

Annual Review



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Welcome to our St Margaret's House Annual Review for 2020/22. Here is a list of what you can expect to find in these pages.

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Welcome

Welcome to our Annual Review 2021/22. Despite the ongoing challenges of Covid 19 this year, it has been an amazing period of growth for St Margaret's House.

Our Gallery Café came back to life with new menus and a tremendous summer celebration in July to welcome back members of our community and customers. Our Ayoka Charity shop has been buzzing with new volunteers and regular customers. Our valued tenants have been returning back to the office bringing life back to Old Ford Road!

Our Arts & Wellbeing has emerged stronger through Covid. In the summer we welcomed back live events with the culmination of our Heritage Lottery project Molly's Masquerade – which brought 18th Century LGBTQ heritage to life in our Gallery Café garden. In January our much loved Open Mic evenings returned and in March exciting music gigs. Our Create Place welcomed back Woodwork and our volunteer led craft groups as well new users such as Fix Up, Look Sharp!

April 21 brought the start of The Health Tree, we were one of 36 funded Thriving Communities across the UK. This new piece of work enabled new partnerships with the likes of London Arts and Health, brought us closer to our Social Prescribing Service and enabled us to open our new wellbeing space The Canvas.

Enjoy reading about our year of growth.



Tony Hardie
CEO



"This project has been crazy, but it's been brilliant"

PARTICIPANT



Embrace Season (Spring/ Summer 2021): "Embrace; what might be" reflected the mood of excitement and fears around emerging from Covid. Restrictions were still in place but the world was opening up.

Molly's Masquerade; The season started off with a bang with culmination of our Molly's Masquerade Project – celebrating early LGBTQ heritage through Molly Houses – 18th Century meetings places for gay men.

We had some amazing theatre performances. Children's theatre company Elephant Talk Theatre's show "Finding Percy Erebus" was an exciting adventure show encouraging conversations around grief. October was the return of RSC actor Mark Lockyer with his new play that looked at life for a couple living with dementia called "Take Off Your Cornflakes". The play performed two nights and was sold out each night.

"The massive accessibility factor cannot be over looked by providing such exceedingly high quality workshops. I was able to be included where as an unemployed disabled person I other would not have been."

MOLLY PARTICIPANT

Arts and Wellbeing

This project delivered **115 events and workshops**, supported **22 freelancers**, and reached **1127 participants**

The culmination of the event was an immersive Molly House event attracting 156 people and was one of our first events out of lockdown.

Thanks to Spitalfield's Music and Sound UK we welcomed songwriter Fran Lobo. In workshops the community got to work together with Fran and create their own song. 9 people attended the workshops aged between 17 and 75 and when asked what they found valuable about the workshop they highlighted "meeting new people, community vibes and working together" as aspects they had enjoyed.

Our Hilarity Academy delivered 10 weekly free comedy workshops to 26 young people aged between 6 and 18 from Tower Hamlets. They created their first live stand up show for the Greater London Authority's Festival of Ideas on 12th July. From August 24-27th we also delivered a successful Hilarity Academy Summer School.

"Me and my best friend have become even better friends through comedy club"

PARTICIPANT



"I was shy before I came to Hilarity Academy"

PARTICIPANT





A key Arts and Wellbeing project this year has been The Health Tree. We gained funding from the Thriving Communities fund led by the Arts Council to become one of 36 projects across England delivering activities in partnership that link with their social prescribing service. The Health Tree saw a partnership with London Arts and Health, Spare Tyre Theatre, Fevered Sleep, Social Action for Health, Outside Edge Theatre and Tower Hamlets GP Care Group. We started with our weekly sessions of Yoga, Fitness, Tai Chi and Pilates as well as a Massage Shala and low cost Acupuncture sessions.

"I visited twice for acupuncture. All said and done it's been a great time at The Canvas for me. Thank you social prescriber for the time you spent arranging this for me."

