

Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts



1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021

Little Lives UK

Registered Charity Number: 1171884

LITTLE LIVES UK
CHILDREN'S CHARITY

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Our Mission, Aims and Objectives

The trustees present their report for the year ending on the 31st March 2021. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and 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 2019).

Mission and aims

Little Lives UK is a children's charity operating across London to support children facing the additional challenges of disability and disadvantage to enable them full and active participation in all aspects of life. Our mission is to identify and reach out to children in London who are disabled or disadvantaged. We support children, families and organisations which offer activities and outreach support for those who need it.

Little Lives UK raises funds to ensure that the children we support have the opportunity to develop the skills and confidence needed to participate within their community. We also run long-term projects to support children who are underprivileged or struggling with their mental health.

Objectives and activities

Little Lives UK's objectives as set out in our 2017 Founding Constitution is "to advance in life, relieve the needs of, and to help children and young people by providing support and activities (including leisure time activities) which develop their skills, capacities and capabilities with the aim to enable them to better participate in society as mature and responsible individuals." (CIO Founding Constitution, 2017)

We, at Little Lives UK, are proud of our vibrant London community and believe that the people of London know their needs better than anyone. Therefore, we aim to work with and for London's communities. We ensure that children get the help they need through projects which create sustainable change, and are inclusive and positive.

Public Benefit

The trustees are aware of the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit reporting as set out in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011. They believe that Little Lives UK fulfils a fundamental public benefit through the campaigns and projects it runs to provide support to disadvantaged and disabled children within local London communities.

Annual Strategy

General Annual Strategy for the year ending on the 31st March 2021

Campaign Strategy

Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic we will implement two long-lasting campaigns, targeting issues which have been greatly exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. These campaigns are The Technology Campaign, which launched in March 2020 and Someone To Talk To, which launched earlier in 2021. These campaigns will aim to address technology poverty and disparities in mental health along socio-economic lines.

Alongside these two major projects Little Lives UK will continue to run short-term projects, where we raise funds for organisations and programmes similar to those we have run in previous years.

Additionally, Little Lives UK will seek to expand our social media and digital presence by revamping our website and increasing the frequency of posts on our Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and blog.

Fundraising Strategy

The fundraising strategy for the next period is fully set out in the Little Lives UK 2021 Fundraising Strategy. There are a number of interesting developments taking place in fundraising over the next year.

In the previous two annual reports, it is mentioned that Little Lives UK attempted to contact companies for corporate partnerships. This method will continue throughout the next period, and we hope to enter into a number of successful partnerships with corporate partners.

We will begin static coin pot collections in local businesses in January and attempt to cultivate individual donations through a social media effort. We will also apply for grants from funding bodies. As in the previous years, retail outlets will continue to be Little Lives UK's predominant focus of income.

Annual Overview of Strategy Implimentation



During this period, we have launched our Technology Campaign with a great deal of success. We partnered with Revolt and the Department of Opportunities in the 'End Laptop Poverty' PR campaign to advertise the project to the public and network with businesses to increase the volume of donated technology. We have donated over 490 devices to schools, refugee centres and other children's organisations. Due to this great success, we plan to continue this longer-term campaign for the foreseeable future.

We have completed all of the groundwork for the *Someone To Talk To* campaign and we will be partnering with the London Children's Practice to deliver our in-school mental health programme. However, with three lockdowns with school closures, we have been unable to launch the project yet. With vaccination rates rapidly increasing and the third lockdown ending, we hope to launch the programme within the coming months.

The Fundraising Strategy focuses on corporate partnerships; we have cultivated a long-term partnership with Child's Play in which we receive a percentage from the sale of a mental health related bookset. We have also worked with a number of independent artists such as Anxti and Katja Angeli and will receive a percentage of the sale of their art pieces. We have also partnered with a number of other organisations to promote our work and spread awareness of our projects.

Volunteers

The charity and its subsidiary, Little Lives UK Trading Ltd, have benefitted from the services of volunteers and we will take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work and support. We had approximately 35 active volunteers supporting us this year. It is difficult to put an exact figure on their contribution, but we estimate it is in the region of 15 hours per week. Volunteers are integral to our work. The volunteers come from all backgrounds and walks of life; from those with a little spare time who want to use it to help, to students doing internships.

Impact of Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic has radically changed all our lives and has particular effects on charities, retail, and children and young people who were already vulnerable. Therefore, Little Lives UK has faced a number of challenges during this pandemic, from our income and fundraising to making sure we can continue to support our beneficiaries in the most impactful way possible. To do this we have had to adapt and diversify across all aspects of our organisation.

The Impact on Income Streams

Our biggest source of income by far is our three charity stores. National and tier lockdowns forced the closure of all shops deemed “none-essential retail”. Our three stores were closed for over seven months during this period; a major blow to our highest earning income stream.

