

Annual Report 2020/21



YEMENI COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION IN SANDWELL LIMITED

GREET'S GREEN ACCESS CENTRE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The global Pandemic has provided challenges and new opportunities for us as an organisation, where we had no choice but to adapt our delivery to meet the needs of our service users. Our volunteers and workforce were instrumental in ensuring the YCA were able to support the most vulnerable within our community during the lockdown and for this I wish to express our heartfelt thanks to each one of you.

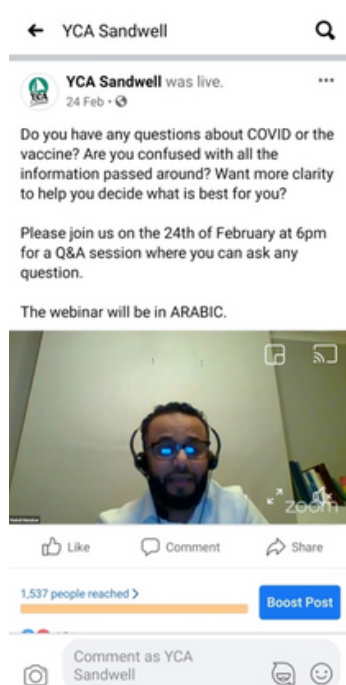
This year for the first time ever we delivered virtual EXTEND classes and were able to keep elder members active during a period when they were limited from accessing outside contact. Additionally Advice and Guidance was maintained using a hybrid of both face to face and virtual interaction. For those cases that we could not see virtually we implemented an appointment only system ensuring we were following government Covid safety guidelines. Our Advice worker ensured that the most vulnerable users were communicated with on regular basis, ensuring they were safe and offering assistance from the YCA workforce and volunteers with shopping and paying bills thus lifting any burdens they may have had.

This virtual delivery of activities were also replicated across other delivery streams such as providing online tuition during a period when we know that parents and young people would have been concerned, they were not fully engaging with education as the world tried to also adapt during the pandemic. We also ensured that young people's emotional wellbeing was not neglected due to limited interaction with their peers by engaging them in virtual community completion which included cake making, story-telling, card making and many more fun activities. This was evaluated very positively by both young people and their families. Additionally the Wellbeing project continued its activities via online ESOL classes alongside cooking sessions and virtual support groups.

Sadly our income revenue has been substantially reduced because we were no longer able to hire out our conference facilities, which as you know provides the organisation with revenue to help maintain its running costs and wages. Additionally with the Mosque not being used for prayer facilities during the lock down, meant that the only donations we collected were those direct debits that had already been set up.

The organisation was also instrumental in supporting Sandwell Public Health, ensuring vital Covid-19 messages were reaching the community and also supporting with the Covid-19 vaccination messages.

Finally we would like to express to our funders how grateful we are for enabling us to adapt delivery and being flexible with re-allocation of budgets to meet new emerging needs as a result of the global pandemic.





The YCA has held a number of activities with the aim of improving perinatal health, which included:

- English for Pregnancy and Birth – this was a pilot project held in Smethwick and was attended by local women who had limited English speaking abilities. This was delivered by one of our volunteers who is a midwife and provided women with an informal setting to familiarise themselves with English words used by professionals surrounding pregnancy and birth.
- Participation in the Maternity voices Partnership which feed into the Local Maternity Systems has been significantly delayed and only just got off the ground. The MVP will host its initial meeting on the 25th November which the YCA will be represented in alongside some of its own user groups.
- The YCA have decided to be a delivery partner for a lead organisation (Murry Hall Trust) in a funding application to deliver a government funded project targeting to improve health outcomes for children from pre-conception to two and half years of age amongst the BAME communities.

The YCA has also delivered a positive parenting training course for parents alongside wellbeing mindfulness classes as part of the organisations Let's Talk Wellbeing programme.

Perinatal Health:

The perinatal health of women from non-white British ethnicities is now been taken up as a national agenda. Unfortunately it took the current global pandemic to bring to the forefront the apparent disparities in health conclusions of mothers and children of colour with the fact that these women were twice more likely to suffer problems from Covid than their white counterparts.

The YCA were one of the primary local organisations to lobby the CCG and its local NHS Trust on these inequalities and created the Women's Maternity and Health Network (WMHN) as a vehicle to articulate the needs of local women. This network is created by local women as representation from other organisations however regrettably due to the pandemic the WMHN has not evolved as we had hoped due to competing priorities. Though the network still exists it is currently inactive however activities around perinatal health continued under the YCA umbrella.