PARTICIPANT



We had lots of new groups using the Create Place for the first time including Read Easy Hackney, The Queer House, Suzan Art Kids Poetry, Care4Calais, Luminescence, PhotoSocial and Engage Here. Regular groups continued including our much loved Woodwork for Wellbeing, Embroidery for Wellbeing, Crafting is Connecting, Fast Fashion Therapy and our free legal advice service provided by Malcom and Co Solicitors.

create  place

Arianne Churchman was our Artist in Residence during Embrace and developed her series 'Dream Horse Cult'. She held an online 'Floral Horse Pyramid' Visioning event, an active participatory performance piece inspired by the folk tradition of Castleton Garland Day.

Our Volunteer Art Curator Virginia Orr curated two amazing exhibitions. Our first exhibition was from local artist Andrew Wyatt called "Cutting Through Time" using collage to create political statements and was an appreciated opportunity for an artist emerging from lockdown:

"Having the opportunity to communicate with my artwork at St. Margaret's House, has encouraged me to push to have another exhibition somewhere else, Thank you"

ANDREW WYATT

The second exhibition "An Unexpected View" was a photography exhibition by the Friends of Victoria Park and featured over 50 pieces of work centred on views of Victoria Park taken by the group during lockdown.



Our Ghyama Arts project with the Bangladeshi Parents and Carers Association brought circus and dance with 22 sessions delivered both online and in person with 15 disabled participants in both Tower Hamlets and Newham, led by National Centre for Circus Arts artists Dan Rose and Miles Fraser and Indian Dancer Priyanka Chauhan. This was all mashed up into an exciting hybrid circus/dance celebration. This project was called an example of best practise of what a day centre can be by Tower Hamlets Commissioners.

We were excited to gain funding from the Arts Council for "Borrowers of Imagination42.png", raising awareness on the importance of care; with the direction and development co-led between facilitators and carers from Carers Centre Tower Hamlets. Our Creative Facilitators Milou Stella and Kazuko Hohki delivered 7 workshops across the project period, working alongside 9 Carers.



Grow Together (Autumn/Winter 2021) represented the coming of autumn with new starts, beginnings and a time for “growth”.

We started off with our regular Open House where we once more welcomed Amelia Mehra from Elephant Talk Theatre Company who recreated her immersive “Race Through Time” Escape Room. Saturday 2nd of October was a wonderful Fun Palace led by Global Majority led youth entrepreneur group UNITY. 56 people of all ages enjoyed young people leading workshops in Bath Bombs, Meditation, Yoga, Business Skills, craft and arts.



Highlights in performance include Ice and Fire where we premiered their new theatre show “We Like to Move It, Move It”. We welcomed Moulded Theatre with their accessible children’s show using Makaton, looking at environmental issues called “Swish”. Live music returned to our Gallery Café with an Amy Winehouse tribute. For our seasonal show we welcomed back our friends Dickens Theatre with their popular “A Christmas Carol” for two sold performances playing to 70 people.



We took part in the Being Human Festival exploring “Rest as Radical Practice” involving instillations, workshops from Spoken Word artists Lateshia Howell, discussion led by Shaka Lish and a workshop led by Queen Mary University. 86 people engaged across the festival

The Health Tree grew further across the borough. Our sessions of wellbeing continued from The Canvas with massage and acupuncture growing especially popular. On October 13th The Health Tree held its first public event at the Brady Centre “What is Social Prescribing?”. This event attracted 88 attendees and workshops, talks and speeches from the Arts Council, National Academy for Social Prescribing, Spare Tyre, Outside Edge and London Arts and Health

The Canvas space also started to gain increased hirers for activities such as Lunges and Leggings, Pregnancy Yoga, London House of Wellbeing, Baby Massage, Eco – Anxieties Group. Me and You Family Services used the space on a weekly basis supporting families meet and play.

Hilarity Academy delivered its 11 sessions leading to its first comedy evening. This took place at the Gallery Café to 25 parents and carers. The 16 young people performed their own stand up material.

