,090	53,370
	<u>-</u>	<u>87,892</u>	<u>87,892</u>	<u>100,972</u>

Up until September 2017 the Charity received office accommodation free of charge from City and Hackney Primary Care Trust. From this date the Charity entered into a new licence agreement.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (Continued)****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019****3. ANALYSIS OF RESOURCES EXPENDED**

	<b>Raising Funds</b>	<b>Charitable Activities</b>	<b>Total 2019</b>	<b>Total 2018</b>
<b><u>Unrestricted</u></b>	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	9,182	82,641	91,823	90,002
Staff Training	-	-	-	-
Accountancy	-	923	923	1,361
Auditors remuneration	-	1,267	1,267	1,850
Other Costs	-	3,400	3,400	10,270
Legal & Professional Fees	-	3,936	3,936	1,296
Rent	-	2,267	2,267	-
	9,182	94,434	103,616	104,779
<b><u>Restricted</u></b>				
Staff costs	-	44,294	44,294	55,744
Staff training	-	105	105	143
Recruitment Costs	-	-	-	-
Accountancy	-	1,847	1,847	1,006
Auditors Remuneration	-	2,533	2,533	1,950
Rent	-	17,733	17,733	11,667
Other Costs	-	14,142	14,142	16,262
Legal & Professional Fees	-	3,234	3,234	1,210
	-	83,888	83,888	87,982
	9,182	178,322	187,504	192,761

Staff costs have been allocated to the above expenditure heads on the basis of estimated staff time spent on the activities. Support costs and governance costs are included in the above analysis. Governance costs amounted to £13,173 (2018: £16,110).

**4. STAFF NUMBERS AND COSTS**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	£	£
Salaries	127,332	135,583
Social security costs	6,842	7,436
Employer pension	1,943	2,238
Redundancy costs	-	488
	<u>136,117</u>	<u>145,745</u>

The average number of employees during the year was 7 (2018:8)

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year under review (2018: none).

The remuneration of senior management amounted to £46,633 (2018: £47,783).

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (Continued)****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019****5. TRUSTEES REMUNERATION**

During the year, Trustees received reimbursement of expenses amounting to £513 (2018: £610) for subsistence, travel and telephone.

No trustee received any remuneration other than disclosed in these accounts.

**6. TAXATION**

CHOICE is a registered charity and is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income and capital gains received to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

**7. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

	<b>Furniture £</b>	<b>Office Equipment £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2018	2,316	23,964	26,280
Additions	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2019	<u>2,316</u>	<u>23,964</u>	<u>26,280</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2018	2,316	23,964	26,280
Charged for the year	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2019	<u>2,316</u>	<u>23,964</u>	<u>26,280</u>
<b>Net Book Value</b>			
At 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2019	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2018	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

**8. DEBTORS**

	<b>2019 £</b>	<b>2018 £</b>
Grant debtors	29,620	39,387
Prepayments and other debtors	<u>2,159</u>	<u>2,504</u>
	<u>31,779</u>	<u>41,891</u>

**9. CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within this year**

PAYE	3,297	2,894
Deferred income	14,500	-
Accruals and other creditors	<u>7,621</u>	<u>19,693</u>
	<u>25,418</u>	<u>22,587</u>

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (Continued)****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019****10. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS**

	<b>Brought Forward</b>	<b>Incoming Resources</b>	<b>Resources Expended</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>Carried Forward</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
General Fund	42,357	90,372	(103,616)	-	29,113
<b>Total Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>42,357</b>	<b>90,372</b>	<b>(103,616)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>29,113</b>

**11. RESTRICTED FUNDS**

	<b>Brought Forward</b>	<b>Incoming Resources</b>	<b>Resources Expended</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>Carried Forward</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
Disability LIB	999	-	-	-	999
Advocacy, Training and Employment	4,406	48,469	(37,551)	-	15,324
Disability Crime Project (MOPAC)	-	17,551	(17,551)	-	-
Volunteering	-	13,000	(11,825)	-	1,175
Homerton Uni Hospital	8,333	-	(8,333)	-	-
Active Lifestyle – Morrisons Foundation	7,295	-	(7,295)	-	-
Access to Work	-	1,333	(1,333)	-	-
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>21,033</b>	<b>80,353</b>	<b>(83,888)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>17,498</b>

**Restricted funds carried forward relate to on-going projects and are available to be expended in 2019/20.**

**Disability LIB** – this is a one-off grant from Disability LIB towards disabled people's communication support, such as translation and interpretation costs.

**Advocacy, Training and Employment** - this represents amounts received towards the Advocacy Training & Employment Project to train disabled people to enable them to find meaningful employment in advocacy or other related fields.

**Disability Crime Project** – this project seeks to pilot a new multi-agency Hate Crime Advocacy Service for victims of race, faith, homophobic and disability hate crimes that take place in the boroughs of Hackney and Westminster.

**Volunteering** – this represents amounts received towards Volunteer and Befriending Project.

**Homerton University Hospital** – this represents a grant to cover the rent costs for one year.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (Continued)****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019****12. FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS**

At the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 the Charity had commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Amounts payable:	£	£
Within one year	948	1,264
Between two and five years	-	948
After five years	-	-
	<u>948</u>	<u>2,212</u>

In addition to the above, the Charity entered into a new licence agreement for its office premises in October 2017, subject to 2 months notice period. The total annual commitments at the year end amounts to £20,000.

**13. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS**

There were no capital commitments at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 (2018: Nil).

**14. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES**

There were no contingent liabilities at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 (2018: Nil).

**15. NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS**

	<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>Cash at Bank and in Hand</b>	<b>Debtors</b>	<b>Current Liabilities</b>	<b>Total</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted	-	8,252	31,779	(10,918)	29,113
Restricted	-	31,998	-	(14,500)	17,498
Total	<u>-</u>	<u>40,250</u>	<u>31,779</u>	<u>(25,418)</u>	<u>46,611</u>

**16. GOING CONCERN**

In common with many smaller charities CHOICE is dependent upon securing income to ensure it can continue to further its charitable objectives as a going concern into the future. The Trustees actively foster relations with existing funders and seek additional funding. Given the current level of reserves and the value for money in terms of historic costs per service user outcome, the Trustees are of the opinion that the Charity will be able to continue as a going concern into 2020 and beyond.

**17. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

There were no related party transaction during the year.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**(Company Limited by guarantee)**

**TRUSTEES REPORT**  
**AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**COMPANY NO: 03423122**  
**CHARITY NO : 1077287**

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**TRUSTEES REPORT**  
**AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

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**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.

**LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

**Trustees**

Anita Ceesay	Chair – resigned 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
Sandra Rennie	Chairperson – appointed 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
Patricia Charlesworth	Vice-Chairperson - appointed 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
Malcolm Aickin	Treasurer
Geoffrey Chilkes	
Mary Julian	
Jo Panter	- resigned 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
Debra Schiman	
Paula Smith	
Grizelda Walker	- resigned 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2018
Lydia Warren	

**Company Secretary and  
Executive Director**

Caroline Nelson

**Company reg.no.**

03423122

**Charity reg.no.**

1077287

**Registered Office**

CHOICE IN HACKNEY  
 Defoe Block, Ground Floor  
 50 Hoxton Street  
 London  
 N1 6LP

**Auditors**

Knox Cropper LLP  
 65 Leadenhall Street  
 London  
 EC3A 2AD

**Bankers**

Barclays Bank PLC  
 3-5 Kingsland High Street  
 London  
 E8 2JT



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

The trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of the Companies Act) present their combined directors' report and trustees' report, as required by company law, together with the audited financial statements of Choice in Hackney (the Charity) for the year ended 31 March 2019. The trustees confirm that the trustees' report and financial statements of the Charity comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the Charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

**Administration Details of the Charity, its Trustees and Advisors**

Administration details relating to CHOICE are set out under Legal and Administrative Information, on page 1.