Emotional Wellbeing:

The YCA remains to run its weekly Women's Wellbeing Support Network allowing women, which comprises of young mothers with young children to come together and socialise. The group also acts as a mutual/peer support for one another where women have been able to share experiences of issues to enable others to learn.

The YCA in understanding how the global pandemic has the potential to negatively influence on mental health has been pro-active and innovative in delivering a variety of on line emotional wellbeing sessions. This included running:

- Two awareness sessions on male mental health and managing anxiety.
- 6 Zoom sessions for women on anxiety, stress management and coping with changes during lockdown
- More recently in November the YCA delivered an online course 'Coping with Stress.' Discussing the meaning of stress, how it manifests and coping strategies.
- Running online wellbeing mindfulness sessions.

In addition the YCA has been reaching out to the elderly members of the community, ensuring there emotional and physical requirements are being met during the pandemic. The organisation has created a network of volunteers who have been make weekly wellbeing phone call / social distancing door to door checks on these vulnerable members. This has included offer of shopping as well as donations of non-perishable food from the community and once a week delivering a hot meal to them.



Health Related delivery:

As the global pandemic brought added challenges to the community, especially in relationship to the disproportionate effect it had on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, we were asked to support Sandwell Public Health team. At present we are involved in weekly meetings with Public Health to not only receive updates to share with our users/communities but also for staff within Public Health to gather intelligence from the ground about impacts and issues affecting the community because of the pandemic and subsequent restrictions. The CEO has been involved in a few videos being delivered online outlining the importance of staying safe.

Reducing Radicalisation:

The YCA continues to be at the forefront of supporting agencies to diminish radicalisation. The YCA's CEO continues to be the Chair of the Inclusive Muslim Action Network (IMAN) who now meet online every month, bringing together Muslim organisations and mosques alongside local authority and West Midlands Police to raise awareness of tensions within the community as well as foster positive relationships.

The above Mosque forum links in with the CEO being in the Position of Trust (POT) within the local safeguarding team being the link between Mosques/Madrasa's and the local authority addressing issues relating to Muslim establishments as well as driving enhancements in these institutions by encouraging them to use the Madrasa Tool Kit in its delivery.

The CEO has also been asked to be a member of the Counter Terrorism Advisory Group (CTAG) by West Midlands Police. He attends quarterly meetings at West Midlands Police Head office where he advises on tensions within the community, being a critical friend on issues with schedule 7, counter terrorism strategy and prevent re-wind programme. The CEO continues to be influential in being a member of Faithful friends group bringing individuals from different faiths together within a social setting (presently online).

Conference Room Hire/YCA income generation capacity:

Prior to the pandemic the YCA set up an additional space to hire out by repurposing one of the rooms. This started to generate an additional income to the organisation with the conference providing though not an increased but a stable income. However like many other businesses we have had to stop hiring out these facilities meaning a significant reduction in income. To support us to become more covid compliant centre we secured an additional £2k from Tudor Trust which helped us adapt. We also secured government funding to support the organisation to stay afloat in view of the minimal income generation capacity. The organisation has also had to furlough a small number of staff but anticipate that they will be brought back once the pandemic has eased.

During this lockdown we have also had acts of charity that we were not expecting. One example being where one of our weekly volunteers who had been shielding and had not been able to spend her money during the lock down, donated £700 to the organisation stating that she "couldn't think of a more worthy organisation to donate to"



The YCA Cultural continues to offer a varied range of services from its modern facilities. Building on the success of previous years we have managed to maintain our regular activities, as well as introduce new initiatives. Below are some of the highlights of initiatives which took place over the last year:

Daily prayers & Jumuah prayer

The YCA Cultural Centre is open for the 5 daily prayers throughout the whole year. Our biggest congregation are the Eid and Friday prayers which see approximately 300 people using the centre.

Tahfeeth School

Our classes have become well-established and are very popular within the local community. The school provides classes in Tajweed, Islamic studies, Quran recitation and memorisation. Our class run on 2 evenings and currently has 37 students between the ages of 7 – 18 years.

Ramadan

Our Ramadan programme this year were reduced due to the Pandemic and restrictions on gatherings, in the future we hope to return to have different activities such as Tarawih/Tahajud prayers, I'tikaaf, fundraisers for the centre and international crises and to deliver our popular community iftar on Fridays whereby we encouraged families and young people to bring along their food and break their fast together as a community.