“We’ve learnt to be confident and say out loud all our funny jokes and comments”

PARTICIPANT

Ghyama Arts engaged in theatre alongside 3 practitioners from Spare Tyre Theatre. Their weekly sessions used improvisation and games to develop confidence. They also worked with a work placement from Central School of Speech and Drama creating visual art and puppetry. They had special sharing of all their work online (due to Covid restrictions) on December 13th.

Our Artist in Residence was Frankie Roberts who created a live instillation for our Chapel at the end of her residency in December. Volunteer Art Curator Virginia Orr created two fantastic exhibitions in our Gallery Café. The first was by photography group Shutter Hub. “My Imaginary Friend – The World” was by Vi Kalinski and was his first solo show. A young emerging artist from Poland studying at London Metropolitan University.

A key moment for the Create Place was the “Symbols of Love” window display where users from Woodwork, Crafting, Beading and Fast Fashion Therapy all contributed to a beautiful window display showcasing connection for our community after Covid.



Activate Season (Winter/Spring 22): This season encouraged us to get involved in community and activism linking with the programme including Women's and LGBTQ History Month.



We welcomed the return of our Open Mic nights on the last Thursday of every month in the Gallery Café which we had not been able to do for 18 months due to Covid. It was delightful to see many faces return and have the opportunity to perform.

Mindful Music arrived in our Chapel space which was a series of regular live events mixing music and meditation.

"Loved it. The ambience, music and meditation was wonderful. I am so proud of you guys."

AUDIENCE MEMBER

On Friday 21st January Tacho Drum attracted an audience of 32 with their vibrant show packed full of beautiful melodies and dancing rhythms from Eastern Europe and the Balkans. On the 23rd Feb, 9th of March and 23rd March out of 'THE STEELWORKS' came an exciting new show from AK PATTERSON showcasing a dark musical and visual world. This brought lights, projections and an audiences of up to 100 people per performance!

We did not forget our family offer: "Plundered" from Really Big Pants Theatre engaged a family audience of 26 in a fun pirate adventure exploring environmental issues. There was a family fun in Create Place too with Colourwheel Club and Ben Lunar; keeping families entertained with craft and fantasy writing during half term.

"I had a lot of fun! I'd love to continue working with St. Margaret's House in the future."

AK PATTERSON

We had a fantastic Create Place workshops with "Fix Up, Look Sharp" which used imagination and fun so participants could design and make one off hand crafted creations.

"I had a lovely evening learning some mending techniques for old sportswear! Wonderful space to spend an evening!"

PARTICIPANT



We also welcomed workshops Pasta Making, Headliners – a youth project who took over the Create Place Instagram account, Visioning and the Barbican who ran training sessions.

"Thank you for letting us use this wonderful space. We have come out feeling calm, re-energised and reset"

BARBICAN PARTICIPANT

In January we welcomed a new Volunteer Art Curator for the Gallery Café Mae Shummo, who activated two exhibitions. Assad Art was inspired by his Bengali culture and created "Poetic Figures" looking at wellness in our everyday lives. Trapped in Zone and their "Good for Girls" group created a powerful youth led exhibition of art for Women's History Month.

Ghyama Arts had an amazing season with 22 sessions delivered across Tower Hamlets and Newham both in person and digitally. This season they created their own movie with Chocolate Films called "The Magical Rabbits" and allowed the 19 participants to explore green screen effects.

"It was lovely just having the space to share and being able to talk to such kind people"

PARTICIPANT

The Health Tree delivered the Covid Café led by Spare Tyre Theatre, this an online space for people suffering with Long Covid a place to come together and share. There were 19 sessions working with 26 participants attending on a regular basis.



There was also an event on March 10th (Social Prescribing Day) to celebrate social prescribers held at the Brady Centre and attracted 93 people with workshops from Breathe AHR, Numbi Arts, Spare Tyre and Tower Hamlets' CP Care Group. Our amazing Woodwork for Wellbeing group provided an exhibition of their work.

