



where volunteering
and community action
transform lives

Annual Report 2023-2024

**10 YEAR
Anniversary**



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Trustees

- Matthew Ayres – Chair
- Matthew Hazell – Treasurer
- Sue Annis
- Phayza Fudlalla
- Edmond Heng Kuen Yeo
- Eva Fritz
- Kim O’Donoghue
- Nawal Lakhdar
- Corrine Botha – appointed September 7th 2023
- Halaleh Taheri – resigned March 22nd 2024



ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE 2023-2024

10 Years of One Westminster

This year marks our 10th anniversary since the merger of VAW and VCW in April 2014. We are all very proud of our achievements over the past 10 years. Raising the profile of the local voluntary sector and volunteering across the borough and, in the past few years, lobbying for, and successfully securing, NHS funding to deliver social prescribing alongside our community partners.

We have strengthened our ties with our local and regional NHS and built strong partnerships with colleagues in Westminster City Council. Most importantly, we have developed strong and deep relationships with a wide range of local Westminster Voluntary and Community organisations across borough. This family of organisations deliver huge amounts of work to support those most in need in the City, helping the City Council and local NHS to meet their stated aims of reducing health inequalities, and supporting our community to be more resilient and engaged and less lonely and socially isolated. We fully intend to build on these relationships and achieve even more over the next 10 years.





Introduction and Headlines

This has been another busy and productive year for everyone at One Westminster. Our relationship with the City Council has gone from strength to strength with many requests to support a range of new funding programmes with meetings of the sector and evaluation of bids. We have worked hard to maintain strong links with charities across the borough and represent their interests with all our statutory partners. Our engagement with the Westminster Business Network, Westminster Connects and the Westminster's Responsible Business Unit have all resulted in high levels of work to keep people informed and to develop strong partnerships and relationships.

A number of pieces of strategic work have involved the CEO alongside other VCS colleagues, playing a key role in representing and supporting the sector in its engagement with the North Paddington Programme, the local NHS, health engagement work at NW London level through our Third Sector Together partnership and at London level through London Plus.

This has involved attendance at many meetings and supporting colleagues across the sector to keep up to speed with the wide range of activities. Our health engagement has been hugely assisted by the recruitment of a Bi-Borough Voluntary Sector Health lead – Liam – employed with funding from Kensington and Chelsea Social Council. Liam has played a significant role in supporting the Vibrant Healthy Communities programme – whose aim is to bring an asset based, preventative approach into health delivery across the bi-borough area.

Internally, we have had a few staff changes and welcomed Natalie and Shirin into One Westminster, to work alongside Emma, Davide and Paola. With the increased demands on our VCS support work and the Westminster Responsible Business Unit and Business Network, we took the decision to terminate our Time and Talents work and concentrate all efforts on the Westminster Businesses referred to us by the Council team. This coincided with Quoc, who had delivered a fantastic job within Time and Talents, leaving us for a new role.

Our Volunteering team continued to provide a wide range of support to individual volunteers, to volunteer coordinators across the city and to Westminster Connects including our DBS service. The team also secured a new contract to sustain our work supporting adults with learning disabilities into volunteering and training and this service has really developed over the year.

Last but not least, our amazing Social Prescriber team, led by Shelley, has continued to work across the central Westminster footprint, delivering high quality SP services and broadening its work to help the wider agenda for improving health inequalities across Westminster.

A key piece of work led by Shelley has been to develop a stronger One Westminster Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion strategy and action plan. The work encompasses our own workforce, and our stakeholders and the community. Inevitably, this is a significant piece of work that is on-going and will take time to be fully implemented throughout the charity.

The Board of Trustees hosted an Away-Day during the year which resulted in the adoption of a revised Business Plan for the charity covering the period 2024-2026.

Finally, following many years of water leaks and mushroom growth, damp and general malaise at Chapel Street, a decision was taken with the City Council, that we should move to new premises. Thankfully, the ground floor large office space with adjacent kitchen was available within the Stowe Centre and the team moved in just after the beginning of the new financial year.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND DELIVERY – 2023-2024

Social Prescribing Service

One Westminster's Social Prescribing Service is commissioned by Central London Healthcare – the GP Consortium covering 4 Primary Care Networks in Westminster and Central North West London Healthcare (CNWL) the NHS Trust providing mental health services in the borough.

The SP service in numbers

Primary Care Network	Regent's Health	St John's Wood and Maida Vale	South Westminster	West End and Marylebone	Rapid Response North	Rapid Response South	TOTAL
Number of referrals into SP Service	413	270	256	325	103	77	1444
Number of referrals out to other services	670	617	453	537	200	140	2617

During 2023-2024, we had a staff team of up to 22 including a Head of Service – Shelley supported by 4 Senior SPs – Delphine, Amina, Alex and Grace. The team had 2 pregnancies and sadly had to close the Young Adult Mental Health SP service at the end of the year.