Centre Tours & School Visits

Our staff members have worked closely with local schools to create structured tours that support curriculum work.

Counselling

Our counselling service has delivered more than 30 free counselling sessions for couples and individuals who are on a low income. The sessions are delivered by a qualified counsellor and helps with a range of issues, including abuse, addiction, anger management, anxiety, cultural as well as religious issues, depression, disability, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Relationship difficulties, Self-esteem and Stress.

Monthly Standing Orders

Our aim has always been to have a centre which is self-sustainable and debt free. We rely solely on the generous donations of the public. We carry out a bucket collection every Friday, Ramadan, Eid and have donation boxes conveniently located in the centre.

We have run several campaigns to increase the number of donors who donate via standing order/direct debit on a monthly basis. We currently have 17 donors and we hope that we can increase this to 30 donors in upcoming year. We encourage all brothers and sisters to donate generously.





The YCA Welfare Advice Service has continued to serve its users amidst the uncertain and challenging pandemic period. The advice service has met this challenge by making sure our advice clients are regularly contacted and seen physically where possible. As a result of this approach, the YCA take up of the service has dramatically increased.

We have continued to build on excellent relationships with other service providers within the Sandwell, both internally and external, ensuring a better and stronger service for our clients and community.

The Y.C.A welfare aims to help its service users pursue independent lives and alleviate social deprivation.

Over the past year the Y.C.A. Advice service has seen over 383 client visits, nearly 100 new clients and generated confirmed Welfare benefit gains for service users of over £241,188. Universal Credit and Disability related benefits have been most used and requested. The take up of utility benefit financial support has also increased over this period.

Elderly Luncheon Club

The E.L.C. has been ray of light for our service users throughout the Covid-19 period, both during and after lockdown. Daily and regular contact has been one of the priorities of the E.L.C. ensuring regular contact with our most vulnerable members of the community. Some of our outreach work included providing fortnightly hot meals and food parcels when available. Weekly telephone contact made to ensure elderly members of YCA were safe and well in their properties.

During normal times, separate weekly exercise classes were held for both men and women. Healthy meals and wellbeing have a priority delivery aim of our service.



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

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Our youth programme has continued to work with disadvantaged young people and those who are from the established migrant community that have settled in Sandwell. Last year the YCA was successful in securing funding from BBC Children in Need to continue delivering its youth service for a further three years. Due to lockdown we had to adapt our services so we started to delivering sessions online. Over the year we managed to engage with 92 young people in a variety of activities such as:

- Connecting - our main concern was to address the young people's mental health ensuring they did not feel lonely or isolated and ensuring that their mental health did not have any long-term negative effects. We stayed in touch with the young people and made sure they were aware that we were still available to help or address any concerns. We supported the young people in a variety of ways such as providing laptops/tablets, stationery and printing school worksheets. We also promoted the Go Play Sandwell Resource Pack, which was an online pack demonstrating activities that can be done at home with children.
- Tuition Classes - Over the last academic year we worked closely with 30 pupils (13 key stage 2 & 17 key stage 4). We identified that the young people had worries about their education so we introduced new subjects geography and science in addition to English and maths.
- Online workshop called 'Life in Covid'. The aim of the workshop was to explore the effects of the pandemic and its implications on the lives of the young people and address any concerns or worries the young people might be experiencing.
- Online courses - Leadership course and innovation workshop in partnership with Generation England.
- 10 Online weekly challenges - The challenges were varied incorporating art, design, creativity, imagination and innovation so that everybody had a chance of winning a gift voucher – an added incentive for participating. Winners of the competitions were announced via WhatsApp and on our Facebook page on a weekly basis. In total we had 23 young people participate in the challenges.
- Youth Club - After the restrictions were lifted we resumed our youth club sessions. Our average weekly attendance was 28 young people which is amazing and shows the importance of providing youth facilities like ours. Young people were able to have fun, socialise and participate in football, basketball, table tennis and pool.

This has been made possible due to funding from the BBC Children in Need and SMBC. In the upcoming year we hope that you will, encourage your children to attend and participate in the youth programme.





The YCA has been faced with numerous challenges in year 2 as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. Like many other volunteer sector organisations the YCA had to make sure that service users were not further disadvantaged by the Pandemic. We therefore had to adapt our services to some face to face and some online support. YCA staff also contacted service users on a weekly basis to make sure they were ok and to identify any concerns and problems they were experiencing that we could address through our support. Some of the concerns identified were access to IT Facilities for families who had children learning from home but had no equipment. YCA addressed this need by applying for further funds and purchased 10 tablets to support young people learning from home.