"The Health Tree is saving lives"

PARTICIPANT

Mindful Movement was led by local practitioner Sally Ramdsen: *"When I come here on Wednesdays I feel relief and meet people who can show me things that help"* (Participant). Regular Art Therapy Sessions were delivered for 9 participants who have been socially prescribed led by Art Therapist Brita Macdonald. *"I've felt able to pick up a colouring pencil with equanimity for the first time in forever."* (Participant)

We were proud to be asked by the Greater London Authorities Culture Team to conduct a piece of research on our approach to arts and wellbeing and a project idea they have around Creative Health Zones. We worked with both Performing Medicine and BOP Consulting and our research report was submitted to the Culture Team at the end of March.



Like with any other hospitality venue the year 21 April to 31 March 22 presented many challenges. Covid-19 still had a massive impact with changes to furlough, the omicron variant, restrictions on eating outside and even Brexit having an impact on the Gallery Café. There were times when the café had to close due to staff illness through Covid or restrictions.

However that aside – resilience, imagination and teamwork have produced positive results for the Gallery Café this year with return of events, new staff, training plus changes in menu.

The team delivered **4296 English Breakfasts, 33100 Coffees, 4778 Juices, 5335 specials and 19525 cakes and sandwiches**

In the summer, the team worked with a consultant hired through the Arts Council Recovery fund, taking part in training on social media leading a cultivation celebration event to welcome the community back after lockdown.



Our "Vegan Summer Feast" was held on July 23rd. The delicious menu included 3 courses of dips, sides, and a main course of Achari Tofu Skewers with Pickles and Rice and dessert of French Apricot Pastry with Vanilla Ice Cream. Before tucking in our 30 guests were welcomed back to the Gallery Café with a welcome speech from Head Chef Simone Bandini. Guests at the event included local Councillors, local press from Beast Magazine and Roman Road Trust as well bloggers! Feedback was hugely positive.

Theatre producer Victoria Eyton (1256 followers) shared cafe photos to her stories and received 808 views. Beast Magazine wrote **"The food was outstanding from start to finish. The Gallery Café is, in many ways, the perfect representation of everything that makes East London such a special place – community, creativity and heart were all served in abundance."**

In September 2021 Simone Di Stefano joined the Front of House team as our new front of house supervisor. Simone has extensive experience in the hospitality sector in London and brought new energy to the team, much welcomed by customers.

This year was the return of live events to the Gallery Café, much appreciated by the café staff and audiences. The popular Open Mic nights started again in January 2022 giving the opportunity for the Gallery Café to engage with the community, music and poetry whilst providing a great evening of food and drink. The much loved East London Cares project which brings volunteers and isolated older people together returned to the Gallery Café in Feb 2022 for monthly brunches.



Many groups hired space over this year which gave the Gallery Café the opportunity provide lunch and refreshments to lots of groups for their meetings and events. These included the Shaw Trust, Queen Mary University, our Ghyama Arts project for the Bangladeshi Parents and Carers Association and many private birthday parties.



The Gallery Café is overcoming the challenges of our times and looking forward to the future, building new events, working with our community and providing great vegan food! Head Chef Simone wanted to express a big thank you to his whole team highlighting Bhavini Joshi and Brigitta Baranyi who played big role in helping recover from the pandemic.



AYOKA

From April 2021 to April 2022 although able to open Ayoka was still impacted by the challenges of Covid. The local swimming pool at York Hall was closed most of the year due to Covid and Young V&A is still closed for refurbishments having an impact on footfall.

However this year Ayoka has taken on these challenges through the theme of "Loyalty". Loyalty to our local customers in ensuring a vibrant shop full of quality items, offering great customer service and a place for the local community to come together.

"Love this charity shop!!"