Early in the financial year, Shelley worked with the team to review their work and identify key strengths and weaknesses of the service. The process included anecdotal information received from the community and considered the current resources available locally, inequalities that were present, and the wider strategic context that the SPs operate within. The work resulted in the creation of a new working framework for their delivery. The Framework provides structure and consistency across the service for staff in how they deliver their service. It also provides clarity for people in the community around what they can expect from the service. Finally it has assisted in our communication to stakeholders and referral partners.

January 2023 also saw the introduction of the JOY database as commissioned by the NHS. All SP referrals are now made via this platform which also provides a firm evidence base for our work. Social prescribers have been able to share data between the team and adapt our workforce to respond to need.

One Westminster continues to pro-actively identify gaps in services with the aim of strategically working towards filling these. Two key gaps identified this year have been access to free decluttering services and appropriate groups for males under 50. Work is already taking place to liaise with larger charities and seek funding to create a response to this. Another key aspect of the SP service's work is an on-going attempt to ensure that our service plays its part in addressing the number one challenge around health

in Westminster – namely health inequalities. The full team are committed to working alongside our wider Octopus partnership to find strategies to impact on this.

Support to VCS service

The team now consists of 5 staff who work together to deliver a full range of services to meet the needs of the wider VCS in Westminster. The team undertook a lot of additional work this year, as a direct result of the local authority having so many more funding and other opportunities for the voluntary sector to engage with.

Work over the year also included supporting local VCS groups to apply for funds, identifying training needs and reporting back to the Council, undertaking one-off pieces of work including supporting the victims of flooding with small grants and reporting to the GLA on the use and needs of foodbanks.

Finally, the team were responsible for identifying volunteering needs for individual and corporate support and for feeding this information back to the council for publication in Westminster Connects and Business Support information.





Core work delivered included:

- Providing information and advice via our fortnightly e-bulletin and a regularly updated resources and fundraising sections in our website.
- Facilitating Community Network, Health and Wellbeing Network, Older People's Network meetings.
- Providing one to one support and advice to organisations.
- Hosting meet the funder events.
- Working with charities to identify volunteering opportunities for individuals to be promoted through Westminster Connects and for Businesses to be promoted through the Westminster Business Network.
- Creating partnerships between businesses and the wider voluntary sector.
- Linking individual charities with fundraisers.
- Participating in funding panels with Young Westminster Foundation and for the City Council.
- Organisation one off meetings to support the dissemination of funding information or for consultation purposes.
- Conducting an annual survey of the sector.

The VCS Service in numbers

Updates to directory of VCS organisations	67
New organisations added to database	34
Individual organisations supported	145
New or emerging organisations supported	15
Networks and meeting the funders events hosted	16
Number of attendees at events	372
e-bulletins and bulk information emails produced and sent	33
Cash donations secured from businesses	£40,000
VCS opportunities identified and promoted through Westminster Connects	168
Business enquiries handled	300
Partnerships between businesses and VCS organisations created	200

Volunteer Centre Service

One Westminster continued to operate as a Volunteer Centre throughout the year, providing support, information and advice to individuals seeking volunteering opportunities. Alongside supporting people to register with Westminster Connects as a volunteer, the team regularly outreached into homeless hostels and the Job Centre to meet with more vulnerable adults and support them to volunteer.



The team worked with Westminster Adult Education Service to support the delivery of Introduction to Volunteering workshops and facilitated a Volunteer Coordinators Network providing training and best practice advice and support.

A favourite activity is our gardening days which provide a unique opportunity for a wide range of people to come together and support our environment. These days attracted corporate volunteers, social prescribing clients, adults with learning disabilities and staff and are always a highlight of the year.

One of the highlights of our year was the first One Westminster Volunteers' Fair in nearly 4 years. Held at the Stowe Centre in June, the event was

attended by over 200 people with 28 Westminster volunteer involving organisations having a stand at the event. Feedback was very positive from both organisations and members of the public who attended. We continue to deliver one of the biggest Volunteers Fairs held in the borough.

Volunteer Centre Service in numbers

Numbers of volunteers recruited	784
Numbers of volunteers placed	443
Outreach sessions to promote volunteering	110
Attendees at training sessions on recruiting, managing and retaining volunteers	32
Volunteer coordinators attending meetings	38
Volunteer enquiries – by phone, email, face to face	1080
DBS – registrations for Westminster Connects and others processed	98



Adults with Learning Disabilities Volunteering Project

One Westminster is very proud to be delivering our Volunteering Project for Adults with Learning Disabilities. This year we worked with 71 people and placed 26 of them with individual volunteering opportunities.

A key part of the work provided by the project, is the individual specialised support given by staff to the clients in helping them find an individual volunteer role. This included volunteering roles in charity shops, foodbanks, hospitals, museums and administration support.



We also provided social group and fun activities during the year which were vital in supporting the health and wellbeing of our clients, who have some of the poorest health outcomes in the city. Activities included visits to a number of museums, theatre shows, a film making project with a charity, an easter card making activity, watching a film with a live orchestra at The Royal Albert Hall and taking part in a sports day in Regents Park supported by corporate volunteers. On average at least 20 people attended each activity.

The team also organised 8 gardening days across the year attended by clients, corporate volunteers and Social Prescriber clients.



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