In response to Covid-19 pandemic YCA took an innovative approach where we offered online learning for learners that wanted to continue with online English Language courses. Our programmes offered online included ;

- Club Convo
- ESOL classes
- Let's Talk English
- Women's Wellbeing
- Mens Mental Health
- IELTS

The project also delivered a series of workshops that included:-

- Parenting Skills
- Themed workshops : Health, Nutrition, Excercise and Mental Health

We also delivered food parcels to our Luncheon Club vulnerable clients to make sure that the elderly clients had access to food provisions whilst isolating.

Due to the pandemic we were not able to hold information days or family fun days during summer 2020. Instead the YCA sent regular updates through our social media channels to inform service users on how to stay safe and comply to Covid-19 restrictions.

YCA partnered with organisations such as Near Neighbours to offer courses online in Arabic to support communities on how best to cope with financial distress during the pandemic. YCA also organised live webinars in Arabic for communities across the U.K. supported by Q&A sessions to offer one to one support and provided important information to encourage take up for the vaccination programme.





LODGE COMMUNITY CENTRE

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The Covid-19 Pandemic reduced the centre bookings from February 2020 with it coming to a complete stop when we were ordered to shut the centre during the UK National Lockdown from the 20th March 2020. Staff since then have been furloughed saving the organisation on staffing costs. During the lockdown the organisation was successful in applying for a business grants from the government which would help cover lost revenue during 2020/21. The centre re-opened, and staff returned to work, however, bookings are much reduced and it will take time for the centre to rebuild its booking to pre-pandemic levels.

The future and viability of the centre has been secured for the short term, however, its continued success in the long term is uncertain at the moment and we currently looking at options of how the centre might have to change and adopt to the new normal.





Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £	2020 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	1,557	41,341	42,898	50,934
Charitable activities	4				
BBC Children in Need		-	26,135	26,135	18,135
Other Grants		5,000	-	5,000	-
Sandwell Consortium - Bridges Project		-	-	-	12,500
Sandwell MBC - Advice Worker		-	16,344	16,344	16,237
Sandwell MBC - Lodge Community Centre		14,615	-	14,615	14,471
Sandwell MBC - Main Grant		22,945	-	22,945	22,718
Sandwell MBC - Social Inclusion Luncheon Club		17,175	-	17,175	17,004
Sandwell MBC - Summer Play Scheme		-	-	-	3,000
The Big Lottery - Wellbeing Project		-	78,970	78,970	67,649
Tudor Trust		22,154	-	22,154	19,759
Sandwell MBC - Covid19		93,500	-	93,500	-
Heart of England		2,000	-	2,000	-
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme		-	25,992	25,992	-
Sandwell Consortium – Better Health Programme/Sandwell Learning Network		-	24,018	24,018	-
Investment income	3	13,779	-	13,779	85,618
Other income		-	-	-	2,960
Total		192,725	212,800	405,525	330,985
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	5				
Charitable Activities		115,355	100,272	215,627	200,797
Other		33,379	29,383	62,762	66,050
Total		148,734	129,655	278,389	266,847
NET INCOME		43,991	83,145	127,136	64,138
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		59,571	931,787	991,358	927,220
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		103,562	1,014,932	1,118,494	991,358



**Yemeni Community Association In Sandwell
Limited**

**Balance Sheet
31 March 2021**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £	2020 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	11	795,307	-	795,307	805,836
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	12	8,994	933	9,927	22,913
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>130,468</u>	<u>209,450</u>	<u>339,918</u>	<u>176,824</u>
		139,462	210,383	349,845	199,737
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	13	(831,207)	804,549	(26,658)	(14,215)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>(691,745)</u>	<u>1,014,932</u>	<u>323,187</u>	<u>185,522</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>103,562</u>	<u>1,014,932</u>	<u>1,118,494</u>	<u>991,358</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>103,562</u>	<u>1,014,932</u>	<u>1,118,494</u>	<u>991,358</u>
FUNDS	15				
Unrestricted funds					
General funds				3,562	59,571
Designated funds				100,000	-
Restricted funds				<u>1,014,932</u>	<u>931,787</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>1,118,494</u>	<u>991,358</u>

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