We have been able to weather this great storm, thanks to support from the government, careful use of our reserves and the adaptation and diversification of our fundraising streams.

Many traditional fundraising methodologies were impossible during this period, including fundraising events, bucket fundraising and during the periods when shops were closed, we could not expand or collect our static coin pot initiative. Furthermore, due to the impacts the pandemic had on the economy, many grants have been stopped or paused and there has been an increase in competition. Despite these challenges, we have seen a number of successes in fundraising including a grant and two community funds, a number of corporate partnerships and an increase in donations from the public. This is proving that people really do come together during times of great hardship.

The careful management of our reserves, successes in the periods when stores were open and fundraising efforts meant not only that we could stay afloat and retain our staff but also continue to run our vital work for children in our London community who are disadvantaged and/or disabled.

The Impact on Campaigns

As soon as the wider social problems for children and young people connected to the pandemic began to become clear, we adapted our campaign strategy to make sure that we supported our beneficiaries in the most efficient manner. We did this by launching two long-term campaigns; The Technology Project and Someone To Talk To.

The Technology Project addresses technology poverty amongst children and young people in London. This is vital as technology has become a lifeline for learning and socialising during the pandemic. To do this we appealed for donations of technology from the public which we then up-cycle by wiping the data and imputing virus protection and Windows software. We then provide the technology needed by impoverished children and organisations such as schools, youth clubs and children’s homes. We focused on laptops and tablets during this period as they can be used easily as educational tools. We were one of the first organisations in London to launch such a project and we were subsequently contacted to help develop the *End Laptop Poverty* campaign.

Someone To Talk To provides free psychotherapy sessions in schools for children who are struggling with their mental health. They are also running an awareness raising campaign; #LittleTalks, and outreach programmes in schools. We had originally planned to launch in January 2021, however the lockdown meant that we had to delay until after Easter. We have already launched the awareness campaign on our social media platforms. Unfortunately, during the pandemic it was difficult to run this campaign effectively because of the closure of schools. The money raised for this campaign is now being used for the current and upcoming campaigns. Now schools are opening up more and social services can be accessed easier. The *Someone To Talk To* campaign will be continued in the coming year.

We have also been able to complete a number of smaller projects targeting the effects of the pandemic including donating PPE and supporting local children's organisations.

The Impact on The Way We Work

Not only have we had to adapt and diversify our income streams and campaigns, but we have also had to change the way that our staff work. With shop closures and many of our staff having to work from home we have had to adapt to using remote tools such as Zoom and Google Docs. We have continued to be able to function effectively online and are proud of our staff's adaptability.

Covid-19 has been reported to have had major effects on workers' mental health and we have made a conscious effort to maintain an environment where the staff feel comfortable to express their concerns. We have also ensured that our work group chat stays active and friendly to support all of our staff members and volunteers.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on all aspects of Little Lives UK, however with careful management we have been able to survive and thrive to continue to support children facing the additional challenges of disability and disadvantage to enable them full and active participation in all aspects of life.

Our Campaigns

Achievements and performance

Throughout the April 2020 – March 2021 period, Little Lives UK focused mainly on two long-term projects; the Technology Campaign and Someone To Talk To (outlined in the Annual Strategy above.) Despite this we have continued to run our smaller monthly projects, these will be outlined below.

March – May 2020 The Technology Campaign



In March 2020, England entered the first of a number of lockdowns and schools were inaccessible for many children.

Shocking levels of technology poverty in our city meant that many children could not access e-learning platforms and were missing out on vital education.

Little Lives UK's Technology Campaign was launched to tackle this by upcycling the public's technology donations and donating them to children in need.

May 2020 - Gifts for Primary School Students



Thanks to generous donations from our supporters, we donated brand new arts and crafts, education games, board games and puzzles to pupils at Broadwater Primary School in Tooting Broadway.

These provided fun education activities for children to do whilst learning from home.

PPE Donations to Local Care Homes



We donated health and safety equipment to three care homes in Morden, Putney and West Wickham to ensure the safety of the carers and residents during this difficult time.

We supplied each care home with masks, hand gels, gloves and aprons.

June – July 2020 The Technology Campaign



As the pandemic continued to rage, it became clear that many children were missing out on valuable education.

We decided to greatly increase our focus on supplying laptops and tablets to children experiencing technology poverty.

We worked with councils, schools and manage continue these vital donations throughout the lockdown.