REVIEW

Vibrant window displays to celebrate Ede, Christmas and local festivals have provided engaging and artistic displays to encourage customers and benefit residents. We've also celebrated local heritage through a Bookwise scheme, where books donated that link with local East End heritage are showcased in special displays.

Loyalty to volunteers. There have been 2016 volunteer hours given to the local community from Ayoka. Nigel, who leads Ayoka has focused on training and supporting volunteers in creating fantastic window displays, posting on Instagram, training in upselling items and customers service.

Loyalty to the environment. There has been a whole focus on upcycling this year. Ayoka has dedicated a whole area of the shop to items of clothing and bric a brac that need fixing, encouraging customers to repair, recycle and create and to reduce the stock that goes to landfill. We are able to reuse or recycle more than 90% of donated clothing, over 100 % of the donated books, CDs, DVDs and 50% shoes and bags.

"The most down to earth charity shop of all charity shops, its worth in kindness and love too invaluable and priceless which no amount of money can buy. Thank you Nigel for making your space a real diamond of delights!"

REVIEW

Loyalty to the community. Ayoka has supported four local projects this year. This includes the men's homeless group running from St John's Church providing vital shower gel, socks, clothing and grooming items. Work has continued with the Secret Underwear project supporting local Bengali women. Materials also go towards two projects at the Create Place and a local garden has benefited from unwanted CD covers to build an instillation to scare the birds away!



"I have had very little retail experience in my life, and after a year of home isolation during Covid I really wanted to be in direct contact with people, ideally from my local community. So I felt this would both give me some extra work experience, perk up my diminishing social skills and I'd meet and help people. I have gained a lot from being part of the team. I look forward to my Saturday shifts, one of the highlights of my week."

AYOKA VOLUNTEER

Applying loyalty is helping to overcome some of the impact still felt by the changes brought on by Covid and Ayoka continues to demonstrate that it is a vital resource and part of St Margaret's House.



Our Friends

Organisations and Groups who call us their home.

21 OLD FORD ROAD

Tower Hamlets Friends and Neighbours
Reality Shift
Bodywise
Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (ARSP)
Community Psychotherapy Network
Ned Bennett (Theatre Director)
Freshwater Theatre Company
Globe Community Project
Christ Mercy Gospel Church Ltd
NMC Recordings
Inner City Centre
Arboreal Architecture
Aeon
BPCA

17 OLD FORD ROAD

Quakers Social Action

15 OLD FORD ROAD

IWGB
East London Cares
Afacic
Expressions Community Arts
Wish
The Cares Family
Consortium for Street Children
City & East London Bereavement Service
Sylvia Morgado (Visual Artist)

15A OLD FORD ROAD

Fevered Sleep

15B RESOURCE CENTRE

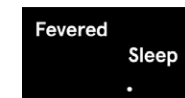
Grand Union Orchestra
Community Psychotherapy Network

Thank you to our supporters

We are so grateful to our supporters below for their massive contribution to our work.



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Financials for the year

Our Total Income for 2022 of **£1,024K** (£809K 2021) reflects our activity as we recover from the impact of COVID 19 in the previous year.

Included within the £1,024K is **£746K** (£390K 2021) generated by the charity from its activities primarily from community café, facility rental/space stream and charity shop.

The expenditure in the year was **£982K** (£724K 2021) is in line with our with resources and slowly increasing our capacity which was reduced during the pandemic.

	21/22			20/21		
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 31 March 22	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 31 March 21
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income from:						
Voluntary Income	36,213	229,005	265,219	262,888	139,442	402,330
Investment Income	13,116	0	13,116	16,204	0	16,204
Income from Charitable Activities	745,792	0	745,792	390,491	0	390,491
Net surplus/(loss) on disposal of assets	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Income	795,121	229,005	1,024,127	669,583	139,442	809,025
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities	762,566	219,519	982,085	620,824	102,895	723,719
Total Expenditure	762,566	219,519	982,085	620,824	102,895	723,719
Gain/(Loss) on Investments	(34,939)	0	(34,939)	(6,776)	0	(6,776)
Net Income for the year	(2,384)	9,486	7,102	41,983	36,547	78,530
Corporation Tax on Café Activities	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer of Funds	(6,188)	6,188	0	0	0	0
Net Movement of Funds	(8,572)	15,674	7,102	41,983	36,547	78,530
Total Funds brought forward	6,668,080	40,806	6,708,886	6,626,097	4,259	6,630,356
Total funds carry forward	6,659,508	56,480	6,715,986	6,668,080	40,806	6,708,886