**Structure, Governance and Management**

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Trustees are recruited from members of the Charity, ex-employees and from the wider community. They are elected and co-opted under the terms of the company's Articles of Association. Users are represented on the Board of Trustees. At the Annual General Meeting, the Board of Trustees is elected by the members of the Charity and serves from the close of that meeting until the close of the succeeding Annual General Meeting. The Board of Trustees consists of not less than 3 members and until otherwise determined by a General Meeting, not more than 12 members.

The Trustees were given an induction to the work of CHOICE by the Executive Director and introduced to all staff members. The formal policies and procedures are reviewed annually.

The Management of the Charity is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. Operational decisions are taken by the Executive Director and staff. Strategic decisions are made by the Board of Trustees in consultation with the Executive Director. The Board of Trustees meets at least 4 times a year and the Executive Director normally attends all meetings.

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and in particular, to those related to its operations and finances of the Charity, and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks. A review of the risk assessment was carried out by members of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Director during the year.

**Public Benefit**

In reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities, the Trustees refer to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

**Objectives and Activities**

CHOICE has the charitable objects of working with disabled, Greater London residents by providing Independent Living Services such as: Advocacy, Befriending Plus, Advocacy Training & Employment, Disability Hate Crime and Active Lifestyle.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

The objects of the Charity are:

- a) To relieve disabled persons in Greater London who require assistance to realise their full potential and lead fulfilling lives. In particular, by the provision of a service that assists such persons to obtain their full rights and privileges as citizens.
- b) To advance the education of the general public as to the needs and interests of disabled people.

From July 2008, The Charity Commission has allowed CHOICE to operate across Greater London and the company's Memorandum has been changed accordingly.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance:**

In the period under review, CHOICE promoted the following services to disabled Greater London residents aged 18 plus and their networks:

- Active Lifestyle;
- Advocacy;
- Advocacy Training & Employment;
- Befriending Plus / Volunteering;
- Disability Hate Crime.

We achieved this by providing the following services:

a) **Active Lifestyle Project:**

After substantial fundraising efforts, the project was awarded a small contribution towards its running costs from London Catalyst; the remainder of its costs came from CHOICE's reserves. This allowed us to continue to provide local sports and recreational activities to disabled Hackney residents including:

- Boccia sessions – this ball game is similar to bowls and specially adapted to meet the needs of disabled competitors;
- Coffee Club – weekly get-togethers are held where attendees take part in mood-lifting activities such as sing-alongs and theatre workshops; and
- Seated SOSA which stands for "Solo Salsa" sessions – meaning dances have been adapted for solo dance so no partner is required to take part. This low-impact dance fitness programme has proved popular with disabled people - it is very engaging regardless of impairment or fitness levels and participants remain seated throughout.



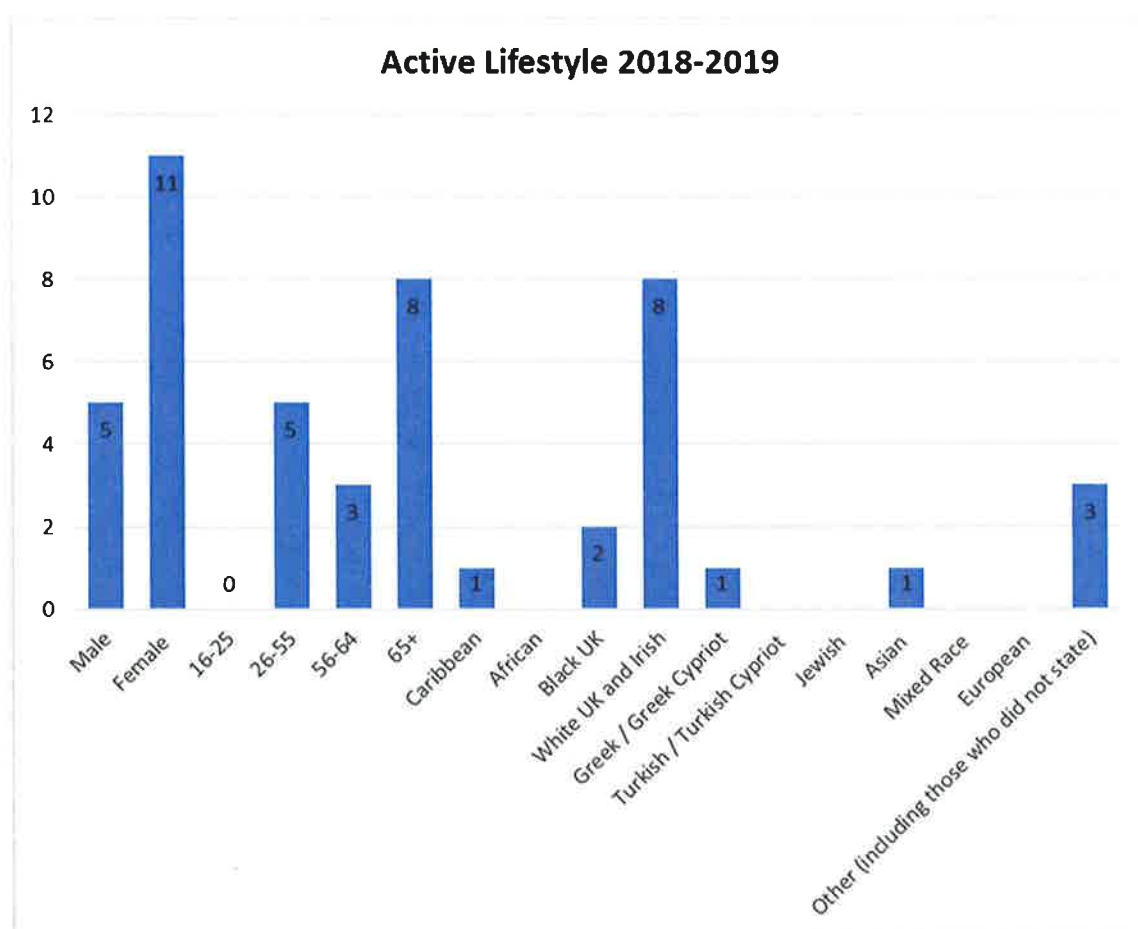
**Photograph: A group of disabled people engage in SOSA.  
 Under their seats are maracas, which forms part of the choreography  
 and are utilised to keep up with the salsa beat!**

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

a) **Active Lifestyle Project continued:**

16 disabled people (14 in 2017-2018) enjoyed activities arranged by the project and reported improved physical and mental wellbeing. The following bar chart presents statistical data for the project:



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

**b) Advocacy:**

We are pleased to report CHOICE remains part of a strong network of local community organisations, who operate within London Borough of Hackney's advocacy service. The Advocacy Project (TAP) continued as the lead provider and we worked very closely with them to ensure we aligned ourselves to changes to the eligibility criteria. Our transition from "community" to "non-statutory" advocacy, though bumpy, was helped by open dialogue between all parties.

We are grateful to have been in receipt of continued funding from Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (HUHFT) during the year to provide health advocacy. This includes relaying the options and choices available to the service user regarding health services and attending health appointments with them where necessary. This helps to shift the unbalanced relationship between service users (particularly those from different impairment, ethnic and cultural backgrounds). Health advocacy aims to empower users to access health services on an informed and equitable basis.

CHOICE advocates support our disabled service users to obtain the services needed to live an independent and dignified lifestyle in the community. The Advocate works in 'partnership' with the disabled user to obtain his/her rights.

During the period under review, our Advocates supported service users to target services that enabled them to enhance their quality of life whilst also meeting their needs. In order to fit within the non-statutory eligibility criteria, this meant we could only work with disabled people who:

1. Were located within or came under the responsibility of London Borough of Hackney;
2. Were known to Adult Social Care teams (i.e. care management, occupational therapy, sensory services);
3. Were vulnerable, unable to speak up for themselves, un-befriended; and
4. Required support with a specific advocacy issue.

During the year, CHOICE provided Advocacy support to 249 disabled people aged 18 plus (190 in 2017-2018). The number of issues dealt with in the year included:

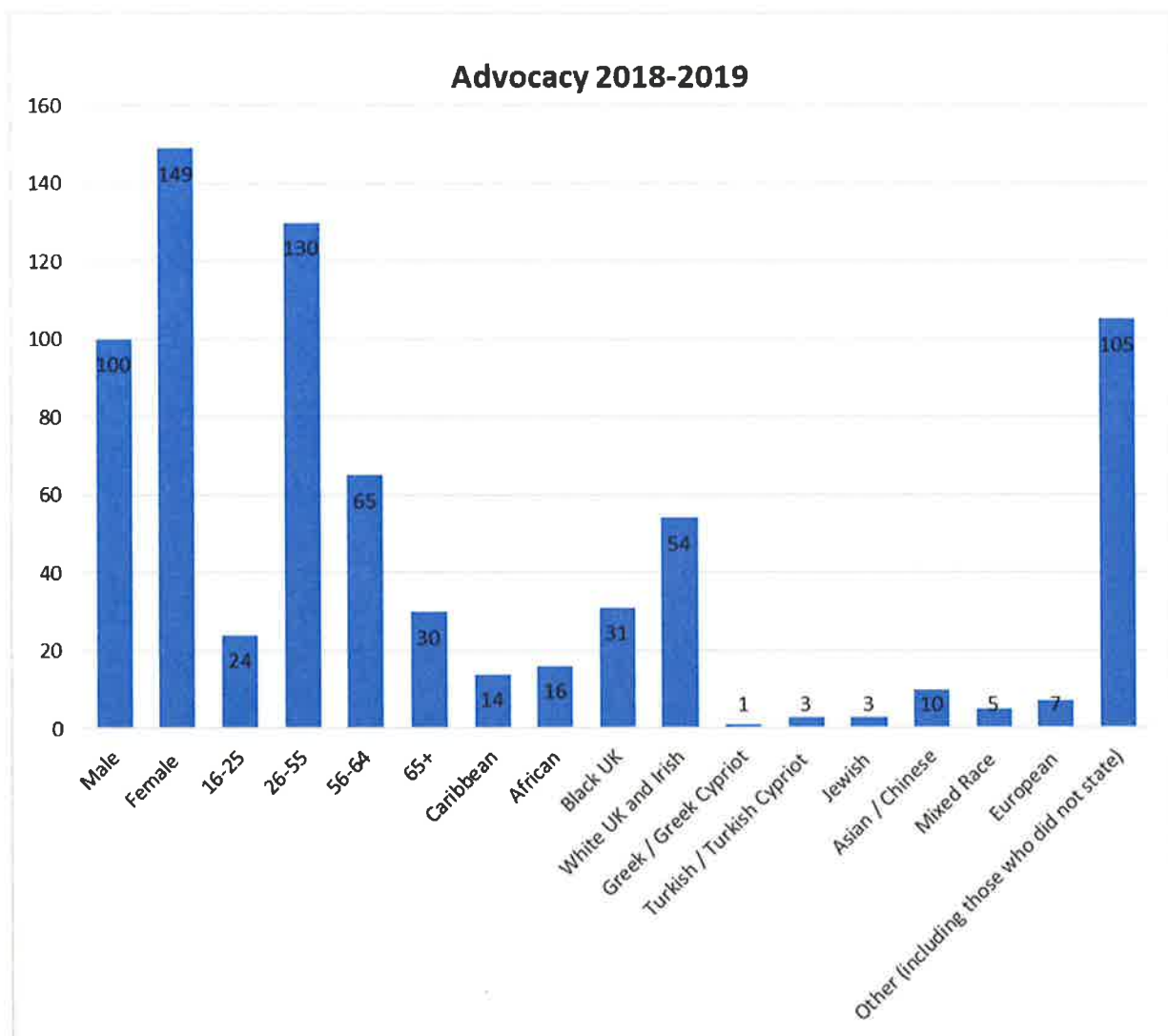
- 70 which related to housing;
- 66 where our service users wanted access to health related services;
- 22 related to parenting; and
- perhaps most worrying were the 5 safeguarding issues raised in the year.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
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**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

b) **Advocacy continued:**

The following bar chart presents statistical data for the Advocacy Project:



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

**c) Advocacy Training & Employment Project:**

The Advocacy Training & Employment (AT&E) project continued to provide its valuable service to disabled Londoners thanks to 3-years match-funding from the Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales and part-funding from Ben Ogden Memorial Fund, People's Postcode Trust, South Hackney Parochial Charity and Santander Foundation. 2018-19 will be the final year of funding with the above funders and so a concerted fundraising effort has already started. This includes applying for 3-years funding from Henry Smith Charity to continue the successful generic advocacy training and for continuation funding from Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales, which will enable us to expand the service to include training on hate crime and domestic violence. We are hopeful that we will be able to continue this remarkable project going forward.

The project continues to provide:

1. 13-week classroom-based training on the principles of advocacy. This training is held one-day per week and includes tuition, written exercises and tests. Also included are practical exercises on job search skills: writing applications / CVs and interview techniques;
2. 12-week+ work placements in the voluntary, statutory and private sectors. This allows our trainees to get a feel of the world of work and aids their employment prospects; and
3. Ongoing support including coaching sessions that assist trainees with careers advice, job retention and continued confidence building. Provision of a monthly e-newsletter, which provides vital information to our trainees in relation to current job vacancies, self-employment opportunities etc.

We continue to be affiliated with the Open College Network Credit4Learning (OCN) as a training college. OCN provide accredited certificates to our trainees, offering our trainees a pathway into higher education. For many years now we have noted that our trainees come from very diverse backgrounds and this is also true of their academic achievements. We have enrolled disabled people who have no formal qualifications as well as those with postgraduate degrees.

Whilst it has sometimes been challenging trying to adjust the pace and style of the training to accommodate all trainees, we have also received feedback from the majority of trainees who want to gain an award, which is higher than the existing Level 3. Consequently, we are in the process of enhancing the academic element from Levels 1-3 to Level 4, which is Diploma level. This will give our trainees further opportunities to become gainfully employed and/or enter further education.

We always like to take our trainees feedback on board and our steering group, which consists of past and present trainees, a CHOICE Board member, the Director and the trainer has proved an excellent platform in order to facilitate this feedback. This is a real service-user led approach to shaping the design and development of the project where all suggestions are welcomed.

This project is ever evolving and moves with the times. In particular, hate crime and domestic violence against disabled people are on the rise and it is important that there are enough fully trained disabled people available to support the victims of such crimes. As such, future developments for this project includes introducing a new element to the classroom-based component in the form of disability hate crime and/or domestic violence modules, which can be studied as stand-alone elements. Further details of this will be provided in next year's annual report.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

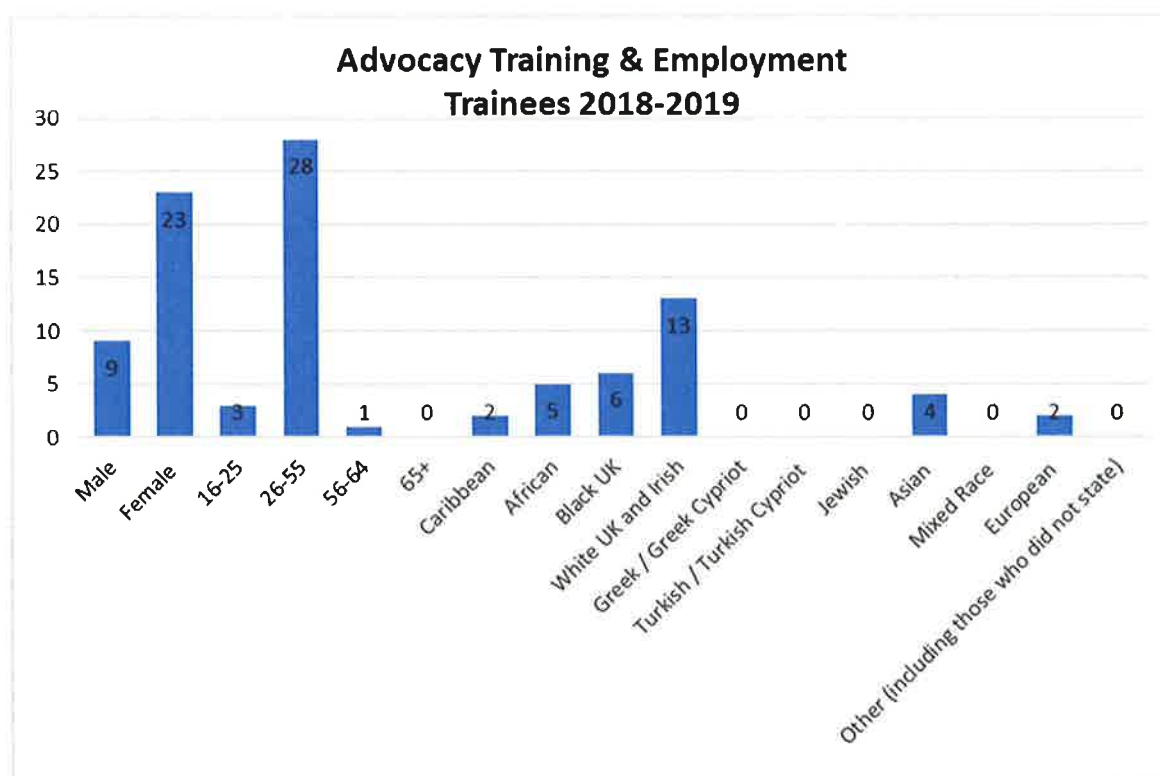
**c) Advocacy Training & Employment project continued:**

Our main successes during the year include:

1. Training 32 disabled adults to better advocate for themselves and others. This in turn enabled them to improve their confidence and find fulfilling careers in the year;
2. Surpassing our funders target of moving disabled people into work from 33% to 43%;
3. Offering job coaching and support to 7 ex-trainees, which helped them to realise their career goals; and
4. Our greatest achievement in the year was receiving feedback from our trainees about their high levels of satisfaction with the course. This was recorded on feedback forms and during one-to-one sessions: it is always rewarding to hear the difference our course has made to disabled people's lives.

The AT&E project successfully ran 3 training programmes this period training a total of 32 disabled people (30 in 2017-2018).

The following bar chart presents statistical data for the Advocacy Training & Employment Project:





**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

**d) Befriending Plus / Volunteer Project:**

The Befriending Plus / Volunteer project received part-funding from London Catalyst and National Lottery Awards for All during the year to support disabled people in a number of areas:

1. Within the community - visiting them in their homes for a chat and supporting them to meet their Information Communications Technology needs; escorting them to appointments, parks, concerts and other social/leisure activities;
2. Gardening - supporting disabled people to maintain their outdoor spaces by matching them with our team of volunteer gardeners. This team is growing and with many of them committing to clear more gardens than is necessary, it has meant that more and more disabled people have enjoyable outdoor spaces to socialise and relax in; and
3. From the CHOICE office - our administrative volunteers supported CHOICE in its core functions by providing a range of administrative tasks including note-taking, reception duties, answering the telephones, filing, photocopying, taking referrals, carrying out research, recording petty cash, social media skills by i.e. contacting service users by telephone, Twitter, email, Facebook etc.



**Photo: Selection of volunteer gardeners clearing  
a service user's overgrown garden**

During the year under review, we had the opportunity to survey our volunteers. In particular, data was collected to measure the increase in volunteer skill development i.e. whether they had a better insight into the issues faced by disabled people. This data was collected from volunteer entry interviews or application forms and were compared with volunteer exit interviews or surveys. A sample of the data is as follows:

- 83% said they had better insight into the issues faced by disabled people.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

**d) Befriending Plus / Volunteer Project continued:**

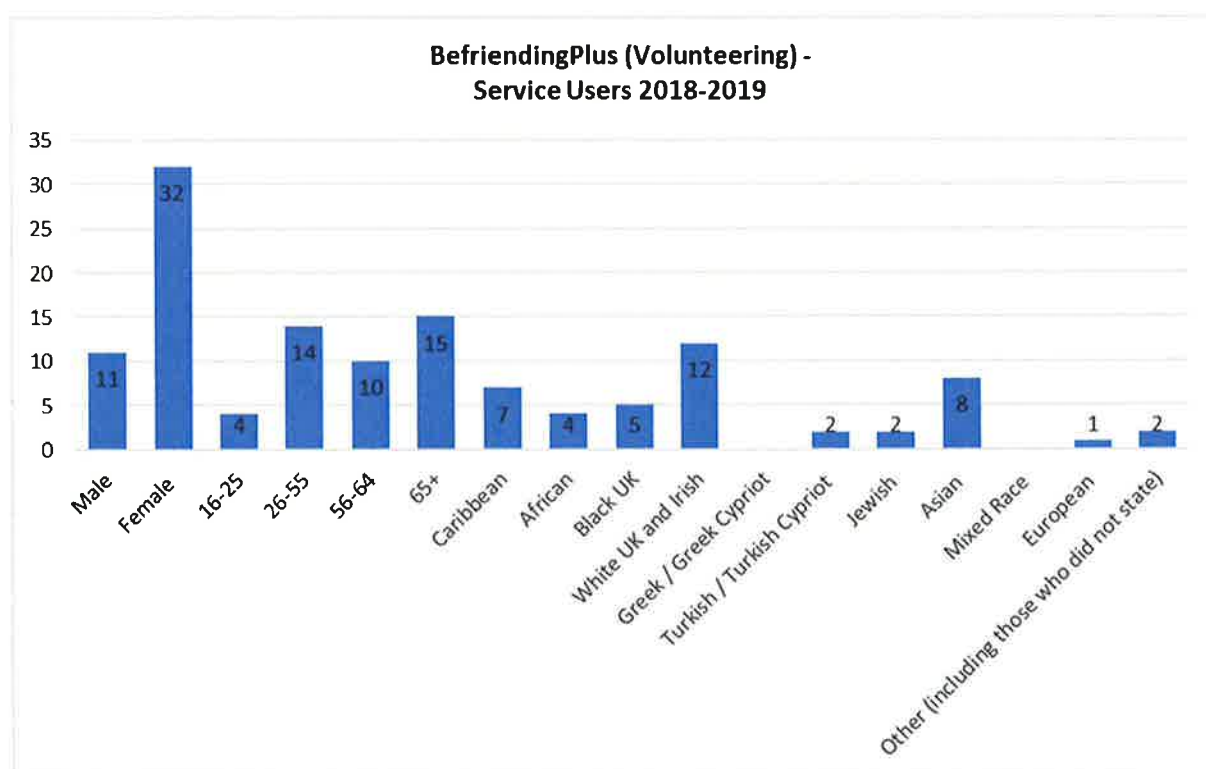
For our service users, data was collected to measure increased feelings of health, wellbeing or confidence as a result of their engagement in the project. We also asked whether they experienced any increased quality of life through going outside more or attending activities (such as those run by its sister project, the Active Lifestyle). This data was gathered using surveys and Active Lifestyle Feedback forms.

We are pleased to confirm:

- 87% of our service users reported increased feelings of health, wellbeing or confidence as a result of the Volunteer Project; and
- 87% also reported increased quality of life by going outside more and attending activities.

The Community Volunteer Officers continued to run the project and we are pleased to be able to reward our volunteers with Volunteer Social events, where they can get together for a meal / drink and mingle with the other volunteers and their service users. We remain indebted to all our volunteers for their help and support throughout the year. A total of 41 volunteers (37 in 2017-2018) volunteered in this period. This work benefited not only the 43 service users (30 in 2017-2018) but their friends and family members too.

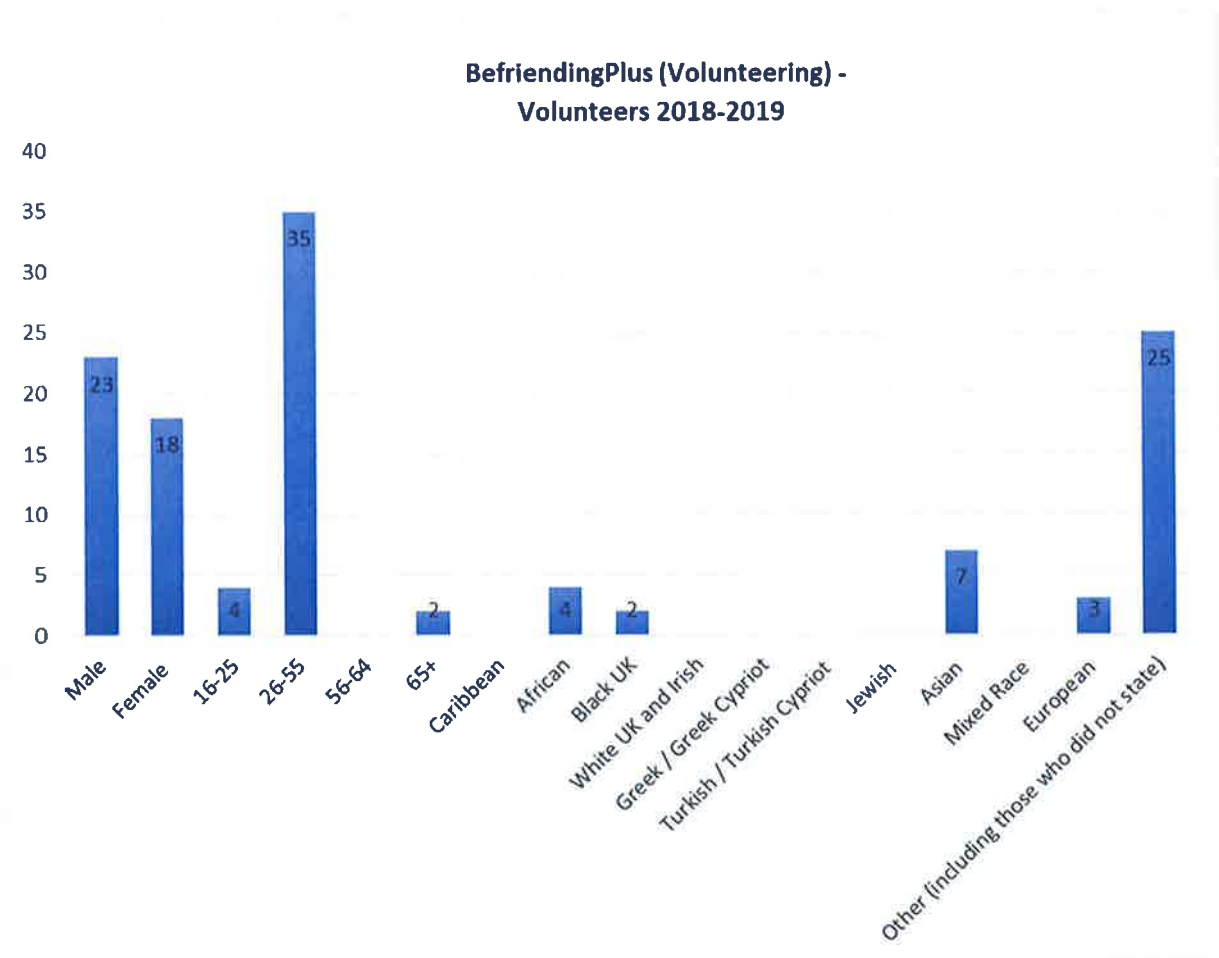
The following bar charts present statistical data for the Befriending Plus / Volunteer Project:



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
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**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

**d) Befriending Plus / Volunteer Project continued:**



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

e) **Disability Hate Crime:**

We are pleased to report that CHOICE remains part of a consortium funded by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) entitled "Community Alliance To Combat Hate" (CATCH). This advocacy hate crime project continues to work within a network of community organisations who specialise in supporting people who have experienced a hate crime due to their: race, faith / religious, sexual orientation (including attacks based on homophobia and transphobia) and/or disability.

The CATCH partnership work together to tackle hate crime, discrimination and abuse within the protected characteristic equality strands and have on occasion come together to work intersectionally: raising awareness amongst partners of each other's struggles. In particular, CHOICE's hate advocate will identify the support needs of individuals and enable them to access other services. The advocate will also:

- Assist with reporting incidents;
- Support individuals through criminal justice processes;
- Deliver outreach to communities impacted by hate crime to promote the service; and
- Share good practice internally within the partnership.

Initially, CHOICE supported service users in Hackney and Westminster, however, due to the success of the pilot project, the funder has increased our reach and we are pleased to be able to support more disabled people in Hackney and surrounding boroughs. This is very welcome as there have been reports in the media about the increase in hate crimes, particularly post-Brexit – when anyone who is seen as "different" is an easy target for perpetrators of hate.

This rise in hate crime has also increased the number of service users who have approached us for support. There are so many examples where disabled people have developed a general distrust of "institutions". So much so that many of them will not want to approach these institutions (i.e. the police) for fear of reprisals or not being taken seriously.

We are pleased that our service users feel confident and comfortable to approach us to gain the support they need to record and report such crimes. We encourage all disabled people who need this type of service to make use of it in order that we can provide up-to-date statistics to our funder, so that they in turn can appreciate the need for this service.

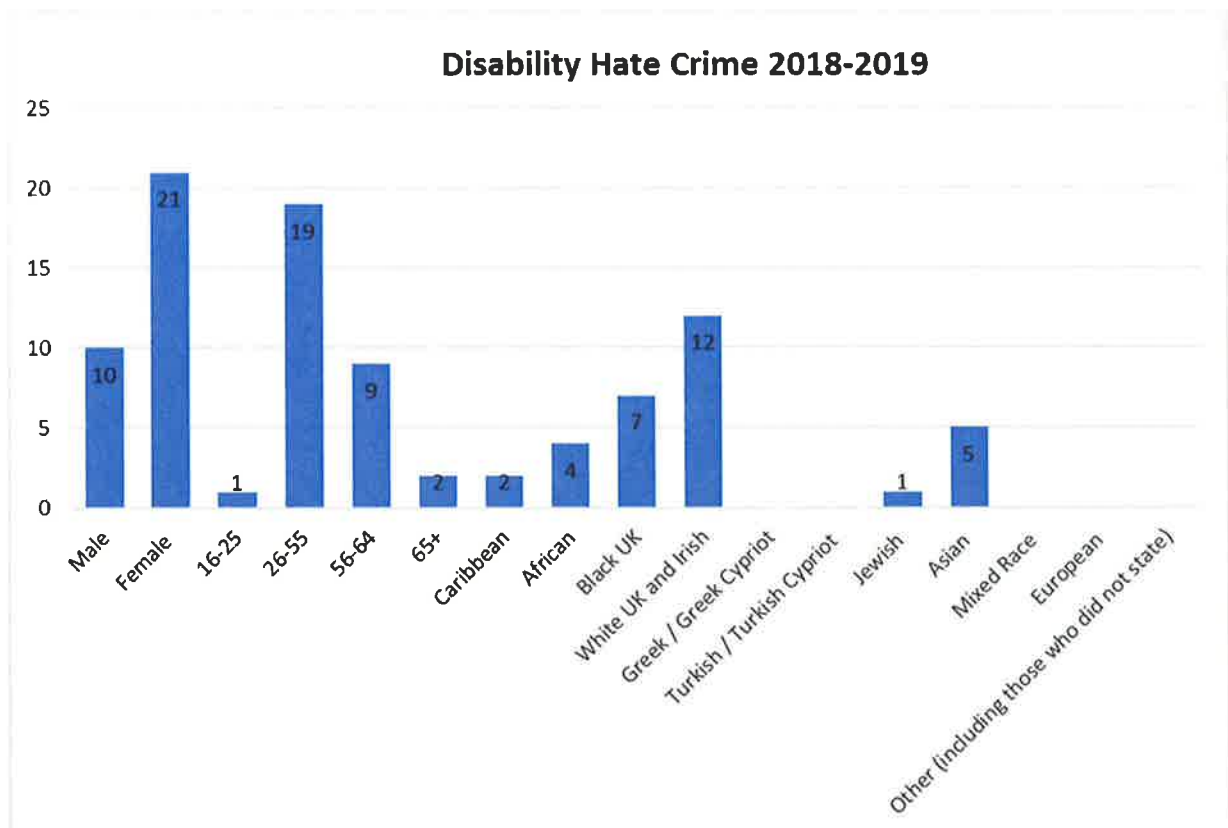
**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
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**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

e) **Disability Hate Crime continued:**

During the period under review a total of 31 disabled people (21 in 2017-2018) received support with their disability hate crime matter.

The following bar chart presents statistical data for the Disability Hate Crime Project:



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**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

f) **Partnership working:**

CHOICE continues to strengthen and grow its network of disability related organisations. Partnership work remains integral to the CHOICE ethos of "Nothing about us, without us" and we are pleased to be able to build our connections to other disability-related organisations. CHOICE and its partners can share lived experience of disability, knowledge, training opportunities, services, a loyal customer base as well as join together to strengthen consortium-based funding applications.

Our network of organisations includes Alliance for Inclusive Education (ALLFIE), DeafPLUS, Department for Work & Pensions, Gay London Police Monitoring Group (Galop), Hackney Council for Voluntary Service, Hackney People First, Health & Social Care Forum, Inclusion London, Metropolitan Police Service, Mind in the City, Hackney & Waltham Forest, Stay Safe East and Supported Employment Network.

Working in partnership is aimed at securing the rights of disabled people as full citizens, improving their quality of life and promoting an inclusive society where disabled people can participate fully and equally.

g) **Quality mark:**

Last year's report mentioned that the organisation had been awarded the Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (PQASSO) quality mark; the most widely used quality system within the third sector.

Our external accreditors, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) are now using a different logo to the one shown in last year's report (see logo to the right).

CHOICE is now known as a "Trusted Charity", which gives us real credibility and recognition as a small third-sector charity.



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

**h) Funders:**

In the year under review, CHOICE received funding from:

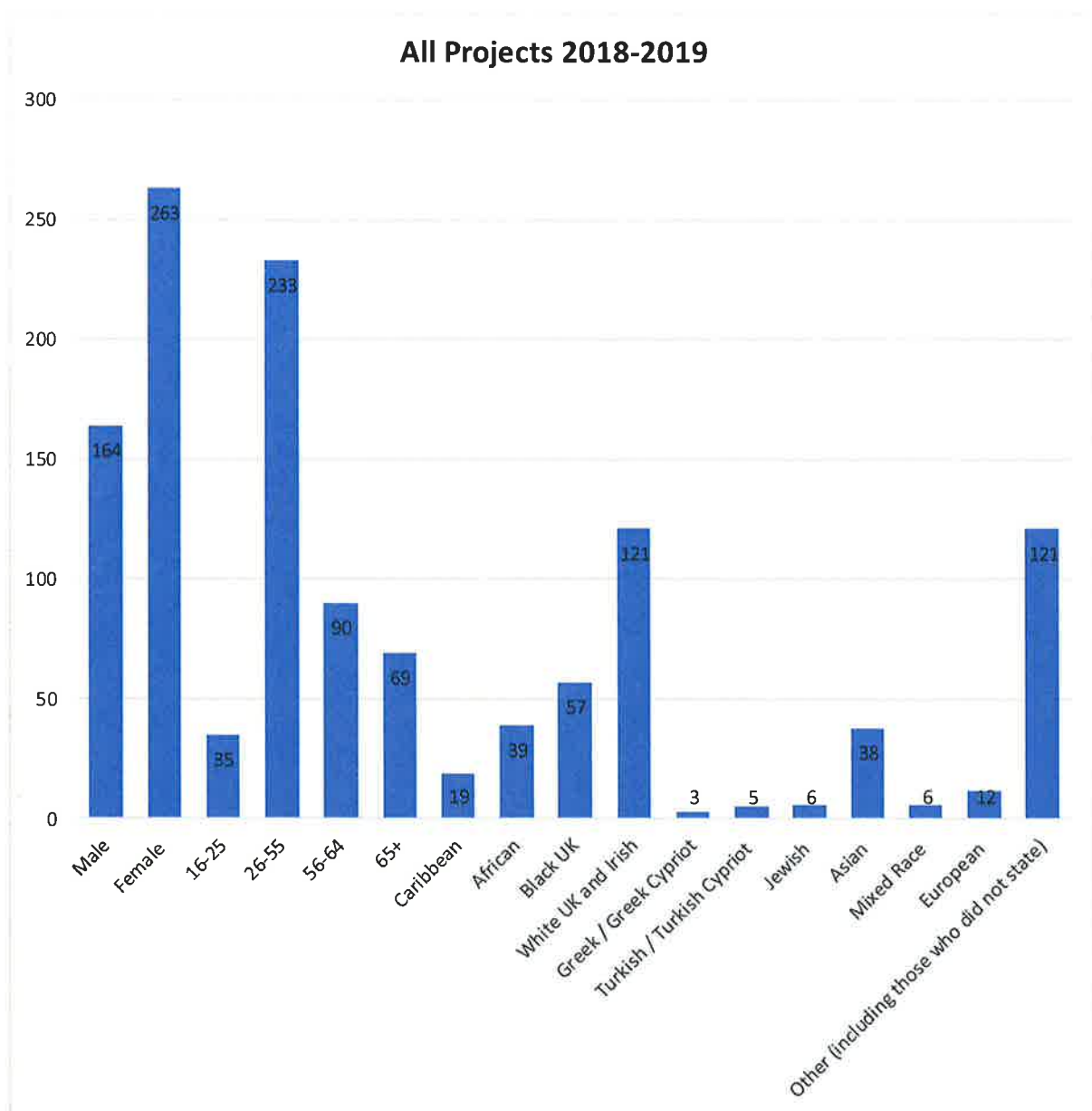
1. Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust – to provide health advocacy to disabled City and Hackney residents aged 18 plus.
2. London Borough of Hackney via The Advocacy Project (TAP) – to provide a non-statutory advocacy service to disabled and vulnerable Hackney residents who were known to Adult Social Care teams, un-befriended, unable to speak up for themselves and who required support with a specific advocacy issue.
3. Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales - to provide advocacy training and work placement leading to employment opportunities for disabled Londoners.
4. South Hackney Parochial Charity - to provide advocacy training and work placement leading to employment opportunities for disabled residents in the South Hackney area.
5. Santander Foundation - to provide advocacy training and work placement leading to employment opportunities for disabled Londoners.
6. People's Postcode Trust - to provide advocacy training and work placement leading to employment opportunities for disabled Londoners.
7. Ben Ogden Memorial Fund - to provide advocacy training and work placement leading to employment opportunities for disabled Hackney residents.
8. Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime – to provide disability hate crime advocacy to disabled people who live or work in Hackney and surrounding boroughs.
9. London Catalyst – to provide a Befriending Plus and Active Lifestyle services, which includes practical support (i.e. Information Communications Technology training) to disabled people.
10. National Lottery Awards for All - to provide a Befriending Plus and Active Lifestyle service, which includes practical support (i.e. Information Communications Technology training) to disabled people.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance continued:**

The level of funding in the year allowed CHOICE to provide a total of 412 people with direct access to services from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018–31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 (411 in 2017-2018). This figure however, does not include the numbers of people who indirectly utilised our services, which includes – professionals, friends, family and the general public. Were these groups of people to be included, this figure of 412 would have tripled.

The breakdown is as follows:





**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**Review of Activities, Achievements and Performance (continued):**

**Financial Review**

The total results of the year's operations are set out in the attached financial statements. Total incoming resources amounted to £170,725 (2018: £201,722) and total resources expended amounted to £187,504 (2018: £192,761). The net outflow of funds for the year amounted to £16,779 (2018: net inflow of £8,961).

The company made an unrestricted fund deficit for the year of £13,244 (2018: deficit £5,071). Restricted funds made a deficit for the year of £3,535 (2018: surplus £14,032). Please see note 12 of the financial statements for further information on the restricted funds carried forward.

**Risk:**

The most significant risk faced by the Charity is in maintaining sufficient funding to provide for the needs of its service users. The effects of a continuing period of financial austerity exacerbates this in two ways. Disabled people, our beneficiaries, have themselves been disproportionately affected by the financial downturn. In consequence, they have greater need of our services. At the same time, our funders have less money available and are looking for cost savings.

As we have previously reported, we have in the past dipped into our Reserves to maintain services however, this is not a sustainable solution. In consequence, as part of the Business Planning Process, a Fundraising Strategy has been developed. This strategy aims to expand the range of services and diversity of funding sources and the Trustees will regularly monitor performance against the fundraising strategy. In particular, Trustees will fully assess monitoring requirements before accepting contracts and ensure monitoring timeframes are adhered to. In order to reduce the administrative burden, we continue to explore the use of the Report and Accounts, the annual review, events and the website to keep funders up to date with what is happening in the organisation and to celebrate their support. In this way services can be delivered in a more cost effective fashion.

CHOICE remains committed to the ideals of a Disability User Led Organisation. This too presents its own risks in a period of financial austerity. In particular, that the costs of Reasonable Adjustments are no longer fully covered by Access to Work. This would raise unit costs of services and potentially make CHOICE less competitive than other providers. As a result our Business models and funding bids need to articulate the added value created by employment of disabled staff. We will work with others, such as Inclusion London, to campaign for Access to Work to cover full costs.

**Reserves Policy:**

The Charity sets aside funds, as unrestricted reserves, to meet future anticipated or contingent expenditure, in particular to cover staffing costs such as sickness, redundancy, to develop new activities and to ensure the continuity of services through difficult financial periods. The Board of Trustees, after review, decided that the Charity should aim for a level of the "free reserves", between 3 and 9 months recurrent expenditure, which equates to approximately £48,200 - £144,600. As in some previous years we have made use of Reserves to maintain services and to deliver projects with Restricted Funding where that funding proved insufficient to complete the project, in consequence, unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible assets ("free reserves") at the year-end amounted to £29,113 (2018 : £42,357). This is below the desired level and Trustees are mindful that it may be necessary to curtail some needed activities in order to ensure that the reserves are maintained to sustain the charity into the future.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**  
**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

**STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

The trustees (who are also the directors of Choice in Hackney for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

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

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

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 to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

**AUDITORS**

On 31 March 2019, Knox Cropper, the Charity's auditors, transferred its business to Knox Cropper LLP, a limited liability partnership incorporated under the Limited Liability Partnerships Act 2000. The Trustees have consented to treating the appointment of Knox Cropper as extending to Knox Cropper LLP.

The auditors, Knox Cropper, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

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

**APPROVAL**

This report was approved by the Board of Directors and Trustees on 4<sup>th</sup> Sept 2019 and signed on their behalf by:

  
 Sandra Rennie (Chair)

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT**  
**TO THE MEMBERS OF CHOICE IN HACKNEY**

**Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of the Choice in Hackney (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2019 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2019 and of its incoming resources and application of resources for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

**Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

**Conclusions relating to going concern**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

**Other information**

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT**  
**TO THE MEMBERS OF CHOICE IN HACKNEY**

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing a strategic report.

**Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT**  
**TO THE MEMBERS OF CHOICE IN HACKNEY**

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken, so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report or for the opinions we have formed.

*Kevin Lally*

Kevin Lally (Senior Statutory Auditor)  
For and on behalf of Knox Cropper LLP, Statutory Auditor  
65 Leadenhall Street  
London  
EC3A 2AD

*4<sup>th</sup> September 2019*

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**(INCORPORATING THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

	Notes	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total 2019 £	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total 2018 £
<b>INCOME FROM:</b>							
Grants and donations	2(a)	80,353	2,413	82,766	98,330	1,854	100,184
Charitable activities	2(b)	-	87,892	87,892	-	100,972	100,972
Other trading activities		-	-	-	-	-	-
Investments		-	43	43	-	27	27
Other income		-	24	24	108	431	539
<b>Total</b>		<b>80,353</b>	<b>90,372</b>	<b>170,725</b>	<b>98,438</b>	<b>103,284</b>	<b>201,722</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON:</b>							
Raising funds	3	-	9,182	9,182	-	9,000	9,000
Charitable activities	3	83,888	94,434	178,322	87,982	95,779	183,761
<b>Total</b>		<b>83,888</b>	<b>103,616</b>	<b>187,504</b>	<b>87,982</b>	<b>104,779</b>	<b>192,761</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<b>(3,535)</b>	<b>(13,244)</b>	<b>(16,779)</b>	<b>10,456</b>	<b>(1,495)</b>	<b>8,961</b>
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	3,576	(3,576)	-
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>		<b>(3,535)</b>	<b>(13,244)</b>	<b>(16,779)</b>	<b>14,032</b>	<b>(5,071)</b>	<b>8,961</b>
Balances brought forward at 1 April							
<b>BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<b>21,033</b>	<b>42,357</b>	<b>63,390</b>	<b>7,001</b>	<b>47,428</b>	<b>54,429</b>
<b>AT 31 MARCH</b>		<b>17,498</b>	<b>29,113</b>	<b>46,611</b>	<b>21,033</b>	<b>42,357</b>	<b>63,390</b>

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****BALANCE SHEET****AS AT 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019**

	Notes	2019	2018
		£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>	7	-	-
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors	8	31,779	41,891
Cash at Bank and in hand		40,250	44,086
		<u>72,029</u>	<u>85,977</u>
<b>CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	9	<u>(25,418)</u>	<u>(22,587)</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		46,611	63,390
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<u>46,611</u>	<u>63,390</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>			
Restricted Funds	11	17,498	21,033
Unrestricted Funds			
Designated Funds			
General Fund	10	29,113	42,357
		<u>46,611</u>	<u>63,390</u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies.

Approved on 4<sup>th</sup> Sept 2019 and signed on behalf of the board



Chair: Sandra Rennie



Treasurer: Malcolm Aickin

Registered Company Number  
Registered Charity Number

03423122  
1077287

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019****1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES****a. Basis of Preparation of Accounts**

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

**b. Company Status**

CHOICE IN HACKNEY is a company limited by guarantee. In the event of the Charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the Charity.

**c. Fund Accounting**

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the objects of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements. Statutory grants which are given as contributions towards the Charity's core services are treated as unrestricted.

**d. Incoming resources**

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

**e. Resources expended**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expenses categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Governance costs include the costs of servicing meetings of the Board of Trustees, audit and strategic planning.

**f. Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation**

All assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised.

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the costs of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on:

Furniture/Fittings: 25% straight line basis

Office Equipment: 25% straight line basis

In preceding years depreciation was calculated on a reducing balance method.

Assets acquired during the year have been written off in full due to the fact that they apply to a restricted project.