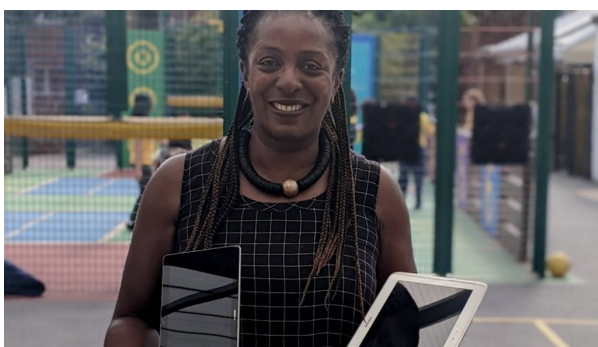
August 2020 Uptown Youth Group



In August, we worked with Uptown Youth Centre, which encourages young members of the community to gain confidence and improve their social skills.

We were able to donate to help with running costs, toys and games. Through our Technology Project we were able to also donate tablets to help the young people in the group to continue their education.

September 2020 Queens Park Primary School



Another notable success in our Technology Campaign came in September of 2020.

We donated over twenty tablets to Queens Park Primary School.

This will allow teachers to use interactive learning methods and for the children to be able to use them for home learning.

October 2020 Focusing on Technology Poverty



We continued to focus on tackling technology poverty and are proud to report that over the last three months we have donated over two-hundred items of technology to organisations including schools, refugee centres and councils across London.

November 2020 Feltham Community Boxing Club



Last year we worked with Feltham Community Boxing Club by offering a donation to fund a year's rent.

We are overjoyed to be able to continue to support the boxing club for a second year.

The club aims to inspire children in the community to get fit and active and to stay out of trouble.

December 2020 Treetops Resurfacing Works



Treetops Residential Short Break Service is a vital place for many children with disabilities, offering them a "vibrant and friendly home from home."

Little Lives UK understands the importance that such a centre has to many children. Therefore, for our December campaign, we funded improvements to the outdoor area of the facility, to make sure it is accessible and safe for all the children.

January 2021 Lockdown and Technology Drive



From January 2021 to the end of this financial year the UK entered another lockdown. Once again, many children were unable to attend school. In response we again accelerated our Technology Project to make sure children could access education online.

Thanks to the public and staff's valiant efforts we have been able to donate over 300 devices to children in need.

Trustees statement

Little Lives UK Trading Ltd

Our subsidiary company, Little Lives UK Trading Ltd has faced unprecedented challenges to our vital work. We are incredibly proud of the dedication shown by our staff and volunteers who worked tirelessly to ensure that we remain operational and effective. They have enabled us to support children and young people with disabilities, and who face disadvantages, to have a full and active participation in all aspects of life.

Once again, our supporters have astonished us in their ongoing support in terms of donations of stock for our stores, technology and funds. We are proud of how Londoners have pulled together during the pandemic.

We were able to continue running our smaller projects to support local organisations and launch our long-term Technology Project. We aim to continue to enact both strategies throughout the next financial year, as well as to launch our Someone To Talk To project.

We are also excited about the new opportunities this year has brought in terms of new partnerships and PR opportunities which has helped to grow our supporter base and spread our message further than ever before. In the next year we plan to continue to search for innovative opportunities.

April 2020 to March 2021 challenged us in ways which could not have been predicted, however the dedication of staff and support of our London community has enabled us to weather this storm and continue to strive forward. We have also been fortunate enough to be able to be an active support for disabled and disadvantaged children across London.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales 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 charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

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

And

- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Financial Review

Financial review

The charity's finances are sound and the financial statements for the year ended 31st of March 2021 are available to view on the Charity Commission website.

During the year the total income was £86,127 (2020: £10,322) with expenditure of £38,033 (2020: £10,166), leaving a surplus of £48,094 (2020: £156) for the year. Unrestricted reserves as of 31st March 2021 stood at £66,649 (2020: £18,555).

Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, this includes consideration of the impact of Covid-19 on the financial position of the charity. For this reason, the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

Principal funding

The charity receives most of its funding from individual donations. Going forward there are plans to apply for grants and build links with corporate partners.

Risk assessment policy

The trustees are responsible for overseeing the risks faced by Little Lives UK and its subsidiary company, Little Lives UK Trading Ltd. Risks are identified and assessed throughout the year. The trustees are satisfied that any risks have been adequately mitigated where necessary and they have undertaken an overall risk assessment, as well as a Covid risk assessment.

Reserves policy

The trustees' aim is to maintain unrestricted reserves at a level sufficient to cover six months of operating costs. This is so that the charity is able to continue its vital projects in the event of unforeseen circumstances having a negative impact on future funding streams. The level of unrestricted reserves held at the year-end was £66,649. This amount represents more than six months of operating costs for the charity and is in response to the impact of the Covid-19 global pandemic, as detailed in the following paragraphs.

Like many charities and businesses, the Covid-19 lockdowns proved to be a difficult time. Our shops in our trading subsidiary, Little Lives UK Trading Limited, were shut for a total of seven months and this has had a hugely negative impact on the level of income that was available to be donated to the charity. Around 95% of income for the charity comes from sales across the three shops: in Fulham Broadway, Tooting Broadway and Raynes Park. With the shops being

closed there was little income during this period and the survival of the shops was mainly down to the support from government grants received during this time.