Plans For Future

We are really excited about the future work of our hub, which includes:

The research we were commissioned to lead by the Greater London Authority's Culture Team was based on our project The Health Tree and their emerging idea of Creative Health Zones. We look forward to using the research report to further the idea of the Creative Health Zone by linking the health sector with the culture sector especially in Tower Hamlets. We have started working the application for National Portfolio status and will submit this to the Arts Council in early May.

We also submitted an application to Tower Hamlet's Council to take on the lease of one of their community spaces called The Tramshed. We found out we have been successful and from April 2022 we hope to be able to deliver a programme of activity that includes space for work that benefits our community.

We found out that we have gained funding from the Heritage Lottery and in May 2022 will be launching our project Mendoza Mania which will look at the life of Daniel Mendoza a boxer (1764–1836) who lived for a time across the road from St Margaret's House.

We still have ambition for our new Arts and Wellbeing Centre "The Barn" even though Covid has delayed progress. Our new building will create a hub where arts and wellbeing will physically merge, where collaborations between artists and



practitioners will thrive and where our community will reap the benefits.

The ground floor will be a fully accessible rehearsal and workshop space. We are also looking forward to using this space to develop our partnership with the Bangladeshi Parents and Carers Association (BPCA).

We have created a sustainable model of putting the funds earned from low rents of our spaces straight back into the community so the first floor will continue on this by providing more sought after low-cost office space to arts and wellbeing charities. The upper floor will house a variety of studio spaces for our visual art workshops and our wellbeing projects.

Help us shape the cultural landscape of Bethnal Green! If you would like to support us in any way, please get in touch with our Director at tony.hardie@stmargarets house.org.uk

Thank You!

This year has seen us expand who we work with and we are now a family of more than 220 employees, volunteers and collaborators – people from all over the world who share the same desire to be useful to the community and make a difference, however big or small. With everyone putting forward their best skills, always committed, proactive and with creative solutions, the excitement and drive to generate positive change is higher than ever.

OUR TEAM

Munsur Ali

Chef & Kitchen Porter

Martin Anthony

Kitchen Porter

Maya Baccani

Chef

Simone Bandini

Head Chef

Brigitta Baranyi

Front of House Supervisor

Idgie Beau

Arts Manager

Sam Bettridge

Arts Manager
(Maternity Cover from Nov 21)

Stuart Cox

Arts & Wellbeing Director/
Deputy CEO

Simone Di Stefano

Front of House Manager

Megan-Madaleine Freeman

Barista

Nachrul Mazi

Kitchen Porter

Laura Furner

Wellbeing Manager
(From Dec 21)

Jose Gama

Finance Manager

Leanne Glikbarg

Barista

Tony Hardie

Company Secretary & CEO

Emily Jones

Operations Manager

Bhavini Joshi

Sous Chef

Shaka Lish

Wellbeing Manager
(till Dec 2021)

Nigel McMillan

Ayoka Manager

Honey Mounce

Barista

George Paris

Programme Manager

Thompson Urhiofe

Administrator

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Mrs Shamimara Choudhury

Fr Alan Green (Acting Chair)

Mrs Tracy Karkut-law

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Ms Mana Mahil (Treasurer)

Annie May Maddock

Miss Barbara Perrott (Secretary)

Fr Brian Ralph

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All information contained in this publication is correct at time of press. St Margaret's House is a member of Locality, a nationwide network for community-led organisations.

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