**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (Continued)****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019****g. Allocation of Overhead and Support Costs**

Overhead and support costs have been allocated between charitable activities and other expenditure on the basis of staff time. The allocation of overhead and support costs is analysed in note 3.

**h. Operating Leases**

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the statement of financial activities as they fall due over the term of the lease.

**2(a). INCOMING RESOURCES FROM GENERATED FUNDS****- Grants received**

	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2019 Un- Restricted Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2018 Total</b>
	£	£	£	£
Peoples Postcode	19,000	-	19,000	-
Awards for All	10,000	-	10,000	-
London Catalyst	3,000	-	3,000	-
Santander	4,669	-	4,669	-
Lloyds Bank Foundation	24,800	-	24,800	24,800
CATCH Mobilisation	17,551	-	17,551	14,181
City Bridge Trust	-	-	-	16,850
East End Community Foundation	-	-	-	2,500
Morrison Foundation	-	-	-	10,880
South Hackney Parochial	-	-	-	7,839
Homerton University Hospital	-	-	-	20,000
Hackney CVS	-	-	-	825
Beneficiaries income	1,333	670	2,003	1,280
Donations	-	1,403	1,403	1,029
Alliance for Inclusive Education	-	340	340	-
	<u>80,353</u>	<u>2,413</u>	<u>82,766</u>	<u>100,184</u>

**2(b). INCOMING RESOURCES FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES****- Contracts for services and performance related grants**

	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2019 Un- Restricted Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2018 Total</b>
	£	£	£	£
Outward Housing	-	-	-	1,800
City & Hackney Community Health Services – Advocacy	-	45,802	45,802	45,802
City and Hackney Mind – Advocacy	-	42,090	42,090	53,370
	<u>-</u>	<u>87,892</u>	<u>87,892</u>	<u>100,972</u>

Up until September 2017 the Charity received office accommodation free of charge from City and Hackney Primary Care Trust. From this date the Charity entered into a new licence agreement.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (Continued)****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019****3. ANALYSIS OF RESOURCES EXPENDED**

	<b>Raising Funds</b>	<b>Charitable Activities</b>	<b>Total 2019</b>	<b>Total 2018</b>
<b><u>Unrestricted</u></b>	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	9,182	82,641	91,823	90,002
Staff Training	-	-	-	-
Accountancy	-	923	923	1,361
Auditors remuneration	-	1,267	1,267	1,850
Other Costs	-	3,400	3,400	10,270
Legal & Professional Fees	-	3,936	3,936	1,296
Rent	-	2,267	2,267	-
	9,182	94,434	103,616	104,779
<b><u>Restricted</u></b>				
Staff costs	-	44,294	44,294	55,744
Staff training	-	105	105	143
Recruitment Costs	-	-	-	-
Accountancy	-	1,847	1,847	1,006
Auditors Remuneration	-	2,533	2,533	1,950
Rent	-	17,733	17,733	11,667
Other Costs	-	14,142	14,142	16,262
Legal & Professional Fees	-	3,234	3,234	1,210
	-	83,888	83,888	87,982
	9,182	178,322	187,504	192,761

Staff costs have been allocated to the above expenditure heads on the basis of estimated staff time spent on the activities. Support costs and governance costs are included in the above analysis. Governance costs amounted to £13,173 (2018: £16,110).

**4. STAFF NUMBERS AND COSTS**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	£	£
Salaries	127,332	135,583
Social security costs	6,842	7,436
Employer pension	1,943	2,238
Redundancy costs	-	488
	<u>136,117</u>	<u>145,745</u>

The average number of employees during the year was 7 (2018:8)

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year under review (2018: none).

The remuneration of senior management amounted to £46,633 (2018: £47,783).

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (Continued)****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019****5. TRUSTEES REMUNERATION**

During the year, Trustees received reimbursement of expenses amounting to £513 (2018: £610) for subsistence, travel and telephone.

No trustee received any remuneration other than disclosed in these accounts.

**6. TAXATION**

CHOICE is a registered charity and is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income and capital gains received to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

**7. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

	<b>Furniture £</b>	<b>Office Equipment £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2018	2,316	23,964	26,280
Additions	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2019	<u>2,316</u>	<u>23,964</u>	<u>26,280</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2018	2,316	23,964	26,280
Charged for the year	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2019	<u>2,316</u>	<u>23,964</u>	<u>26,280</u>
<b>Net Book Value</b>			
At 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2019	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2018	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

**8. DEBTORS**

	<b>2019 £</b>	<b>2018 £</b>
Grant debtors	29,620	39,387
Prepayments and other debtors	2,159	2,504
	<u>31,779</u>	<u>41,891</u>

**9. CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within this year**

PAYE	3,297	2,894
Deferred income	14,500	-
Accruals and other creditors	7,621	19,693
	<u>25,418</u>	<u>22,587</u>

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (Continued)****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019****10. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS**

	<b>Brought Forward</b>	<b>Incoming Resources</b>	<b>Resources Expended</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>Carried Forward</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
General Fund	42,357	90,372	(103,616)	-	29,113
<b>Total Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>42,357</b>	<b>90,372</b>	<b>(103,616)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>29,113</b>

**11. RESTRICTED FUNDS**

	<b>Brought Forward</b>	<b>Incoming Resources</b>	<b>Resources Expended</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>Carried Forward</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
Disability LIB	999	-	-	-	999
Advocacy, Training and Employment	4,406	48,469	(37,551)	-	15,324
Disability Crime Project (MOPAC)	-	17,551	(17,551)	-	-
Volunteering	-	13,000	(11,825)	-	1,175
Homerton Uni Hospital	8,333	-	(8,333)	-	-
Active Lifestyle – Morrisons Foundation	7,295	-	(7,295)	-	-
Access to Work	-	1,333	(1,333)	-	-
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>21,033</b>	<b>80,353</b>	<b>(83,888)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>17,498</b>

**Restricted funds carried forward relate to on-going projects and are available to be expended in 2019/20.**

**Disability LIB** – this is a one-off grant from Disability LIB towards disabled people's communication support, such as translation and interpretation costs.

**Advocacy, Training and Employment** - this represents amounts received towards the Advocacy Training & Employment Project to train disabled people to enable them to find meaningful employment in advocacy or other related fields.

**Disability Crime Project** – this project seeks to pilot a new multi-agency Hate Crime Advocacy Service for victims of race, faith, homophobic and disability hate crimes that take place in the boroughs of Hackney and Westminster.

**Volunteering** – this represents amounts received towards Volunteer and Befriending Project.

**Homerton University Hospital** – this represents a grant to cover the rent costs for one year.

**CHOICE IN HACKNEY****NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (Continued)****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2019****12. FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS**

At the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 the Charity had commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Amounts payable:	£	£
Within one year	948	1,264
Between two and five years	-	948
After five years	-	-
	<u>948</u>	<u>2,212</u>

In addition to the above, the Charity entered into a new licence agreement for its office premises in October 2017, subject to 2 months notice period. The total annual commitments at the year end amounts to £20,000.

**13. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS**

There were no capital commitments at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 (2018: Nil).

**14. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES**

There were no contingent liabilities at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 (2018: Nil).

**15. NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS**

	<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>Cash at Bank and in Hand</b>	<b>Debtors</b>	<b>Current Liabilities</b>	<b>Total</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted	-	8,252	31,779	(10,918)	29,113
Restricted	-	31,998	-	(14,500)	17,498
Total	<u>-</u>	<u>40,250</u>	<u>31,779</u>	<u>(25,418)</u>	<u>46,611</u>

**16. GOING CONCERN**

In common with many smaller charities CHOICE is dependent upon securing income to ensure it can continue to further its charitable objectives as a going concern into the future. The Trustees actively foster relations with existing funders and seek additional funding. Given the current level of reserves and the value for money in terms of historic costs per service user outcome, the Trustees are of the opinion that the Charity will be able to continue as a going concern into 2020 and beyond.

**17. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

There were no related party transaction during the year.