For the above reason, Little Lives UK has held higher reserves in part to be able to provide temporary support to its trading subsidiary, if the need should arise. As the pandemic is not yet over, and no one knows when it will be, and the shops are a vital source of donated income for the charity, this level of reserves will be maintained in the coming year, until the trustees feel sufficiently confident that future lockdowns will no longer be a regular occurrence.

A further reason is, because of the pandemic, our campaigns have not received all of the funding that was meant for them, primarily because a lot of the services throughout the pandemic had been closed. Now things are opening up a little more, the money can be increasingly distributed to the campaigns.

Plans for the future - Strategy for April 2021 to March 2022

Campaigns Strategy

The central component of our strategy remains our two long-term projects: The Technology Project and Someone To Talk To. We aim to continue to expand our Technology Project by building on our successes from the previous year, to work with our PR partners to encourage the public and companies to donate technology and to build on our network of beneficiary organisations to donate to more children. We aim to launch our Someone To Talk To project this year by providing the service for five children as a pilot, then expand upon the pilot's success.

We will also continue to run our monthly projects within the community; however we are currently working on new, more grassroots methods to reach the projects that are most vital to children in our community. We are currently setting up the groundwork for an application process on our website for small funding opportunities.

Public Relations Strategy

In terms of the PR, we aim to continue our strategy of a large volume of frequent posts on our blog and social media platforms, to increase the traffic to our website.

On our Instagram, we will post at a minimum of three times a week to the main feed to continue growing our following, as well as posting frequent stories. Our target audience for the end of the next period is 900 followers. Currently we are nearly at 800. Regarding our Twitter, we will continue to retweet supportive tweets from our followers and post our own tweets regularly. We also aim to reach a wider audience by getting retweeted by larger pages. By the end of the period, we aim to have a following of between 1,000 to 1,200.

Fundraising Strategy

The full strategy for 2021 – 2022 is set out in detail in our 2021 Fundraising Strategy. A number of fundraising initiatives launching or expanding in 2021 include: static coin collection pots in local stores, an increased focus on corporate partnerships and efforts to continue to build our supporter base through creating a community, to increase individual donations, repeat donations and legacies. Fundraising should also continue to work with the PR team to develop the #LittleTruths project to make sure that increasing individual donations are a key tenet of the awareness campaign.

There should be a continued focus on networking with other businesses and children's organisations. Most notably our relationship with the Fulham Foundation for the Someone To Talk To project.

These initiatives should be our focus of the first month or so and then we should build on them throughout the year.

Structure, Governance and Management

Little Lives UK is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), and we are governed by our CIO Founding Constitution.

Little Lives UK's governing board is constituted of three trustees and three members of the Executive Group. The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of approving the financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2020 were:

Mr. Yauheni Sysoyeu
Mrs. Krisztina Kovacs – (resigned 26/04/2021)
Mrs. Szonja Budai

Executive

There is also an Executive Group made up of the directors of the subsidiary company, Little Lives UK Trading Ltd:

Mrs. Krisztina Schafler
Mr. Frantisek Helmeczy
Mr. Peter Schafler

Method of recruitment and appointment of trustees

Our trustees have been selected due to their diverse experiences. One of our trustees is training to be a counsellor, another is an English language teacher and the other a successful restaurant manager. This provides our trustee board with a range of experiences and skills.

Organisational structure and decision making

At the trustees quarterly meeting, the executive group will provide the trustees with the finances from the quarter. The trustees will then review Little Lives UK's finances from the period. Furthermore, they will regularly monitor the investments by setting up the cash flow and the budget for the charity. Any variances are analysed and are reported to the trustees to

make sure that the finances are under control. The trustees will also periodically review the internal financial controls and the spending policy.

Recruitment, appointment, and induction of trustees

Recruitment - the board will consider what added experience and skills will help improve support for the charity and those involved in the day-to-day running of the organisation. For example, Little Lives UK is currently focusing on children's mental health, so a potential new trustee with a background in this sector would be a positive addition. New trustees may be found through individuals known to the charity already, word of mouth and advertising.

Appointment - potential new trustees are interviewed by members of the board and the executive and invited to attend a trustees meeting, after which a decision is made by the board.

Induction – new trustees are introduced to existing charity work and given space to absorb the way the charity operates and contribute new ideas as they establish their role of support within the organisation.

Legal and administrative details

Principal office: Little Lives UK, 87 Tooting High Street, London, SW17 0SU

Registered Charity Number: 1171884

Accountant: West & Berry Limited, Mocatta House, Trafalgar Place, Brighton, BN1 4DU

Banker: Unity Trust Bank, Four Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2JB

Declaration

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by



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Ms Szonja Budai

04.11.2021

Date: