



**West London Action for Children
Annual Report 2022-2023**





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Our Mission

To promote the wellbeing of children in need by working with them and their families to help achieve lasting positive change

WHO WE ARE

We are a registered charity working in the boroughs of Hammersmith & Fulham and Kensington & Chelsea offering free, confidential and professional counselling and therapy, parenting groups and groups for children in schools.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

We believe families are the experts on their own situations, so we support them in using their own skills and resources to address problems and make decisions.

HOW WE HELP

We help clients who face challenges including: domestic violence, bereavement, divorce and separation, school exclusions, bullying and truancy, mental health concerns, parenting difficulties, resettlement trauma, substance misuse, experiences of abuse and racism among others.

We work with the whole family and the community around them to achieve lasting change.

In addition to counselling, we support the families with food parcels, emergency hardship support and days out.

HOW WE ARE FUNDED

Since our founding in 1917, we remain independent and are funded by trusts, local authorities, funding bodies and donations.

A Message from the Chief Executive

We help children who are at risk in West London



These children face profound challenges in their lives such as domestic violence, trauma, poor housing, chronic health conditions, additional educational needs, anxiety, depression and isolation. We see how these challenges have been exacerbated by the recent pandemic, lockdowns and cost of living crisis.

Our team of qualified and experienced therapists is making a difference. We listen to children, help them to identify what is working well in their lives, however small, and support them to build from there. We help children to recognise their strengths, cultivate a positive inner voice and build their self esteem. Our approach is strengths-based and solution focused.

Through our counselling and therapy services we support children and family members to improve communication and family dynamics. We help them to develop their inner resources and their external support networks. We celebrate successes and we offer support when there are setbacks. We tailor our approach to the unique circumstances each child and family face. None of this is easy. It takes time, patience and specialist input. We work hard and so do the children and their families. They always inspire us with their resilience and commitment. We help them to face the future with greater confidence and hope, and enable them to respond more positively to challenging situations.

We are enormously proud of the work we have done to sustain, adapt and expand our service through the pandemic. This Annual Review gives you more information about our work. Our case studies are anonymised but they are real. They are personal stories told by clients who want you to understand the value and positive impact of what we do and how your contributions help.

On behalf of all our clients, thank you for your interest and support. Our work would not be possible without you.

Heather Boxer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Boxer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chief Executive

Impact Highlights

Throughout the year:

IMPACT

510 families worked with WLAC

922 children benefitted from our work with families

4,700 therapeutic sessions were provided

82% of children and young people experienced less aggressive, withdrawn and anxious behaviour as a result of our work

89% of our clients experienced more enjoyable family time

92% of children are better able to manage transitions

86% of clients experienced decreased levels of anxiety in the face of new situations

88% of clients experienced less feelings of isolation

45% of referrals came from CAMHS, social workers or adult mental health services

A Message from the Chair of Trustees

As mental health services struggle to meet the growing need for support, particularly amongst children and young people, we are fortunate to have WLAC supporting the most vulnerable families in our community



I took over as Chair at the end of 2022 from Elizabeth Webber, who did an outstanding job supporting our Chief Executive and the whole team through the pandemic. We are all very grateful to her for her advice, resilience, and good humour in unprecedented circumstances.

Several new Trustees are bringing exceptional skills and perspectives to our work which are enabling us to

move on from the crisis mode of the last few years and into our next centenary.

Our network in the local community is one of our most valuable assets. People often tell me how incredible the team is to work with, and comment on their warmth and compassion. These qualities - alongside our well known professionalism - are important elements in our ongoing success.

In recent years we have seen the problems that our clients are facing becoming more acute and more complex. Our funding model allows us to work with different members of the same family, bringing each of them the kind of support that they need.

We are very grateful to all of our volunteers and funders, large and small, who continue to support our work.

Meg Kaufman
Chair of Trustees

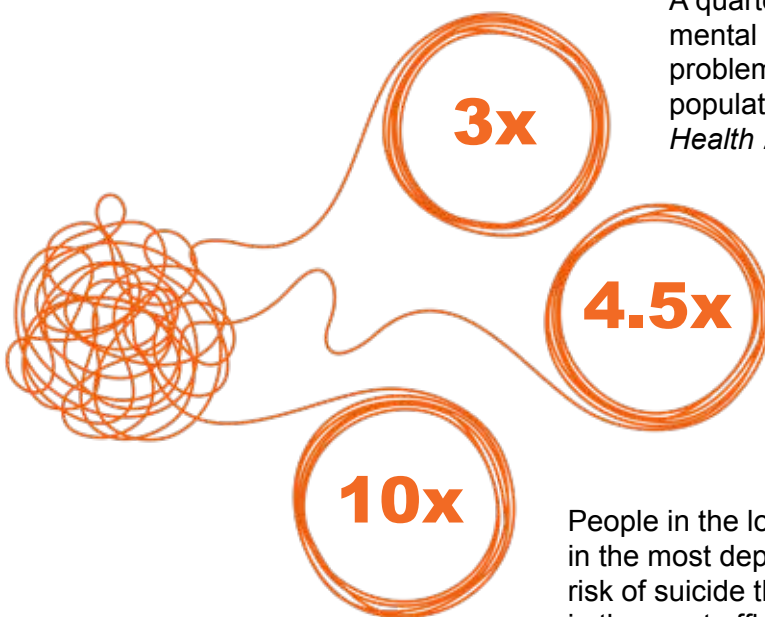
Our Offering: Why it's needed

Our client families live in some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the UK



- 3,396 children or 10% of the child population in Hammersmith & Fulham were living in absolute poverty in the year ending March 2021.
- 28.8% of state school pupils in Kensington and Chelsea are eligible for free school meals.
- It is estimated that 1 in 23 children in London is homeless.
- Childcare costs have risen 42% since 2008, twice the rate of inflation.

The link between poor mental health and poverty is clear



A quarter of people experiencing a common mental health problem also have financial problems, three times more than the general population. (Source: London: Centre for Mental Health 2015)

Young people in the lowest income bracket are four and a half times more likely to experience severe mental health problems than those in the highest income bracket. (Source: London: Centre for Mental Health 2015)

People in the lowest socio-economic groups & living in the most deprived areas are up to ten times more at risk of suicide than those in the most affluent groups & in the most affluent areas. (Source: Samaritans 2017)

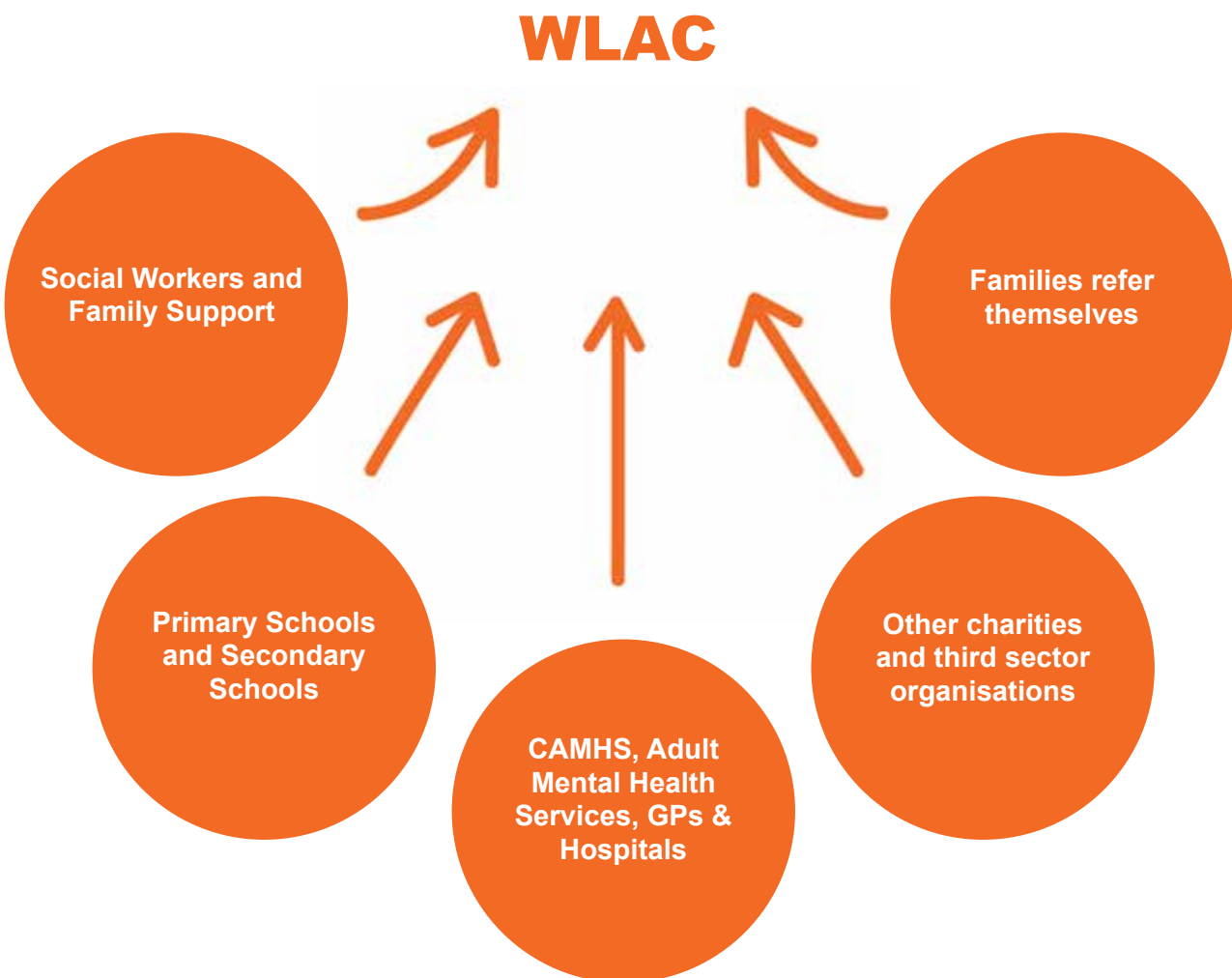
Our Offering: How we do it

WLAC acts as a community linchpin

Having worked in our catchment area for over 100 years, we are embedded in the communities we serve.

- We offer 'gateway' services in local primary and secondary schools so that children and their families can access our support.
- As an independent charity we strive to work collaboratively with other local agencies because we understand the benefits of a joined up approach for children.
- We respect client confidentiality and we have clear policies and procedures to safeguard children and adults who are at risk.

We have an established network of agencies who refer children to us



Our Offering: What we do

We provide free, professional counselling and therapy to help children and families help themselves

WE DO THIS BY

- Helping clients understand & overcome psychological, emotional, and behavioural challenges
- Working with clients to explore thoughts, emotions, beliefs and behaviours that promote personal growth, self-understanding and emotional healing
- Providing early intervention to avert crises & help families to face challenges more positively
- Delivering evidence based therapies which have long lasting positive impact

We offer three main types of therapy

INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING AND THERAPY

Individual counselling and therapy can be offered in person, online or over the telephone. It allows individuals (children or parents) to explore their feelings, beliefs and behaviours and identify aspects of their lives that they would like to change.

Therapists can support people to better understand themselves and others, set personal goals and work towards positive change.

FAMILY THERAPY

Family therapy involves family members meeting to understand each other's points of view, acknowledge what is working well, talk about difficult issues and make changes to improve relationships and create a better functioning home environment. Therapists can support families to resolve conflicts and adapt to significant changes.

GROUPS

Group work involves one or more therapists working with groups of children or parents who are facing similar challenges. Groups are safe spaces to share information, express emotions and practice behaviours and actions. Groups can engender hope as participants realise they are not alone, they support each other and they each other making progress

How our clients describe us...





An Overview of our Work

In the 100 years we have been working in our boroughs, we have built up a strong reputation within the local community for a professional approach with highly-trained practitioners

West London Action for Children offers a range of free counselling and psychologically therapeutic services for vulnerable children, young people, parents and families living in the boroughs of Hammersmith & Fulham or Kensington & Chelsea, who are on low incomes and cannot afford to receive a service elsewhere.

Most of our referrals come from social services, GPs and health agencies, and schools. Clients can also self-refer.

SMALL AND NIMBLE MEANS THAT WE CAN BE FLEXIBLE AND RESPONSIVE

As a small local charity, we can act quickly and offer tailored packages of individual therapy, family therapy, and group work and counselling to meet the specific needs of each family. Our services are not time-limited, and clients can criss-cross between them, which means we are able to offer a cohesive service that is as flexible as possible in responding to what clients want and the outcomes they seek to achieve. Our services are tried and tested and, as an independent charity, we also have the flexibility to adapt our services in response to new emerging client needs.

PROFESSIONAL AND SOLUTION-FOCUSED

Our team of professionally trained therapists use solution-focused, strengths-based, client-

led interventions. We support families under stress to develop their confidence and skills to cope with the ordinary and extraordinary challenges of family life. We help young people, children and parents/carers to recognise their strengths and develop their internal resources enabling them to respond more constructively and confidently to difficulties.

The number of children and young people being referred to Mental Health Crisis Care Teams more than tripled in the four years between 2019 - 2023

Source: Young Minds

TRANSFORMATIONAL AND LASTING IMPACT

The past three years has seen a significant change in the landscape of need in which our clients find themselves facing a convergence of growing mental health needs, sustained financial pressures, precarious and unsafe housing conditions, increased isolation, and uncertainty around benefits. We know that the need for support is increasing as the myriad of issues faced by families is becoming more complex whilst, following years of cuts to mental health services, provision is severely lacking.

And yet, from our experience providing free, time-unlimited therapy and counselling to vulnerable local families, we know that our work can have long-lasting impact, and be transformational for children, young people and families who attend.

We know this because families tell us so. Not only that, but most families also report that siblings, partners and other family members benefit from the change.

Counselling and Therapy

West London Action for Children provides individual counselling and therapy to children, young people and parents/carers

OVERVIEW

These one-to-one sessions take place in our office – a safe, non-judgemental and welcoming space where clients can come to talk freely, openly and confidentially.

Since the pandemic, we have been able to offer individual therapy sessions in-person, on the phone, or online, with therapists working both in the office and from home. This has meant greater flexibility and accessibility for our clients, as well as an increase in our capacity.

Parents may be looking for support around transitions such as the birth of a child, the challenge of teenagers, family separations, experiences of abuse and violence, or mental health concerns.

Young people and children are still experiencing the fall out from Covid, with trauma, isolation, social and health anxiety and depression having a long-lasting and disproportionate impact on children living in poverty.

WLAC offers a non-stigmatizing, non-judgemental safe space where clients can talk freely about the issues affecting them. By offering time-unlimited and solution-focused therapy, families are empowered to make long-term, systemic, positive changes for themselves and their families.

FAMILY THERAPY

In addition to our one to one therapy service, we can also work with multiple members of the family. In early consultation with the





family, we explore which way of working might fit them best: either working with a single family therapist, co-therapists, or with the reflecting team in the family therapy clinic.

In this model, the allocated therapist speaks with the family members whilst the other members of the team listen. The therapists will then have a reflective dialogue between themselves while the family listens on.

The family members are invited to respond to what they have heard. Families with complex, stressful, and traumatic lives are thereby given an opportunity to hear multiple perspectives and gain new insights, as the team hold different positions and family members in mind.

In our work and reflections, we think about how aspects of social and personal identity, such as race, gender, age and religion impact the family members, and the therapists, and the relationship between them. This enables us to hold in mind how power and privilege play out in therapeutic relationships, the family system and broader societal context.

PARENT INFANT PSYCHOTHERAPY

Parent Infant Psychotherapy is an early intervention that offers help for families, from pregnancy and for the first two years.

The relationship between a parent and their baby can be disturbed for many reasons, such as separation after birth or due to traumatic experiences.

Many low-income families, especially those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, were also hit even harder by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is likely to have widened the already deep inequalities in the early experiences and life chances of children across the UK. WLAC provides Parent Infant Psychotherapy, supporting parent/s to recover the relationship with their child.

The benefits of early intervention in the parent-infant relationship are wide-ranging and long-term, including reducing developmental disorders in later years.

School-Based Work

For many children, schools are a safe place to address their mental health concerns

OVERVIEW

Children were adversely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown, with difficult and interrupted transitions to school, and large gaps in school development when children missed formative parts of their education.

This has resulted in a rise in mental health challenges for children and young people, with increased reports of fear, stress, and anxiety, including separation and social anxieties.

Statistics show that these challenges have adversely affected children from low-income backgrounds, widening existing disparities in wellbeing, aspiration and educational attainment.

This is why we were so pleased to have reinstated our school-based work in so many local schools.

INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING

The challenges of providing individual therapeutic services safely for young clients during lockdown required careful thought, time and flexibility, but we were pleased to continue providing these vital services using telephone and video sessions. And when there wasn't a safe space for young people to speak openly at home for fear of being overheard, we used online chat and text.

This confidential space we offered provided a safe place for clients to open up about their feelings of anxiety, depression, and fear; of loss, hopelessness and conflict.

Many of these common issues and themes emerged, grew and still persist, often having a disproportionate and long-lasting impact on children living in poverty.

Last year we worked in four local secondary schools providing one-to-one support to young people. Sessions typically last 50 minutes, are client-led and the intervention is not time limited. This empowers a young client to get the most benefit out of the sessions and to take control of when and how they complete their therapy.

The work aims to support young people to feel more resilient; to improve their social and emotional wellbeing; to increase self-esteem and self-confidence; to improve relationships within the family and with their peers, and to make positive and healthy choices.

MIGHTY ME

Mighty Me is a self-esteem building group that therapists at West London Action for Children have been delivering to small groups of children in primary schools for over 15 years.

Children are chosen for the group because they might need a confidence boost or some support to increase their self-esteem.

Often we see children given labels by others and their selves, such as quiet, naughty, distracted or angry. We think with them about all their strengths and "Mighty Qualities", identifying what makes them feel strong in their hearts and minds.

We teach the children a range of strategies to help them to cope with common problems that children face and to give them a sense of competency over such problems.

SHINING STARS

Shining Stars is a confidence and self-esteem building group for children in Years 2 and 3 who have been identified by the school as struggling to engage in their school community in a way that allows them to be, and feel, successful.

In the group we encourage children to think about the things that make them sparkle in their hearts and their minds. These are the things that make them special, the things they are good at and the things they enjoy doing.

Shining Stars aims to help children recognise their strengths and develop strategies to handle worries and difficult feelings. The group involves arts and creative activities and role play, incorporating narrative therapy and solution-focused therapy, and aims to be tangible, non-threatening and stimulating to 5-7 year old children.

COOL MOVES

Cool Moves is a client-led group designed to support greater confidence around the important transition between primary and secondary school. Children come to the groups experiencing a broad range of feelings including shyness, temper, anger and low confidence.

Our aim is to give children a safe space to identify and share their feelings, and their worries about secondary school; to support them to recognise and appreciate their strengths; gain in confidence; form positive relationships; and feel able to react more positively to situations they may find difficult.

The group aims to have a long-lasting and broad-reaching impact, not only for the child taking part, but also for their family relationships, and the school.

We believe this type of early intervention is key to a child experiencing a full and healthy childhood and reaching their potential.



Counselling Groups for Parents

We work with parents, carers and grandparents to improve the wellbeing of children

OVERVIEW

We offer free and confidential therapy and counselling to parents, carers and grandparents of children and young people aged 18 and under. Here are some of our programmes.

PARENTALK

Parentalk is a six-session group for parents of younger children. Parents can be facing serious challenges such as caring for children who have experienced domestic or emotional abuse, or trauma, or children who have special educational needs.

We use a solution-focused approach, with each parent working on their own aims, using their existing skills. Parents want to improve their bond with their children, re-establish a happier parental relationship, and find healthy ways to handle difficult behaviour.

Parents often reflect that the group helps them realise that they are not alone in feeling the way they do; under pressure, demoralised and experiencing a sense of failure.

Connecting to others in a non-judgemental way gives parents the strength to calm the mind, do their own thinking, and find their own solutions.

Regaining confidence in their decision making is often a welcome outcome of sharing with others who understand and do not judge. Parents feed back that they leave the group feeling more confident, with calmer and more reflective parenting strategies.

DADS MATTER

Dads Matter is a six-session solution-focused parenting group for fathers, step-fathers and male carers. The fathers may be sole carers, non-resident, sharing care, or seeking to re-establish their relationship with their child(ren).

The men set their own goals, and are encouraged to think and reflect on and notice the impact they have on their children as they try out different strategies.

The group context builds confidence and an awareness of their parenting identity, as well as an awareness of the commonality of struggles that fathers face. Often the participants become more open to seeking further therapeutic support following the course, such as individual, family or co-parenting work.

During and following the pandemic, the group ran online, with Dads feeding back that the accessibility this provided was appreciated. It currently runs in person, but we are flexible and adaptable, and respond to the needs of the men, group-by-group.

BREATHING SPACE

Our Breathing Space group is an eight-session group teaching mindfulness practice tailored specifically to parents.

The group aims to support parents to be more mindful in their relationship with their children, as well as within themselves, and to pay attention to what is happening around them in a non-judgemental way. This can help parents to step out of automatic patterns of reacting to difficulty, and respond in a way that they choose.

The course was able to continue online during the pandemic, and clients told us what a lifeline the 90 minutes of mindfulness and calm was at that time. More recently we have started running the group in person again, and we are pleased that parents continue to find it an effective intervention.

PARENTING IN THE PANDEMIC

With Stay and Play facilities being forced to close during lockdown, many new parents found themselves isolated, and anxious that their babies had little opportunity to be with others and to learn social skills in their early years.

WLAC responded by teaming up with the NHS to run a 'Parenting in the Pandemic' group online. This provided an online space where parents could talk about theirs and their children's experiences during the pandemic and to learn techniques to help them manage their mood and anxiety during difficult times.

This helped to inform WLAC that, as we emerged from lockdown, parents needed a smaller, more therapeutic group, where they could be supported with concerns about their baby's development and concerns about their relationship with their baby.

CAMEO

The CAMEO (Come And Meet Each Other) parent and toddler group was born, with the aim of providing a relaxed space for parents to bond with their child through art and play, connect with other parents and build a network of support.

We invited clients with children under 5 to join the group, where they could meet other parents and children, take part in art and sensory activities, and enjoy a story and sing along time.

This new model uses a Parent-Infant Psychotherapist and two Child and Adolescents Psychotherapists with whom the mothers and children build a rapport and discuss any worries or concerns they may have. Parents can discuss their feelings of isolation, concerns about their toddlers transitioning into nursery, struggles to implement boundaries and issues with confidence as a new parent.

The setting works well for this as we have childcare assistants and volunteers available to play with the child whilst their parent is having a conversation with a therapist. We are grateful to our volunteers for also helping to facilitate a takeaway packed lunch for each family.

Parents have reported that they look forward to being able to meet other mums and to share their experience of motherhood, as it can be lonely raising a child alone.

“I feel like I am more able to give attention to my children's emotional needs.”



Case Study: Orla's Story



I have an eight year old daughter, Orla

Orla's father is not part of our lives but I was close to his brother, Orla's uncle, who died during Covid, leaving me feeling bereft. I went to work in the pub owned by Orla's grandfather where I 'just wanted to get my work done' but there were challenges posed by the family circumstances. I had housing issues and health problems of my own as well. It all got too much.

“My mum suggested I approach WLAC. I wasn't sure it was the right charity for me. I quickly realised that the charity works to support families in the round.”

I felt safe. I could talk about how I grew up and the things I'd been through. It was like a conversation.

My therapist listened, asked questions and gave me feedback.

I feel that I am now better able to understand and handle difficult situations and do not get so quickly stressed out. I am now less hard on myself and better able to get perspective on my situation. For all this, I am grateful to my therapist and to the fact that I had the continuity with one person. It's a meaningful relationship which I value.

WLAC has helped Orla because I am in a better place, and together we have had some great days out thanks to the charity. Orla thought going to see *Terrible Tudors* at the theatre was 'the best day ever' as she is crazy about anything to do with the Tudors!

WLAC is a great charity. I did not feel judged, but only supported and guided in my difficult days.

I know that if I need the charity again, the door would be open.

Case Study: Ruxana's Story

I came to WLAC's offices feeling desperate

I remember that I had to carry my 10 month old son strapped to my back. I didn't have a buggy. I was heavily pregnant with my second child.

At the time, I was completely reliant on food banks for clothing and food. I was diluting the milk to make it last longer.

I was very far away from the country I had grown up in. I had experienced abuse and abandonment in my adult relationships. I felt completely alone.

I had made attempts to end my life several times. I tried to abandon my baby in the park, but a passer-by heard him screaming and called out to me.

When I met my therapist she told me that our sessions were confidential and that she was here to help me and my child and my baby when it arrived. She made me feel safe.

I felt able to tell her about what had happened to me. It was a very painful process. But it was also a relief. My therapist listened. She didn't judge me. I felt heard.

“And I began to realise that I wasn't on my own. I started feeling hopeful.”

I had lots of issues to deal with. My therapist helped me work out what to do. I got some support with my immigration application. I got help from my GP and Adult Mental Health Services to deal with my psychotic episodes.

The WLAC stay and play group helped me to start bonding with my son. WLAC gave me food vouchers to buy milk and nappies for my new baby.

My mental health has improved significantly. I am now enjoying the relationship with my children.



Case Study: Lara's Story



From West London Action for Children, I have received the most effective support for my mental health to date

I feel like I can express how I truly feel in a safe environment and feel cared for and supported when I do.

“I feel like myself and my family are seen and are the focus of the work we do, rather than just another tick box.”

I feel that the work I have done with WLAC throughout my journey has given me the tools

to pursue the life I want to live and be able to manage my own mental health difficulties independently and with confidence.

My therapist has a fair and balanced approach to what I bring to my sessions, and always reminds me that this is “my space and my time”. This, I find truly helpful as it helps me focus within the sessions and helps me use the time practically.

I have found the other support given by WLAC to be really helpful, especially around Christmas with the hampers and food vouchers. Whenever items are donated to WLAC, I like that my family are kept in mind and are called to be offered such things. This was especially helpful when we were offered a cot bed for our child, which we were in need of at the time.

I also found the Stay and Play to be helpful in keeping my child sociable which is something I had struggled with.

Case Study: Sue's Story

I was granted special guardianship of my three grandchildren (aged 7, 5 and 4)

Things had been extremely difficult. There had been a court case and it was distressing for everyone. There had been lots of difficult emotions and issues. Our social worker suggested I contact WLAC.

I have monthly telephone calls with my therapist and this works really well. I am always thinking about how best to support my grandchildren. They have been through an awful lot. One of the boys has been diagnosed with ADHD and this presents him and our family with additional challenges.

“I know that I can just be myself and tell my therapist about everything that is going on.”

My therapist never judges me or tells me what to do. She listens to me when I talk about what I am facing and what I am doing. She gives me support and reassurance. She suggests other things to think about and new ways to approach difficult issues.

My therapist has been a constant and ongoing source of support. I can't imagine what I would have done without her. She told me that it would take time for the children to feel safe and settled and she was right about that.

One of my grandchildren recently asked me whether they can stay with me until they are 18 and I've told them that of course they can. But I can understand why they are anxious about this, even though they are so young. I can see that they are feeling safer. They come across as being a lot happier and are gaining confidence.

“There are still challenges but we are all in a much more positive place than we were.”

The eldest boy is well behaved at school but is sometimes challenging at home and I think he still has a lot on his mind. He is very sensitive. His younger brother has episodes at school but I can hardly believe how much better things are for him; he is talking more and growing in confidence. My granddaughter is full of energy and growing up fast.

As the children grow up, I know that there will be new challenges. And I know that the issues of the past will probably always be there. But we have help on this journey. Someone who I can talk to and who will always listen. I know that we are not alone.

Our work

- We work with the significant adult in the child's life in order to support the child
- We support parents and children who feel desperate and alone
- Our referral agencies know we can support families who have experienced trauma and who want to move forward more positively
- Our main focus is therapy and counselling but our supporters and volunteers help us deliver other support (more about this on the next page)

Client events

In addition to our therapy services, we collaborate with local organisations to offer other forms of support and opportunities for our clients

HOLIDAY HAMPERS AND HARVEST FESTIVAL

In the financial year of 2022-2023, we were once again able to deliver nearly 100 Holiday Hampers of food, toiletries, gifts and toys to our client families in the run-up to Christmas, thanks to the kind generosity of the Junior League of London, the Unicorn School and our team of dedicated volunteers.

Our thanks also go to Artgo, who supported us with storage and delivery.

Thanks to the Unicorn School, we were also able to provide food vouchers for families at Harvest Festival time.

The children we support live in poverty and their families are deeply affected by the current cost of living crisis.

FAMILY FIRST NIGHTS

We were thrilled to be a part of Go Live Theatre Projects' Family First Nights again this year, offering affordable tickets to West End shows.

Twenty-eight of our client families received tickets to six different shows, enjoying performances such as *Grease*, *Wicked*, *Terrible Tudors*, *Peppa Pig* and *Mamma Mia*.

COMMUNITY DAYS OUT AND FHA

We were delighted to team up with Community Days Out, a Hammersmith & Fulham based organisation set up during Covid, which was able to offer 8 of our client

families a day trip to the seaside during the summer. Families visited Margate and Bournemouth amongst many other resorts.



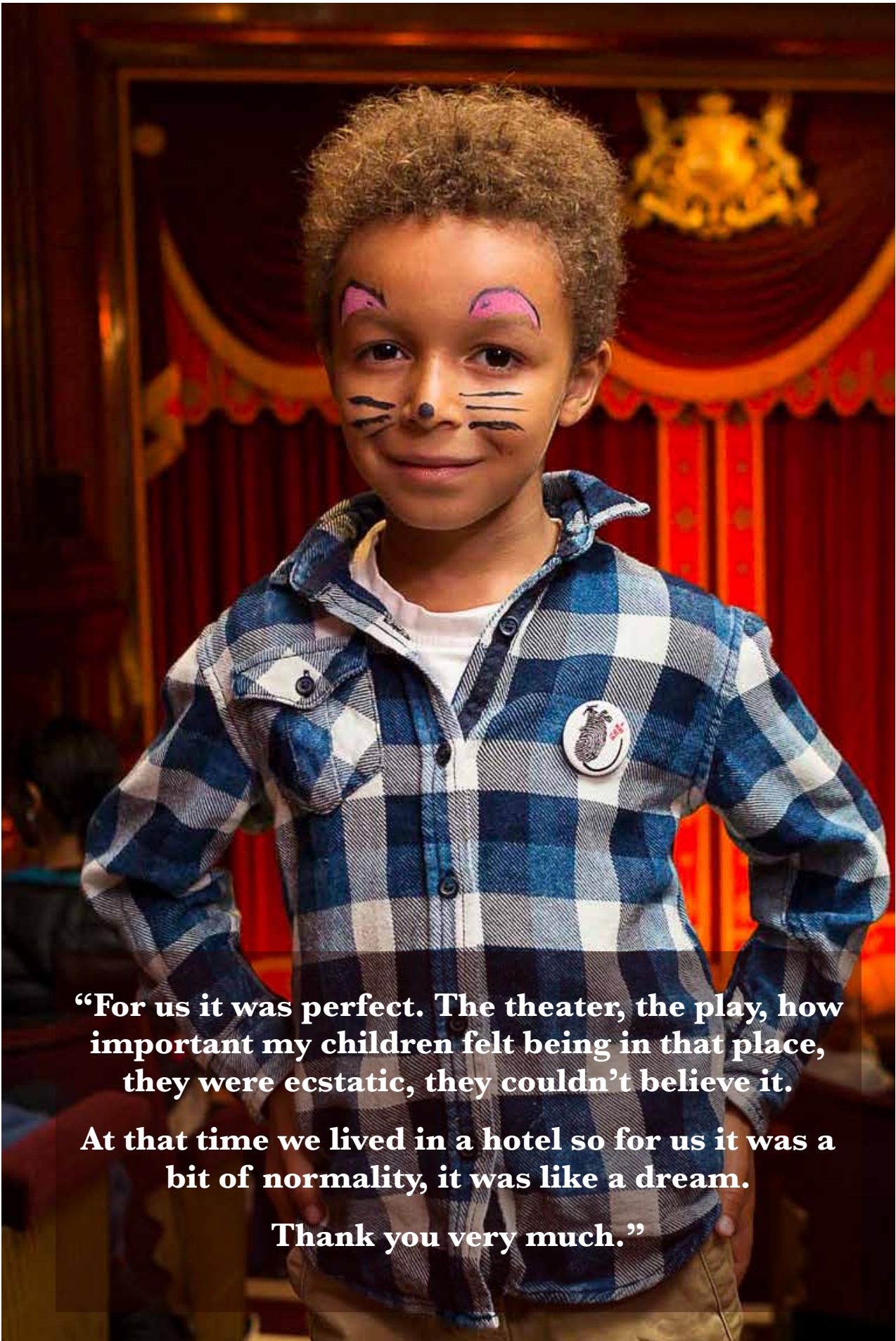
FRIENDSHIP MATINEE

A magical Christmas Carol concert was enjoyed by over 50 of our client families this year, courtesy of the Royal Albert Hall's Friendship Matinee. With rousing renditions of Sleighride and the 12 Days of Christmas, the day-time concert performed by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra was a hit with all.

BIKES O3E

Our thanks go to O3e once again this year. This wonderful B Corporation certified Team Building and Events company provided 7 new bikes for WLAC clients as a result of a team building day they provided for a large company.

Bikes provide a wide range of benefits for our client families: from balance, co-ordination skills and independence for our young people, to a new way of families enjoying time together.



“For us it was perfect. The theater, the play, how important my children felt being in that place, they were ecstatic, they couldn’t believe it.

At that time we lived in a hotel so for us it was a bit of normality, it was like a dream.

Thank you very much.”

Individual and Community Fundraising Events

We are dependent on individual and community fundraising efforts to contribute towards our vital frontline work

Read more below about the interesting and innovative ways that our supporters have organised events and raised funds on our behalf.

COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

As a well-established, local organisation we benefit from strong community support, some of which you can read about below. We are truly grateful for all fundraising efforts from supporters in our local community, whether individuals, groups, schools, companies or others.

BROOK GREEN EVENTS GROUP

Our enormous thanks go to Isabel, Brian, Emma, Gilly, Hettie, Jane and Vicky of the Brook Green Events Group, who raised an incredible £14,000 for WLAC over the last year with a series of fun, successful and popular events, including: Neighbourhood Nosh, the local Safari Supper with a superb reputation; the Annual Quiz, held at St Paul's Girls' School; the Living Advent Calendar, a festive community-participation fundraiser where local houses, shops and schools come together to light up windows to create a trail around the neighbourhood, with a different window "unveiled" each evening of advent; and An Evening of Bridge organised by the Sixsmith School of Bridge.

Our thanks go to Finlay Brewer for their kind sponsorship of these events throughout the year.

RAVENS COURT PARK GROUP

The Ravenscourt Park group organised Secret Suppers, a local safari supper, involving 100 guests.

The Group has been actively promoting WLAC in the local community and is building a network of schools, businesses and organisations who support the charity through fundraising and awareness raising.



MARATHON

Thank you to our eight runners who participated in this year's London Marathon. Becky, Carl, Ed, Hannah, Josh, Naomi, Sam and Shelley all took on the challenge for WLAC, and collectively raised over £17,000 - an amazing amount that will go a long way to supporting our clients.



POSTCARDS ANON

Thank you to everyone who supported our Postcards Anon sale at BBC Television Centre, helping to raise over £11,250 for WLAC.

Our thanks go to all of our very talented artists, including the Chelsea Pensioners, who collectively donated over 700 original postcard-sized pieces of artwork as well as pieces for our live and silent auctions.

Thank you to the Treblemakers, for their accapella performance; Philip Wooller for their kind sponsorship; and the Postcards Anon Committee and all of our wonderful volunteers who ensured the event ran so smoothly.

MATCH FUNDING CAMPAIGNS

We were thrilled this year to once again take part in not one, but two, match funding campaigns.

In June the Champions for Children campaign raised over £21,800, and in December the Big Give Christmas Challenge raised nearly £44,000.

Our thanks go to our Charity Champion, The Childhood Trust; our pledge givers, and our supporters who donated so generously during both Challenges.

**Can you join
our fundraising
network?**

Your Support

We are grateful to all our donors, volunteers and everyone who supports our fundraising events

There is a large demand for our service and much work is needed. Your support allows us to get that important work done.

Supporters help us in many different ways by:

MAKING DONATIONS

- Supporting our fundraising events
- Raising sponsorship e.g. marathon, personal challenge
- Participating in workplace match funding schemes
- Regular giving e.g. monthly direct debit
- Legacy giving in your will

RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT OUR WORK AND VOLUNTEERING

- Organising fundraising activities
- Sharing information with neighbours, family and friends
- Helping to organise and run fundraising events

- Helping at client events e.g. delivering Xmas food parcels
- Volunteering at our Head Office

WHY BECOME A VOLUNTEER?

Volunteering is a rewarding and enriching experience and can bring a sense of purpose and meaning.

Volunteers meet new people from a range of backgrounds and work together on projects with neighbours, local businesses and other organisations.

This can help us build connections, strengthen our sense of community and help us feel part of something bigger. Together we can make a positive difference.

REGULAR GIVING

Regular giving helps us to plan ahead with greater certainty.

Please consider setting up a monthly donation - you can do this via our website www.wlac.org.uk/donate

Can you tell your school, choir, tennis club or neighbours about WLAC? Perhaps you could run a fundraising event?

Have you considered leaving a gift to WLAC in your will?

Elizabeth Fergusson Bequest

Elizabeth Fergusson supported us for over 20 years including serving as the Chair of our Board. She remains in our hearts and her legacy continues.

We were delighted this year to be able to use her Bequest Fund to provide day trips and essential furniture and appliances to some of our most vulnerable clients. The Fund was set up for this specific reason, and we are pleased to have been able to use it to respond to requests for basic goods such as cot mattresses, children's beds and school uniforms.

All of the children we support are from low income families and many of these families are struggling to afford essential items. Support with these practical goods is making a huge difference to the lives of our clients.

School, Church and Business Fundraising Activities

LOCAL SCHOOLS

This year we have been supported once again by young people in local schools who recognise the need that exists in the local community, and find new and exciting ways to raise funds.

Our thanks go to the **Ravenscourt Park Preparatory School** who chose WLAC as their 2-year nominated charity partner, and who have raised over £33,000 so far with events including an Annual Quiz, Auction, Christmas Fair, Santa Run, Year 6 Enterprise day, Dress-up days, a Parent Summer Party, and participation in the London Marathon and Ride London.

Thank you to the **Unicorn School** who continued their long standing support through food voucher donations and Christmas gifts for clients.

Thank you to **St Paul's Girls' School** who offered space to host WLAC events; and to **The Godolphin and Latymer School** who provided all the display boards for Postcards Anon artwork.

LOCAL COMPANIES

Local companies have supported our work in a variety of ways this year.

Our thanks go to: **West 6**, who continued to support our work in many ways, most recently with donations from customer plastic bag purchases; **Artgo Ltd** who kindly gave us space to sort and distribute client hampers; **Olympia auctions**, who donated the proceeds from a warm, intimate and thought-provoking discussion with the artist Alex Manolatos; **John Lewis** through their Community Matters scheme; **Vitol Services** who donated towards our Christmas Appeal; **Stanhope PLC** who accommodated the Postcards Anon exhibition at TV Centre on Wood Lane and three local Estate Agents **Finlay Brewer, Horton & Garton**, and **Philip Wooller**, who have provided kind sponsorship for fundraising events throughout the year.

LOCAL CHURCHES

Thank you to Celia Harper and the Chiswick Baroque, who once again presented an uplifting and warming evening of music at Holy Innocents Church, where the beautiful voices perfectly matched the beauty of the church on a cold winters' evening.



VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Our amazing team of volunteers have been tireless in their work for WLAC this year. This support not only helps to ensure the smooth-running of the organisation, but also helps to foster a warm sense of holistic care for the families who we see.

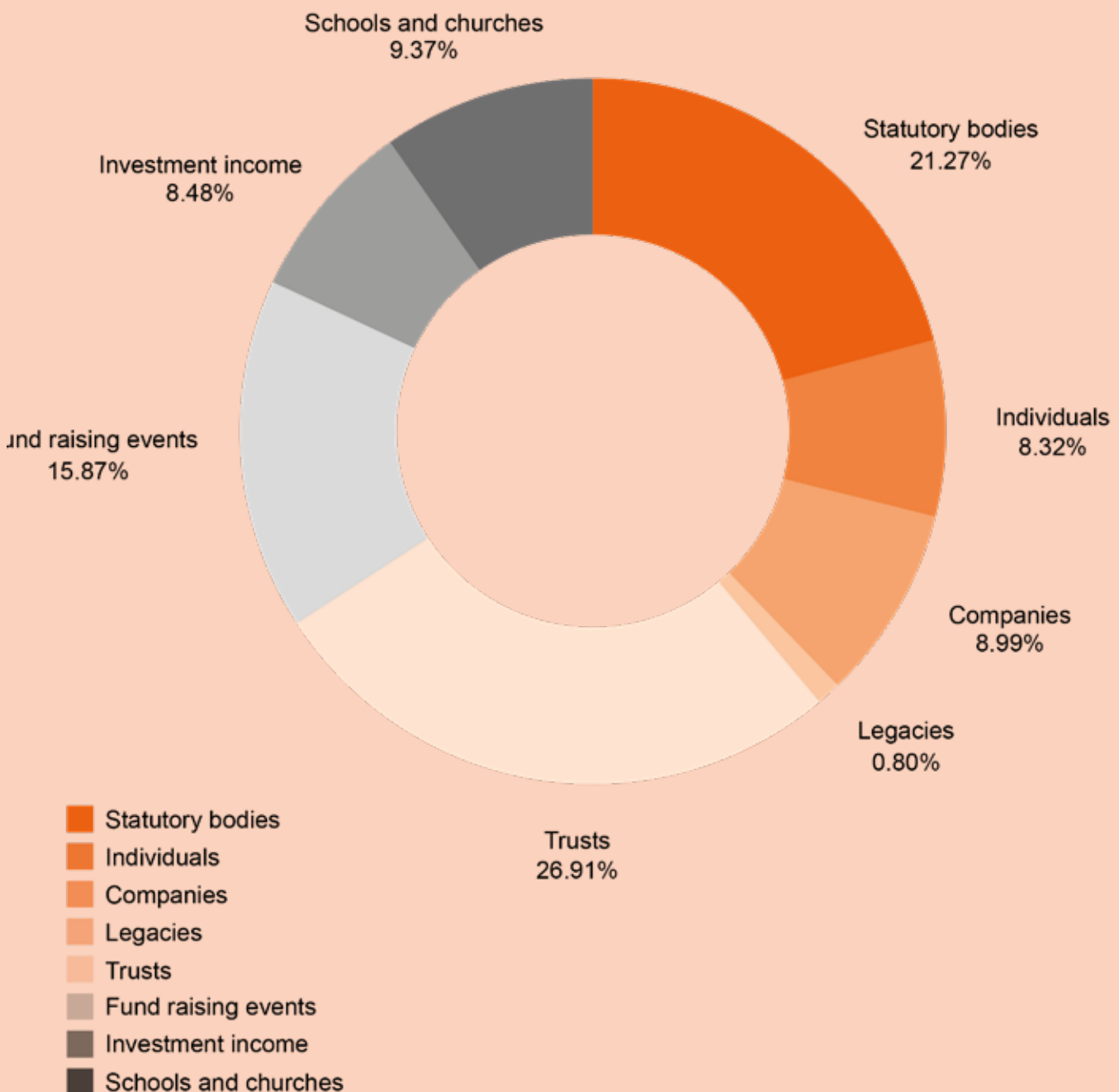
To our fabulous volunteers, thank you for all your help:

- packing and distributing Christmas hampers to clients
- supporting us to claim Gift Aid
- uploading artwork to be sold online
- organising fundraising events
- helping us to write personalised thank you letters
- assisting with office administration and monitoring and evaluation
- writing for our regular newsletters

Financial Overview

This year saw an increase in our costs of charitable activities, reflecting an increase in our frontline therapeutic staff provision in response to the growing demand for mental health support. The deficit that we had anticipated materialized, albeit lower than expected, largely due to a growth in income which outperformed our budgeted expectations.

In what was predicted to be a lean, but high-need, year for the third sector as a whole, we were pleased to be able to draw on a small amount of our reserves in order to help fund an increase in our service provision.

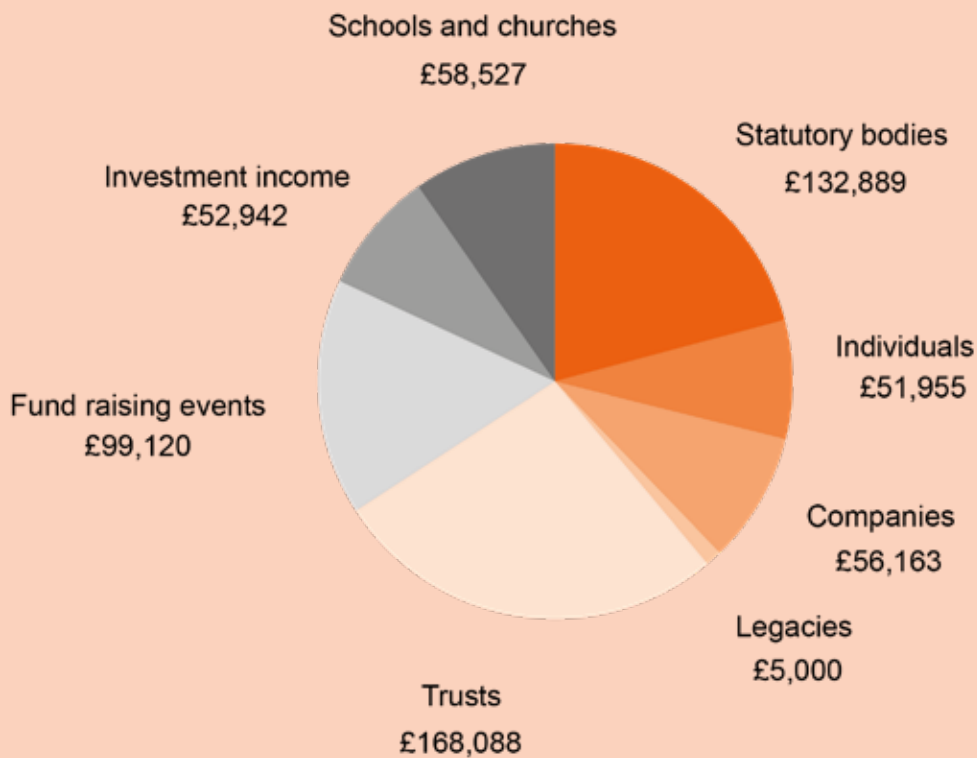


The pie chart opposite shows the broad base of revenue streams that we nurture. Many of our funders are long-term and loyal, recognising our strong local reputation for providing effective, efficient and transformative interventions.

Our restricted funding made up 28% of our total income this year, and this comprised donations from trusts and grants and companies.

Unrestricted funding allows WLAC the flexibility to respond to emerging needs that we see on the frontline, for example allowing us to adapt programmes if we see changing needs in a specific cohort of clients. However, we welcome all funding, and would especially like to extend our appreciation this year to long term funders, whose commitment enables us to plan sustainably and with more certainty for the coming years.

We understand that therapy services are resource intensive, but believe that they offer long term value-for-money. We try to work with families as early as possible, with the hope of equipping children, young people and families with tools with which they can transform their lives and reach their potential.



Financial Numbers

West London Action For Children Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2023

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	2023	2023	2023	2023
	£	£	£	£
Incoming resources				
<i>Incoming resources from generated funds</i>				
Voluntary Income	226,190	246,432	472,622	326,948
Activities for generating funds	99,120	-	99,120	83,413
Investment Income	52,942	-	52,942	50,187
Total incoming resources	378,252	246,432	624,684	460,548
Resources expended				
<i>Costs of generating funds</i>				
<i>Costs of generating voluntary income</i>	45,013	-	45,013	40,612
<i>Costs of charitable activities</i>	375,966	246,432	622,398	562,994
Total resources expended	420,979	246,432	667,411	603,606
Net incoming resources before transfers between funds	(42,727)	-	(42,727)	(143,058)
Net incoming resources before other recognised gains and losses	(42,727)	-	(42,727)	(143,058)
Other recognised gains and losses				
<i>Gains (losses) on investment assets</i>	(120,030)	-	(120,030)	27,620
<i>Gains on pension deficit revaluation</i>	53	-	53	17,204
Net movement in funds	(162,704)	-	(162,704)	(98,234)
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward	1,972,665	-	1,972,665	2,070,899
Total Funds carried forward	1,809,961	-	1,809,961	1,972,665

These accounts are a summary of information extracted from the full annual accounts. These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity.

For further information, the full accounts, the auditors' report on those accounts, and the trustees' annual report should be examined. Copies of these may be obtained from the administrator.

West London Action For Children Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2023

<i>The assets and liabilities of the charity :</i>	2023	2022
	£	£
Fixed assets		
Investments :-		
Investments	1,733,303	1,853,333
Current assets		
Debtors	23,969	13,810
Cash at bank and in hand	194,734	201,518
Total current assets	<u>218,703</u>	<u>215,328</u>
Creditors:-		
amounts due within one year	(140,068)	(92,895)
Net current assets	<u>78,635</u>	<u>122,433</u>
Total assets less current liabilities	<u>1,811,938</u>	<u>1,975,766</u>
Creditors:-		
amounts due after more than one year	-	-
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(1,977)	(3,101)
Net assets including pension asset / liability	<u>1,809,961</u>	<u>1,972,665</u>
The funds of the charity :		
Unrestricted income funds		
Unrestricted revenue accumulated funds	500,505	580,470
Designated revenue funds	1,309,456	1,392,195
Total unrestricted funds	<u>1,809,961</u>	<u>1,972,665</u>
Restricted income funds		
Restricted revenue accumulated funds	-	-
Total restricted funds	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total charity funds	<u>1,809,961</u>	<u>1,972,665</u>

The annual accounts were approved on 20th June 2023, have been audited, and have been submitted to the Charity Commission and The Registrar of Companies.

Signed on behalf of the board of trustees - Mrs Margaret Kaufman Chair of Trustees

Who's Who in WLAC

Thank you to all the people that make WLAC work

West London Action for Children has been caring for children at risk in Chelsea, Kensington, Hammersmith and Fulham since 1917.

TRUSTEES

West London Action for Children is governed by a diverse Board of thirteen Trustees, who cover a range of specialities:

Meg Kaufman - Chair of Trustees

Neil Collins - Hon. Treasurer, Financial journalist

Dr Ruth Caleb - Psychotherapist and former head of counselling services

Ashley Chan - Operations Manager NHS Foundation Trust

John Habgood - Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer

Andrea Henry - Editorial Director

Brian Hockett - Civil Engineer & Non Executive Director of the London Ambulance Service

Margaret Kafton - Transpersonal Integrative Psychotherapist

Basia Kapp - Former School Governor and special needs education specialist

Dr Shanaz Meeran - GP Cancer lead

Katy Millard - Deputy Director of Operations, London Ambulance Service

Aubrey St Louis - Housing Benefit Manager

Elizabeth Webber - Architect

STAFF TEAM:

Our highly-trained therapy team have a wide range of expertise in their respective fields. They are a dedicated and have a strong belief in their clients' strengths and skills.

Heather Boxer - Chief Executive

Gazala Alvi - MA (Hons) PGDip Assistant Fundraiser

Maria Augustine-Barrett - MSc Child & Adolescent Psychotherapist

Karen Bassett - MA Family and Systemic Psychotherapist

Greg Barton - BA (Hons) Administrator

Georgina Bell - D.Clin.Psych Clinical Psychologist, Lead Therapist

Natalie Burge - MA (Oxon) Administrator

Emma Flanagan - BA MSc DipSW Integrative Psychotherapist

Lanette Gayle - BSc (Hons) Integrative Psychotherapist

Jo Hercock - BSc (Hons) MA ADIP Integrative Psychotherapist

Louis Hook - BA (Hons) MSc Psychotherapist

Jayne Kelly - BA (Hons) MA Integrative Psychotherapist

Susanne Nawratil - MA (Hons) Child & Adolescent Psychotherapist

Stefan Osafo - Play Facilitator

Yvonne Osafo - PhD MSc Child & Adolescent Psychotherapist

Veronica Pretelt - BA Psych MA MHC Psychotherapist

Deborah Quy - BSc DipCouns MSc Family and Systemic Psychotherapist

Roz Sambrook-Smith - BA PGDip MA (Hons) Child & Adolescent Psychotherapist

Nina Thomas - MSc PGDip Child & Adolescent Psychotherapist

Astrid Winkler - MA(Hons) MSc(Hons) Family and Systemic Psychotherapist

Special Thanks

Our special thanks go to **Elizabeth Webber** who stepped into the role of Chair of Trustees just before the world entered the pandemic.

Her calm, positive stewardship, and compassion and commitment helped us to adapt and serve our clients through this exceptional crisis period, and we are all very grateful to her.

Our thanks also go to **Katherine Brown** for so kindly designing our new website, which now offers an easy and seamless journey for clients and supporters alike, and for all her design work on the Annual Review.

Our thanks to the models from the **Pimlico Toy Library** and to **Bridget Beilby** for photographing them.

EVENTS GROUPS

We are also grateful to our local Events Groups who work tirelessly to organise fundraising events throughout the year:

Brook Green Events Group

Hettie Freeland, Brian Hockett, Gilly Knights
Emma Sanderson, Vicky Sixsmith, Isabel Taylor, Jane Wood

Ravenscourt Park Events Group

Punit Bhatia, Sally Brunner, Natalie Burge,
Meg Kaufman, Isobel Leaviss, Sue Lee Stern,
Shweta Sharma Bhatia

Postcards Anon Committee

Penny Bowen, Sandy Engelbach, Desiree Kerswell, Clare Odgers, Fiona Timmis. Our thanks also go to the Chelsea Pensioners for their artwork contributions, and the Treblemakers

Regular Volunteers

Stephen Bell, Katherine Brown, Michele Mathieson, Ann Mundt, Annabel Newall, Gitte O'Toole, Angela Ridgeon, Vanya Yeung

In remembrance

It is with profound condolences to their families, we tell you of the deaths of:

- Dowager Duchess of Richmond and Gordon
- Lady (Sally) Dowson
- Elizabeth Fergusson
- Lady (Ann) Chorley
- Lady (Ailsa) O'Brien
- Baroness Linklater
- Muriel Marsh

All of whom so generously gave time, energy, sage advice and support to West London Action for Children over so many years.

Our Supporters

Patrons

Sir Charles Burnett
Jessica Webber
Rt Hon Alan Johnson
Jon Snow

Benefactors

(£300+ PER YEAR)

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Mrs E. Sanderson
Mr L. Stellini
Lady Julia Waite
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(£200+ PER YEAR)

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Mr G. Taunton-Collins
Mr S. Tesler
Mrs J. Whitby
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Trusts and Grants

Andrew Lyon Memorial Trust
BBC Children in Need
Caroline Agnes Joan Hervey Trust
City Bridge Foundation
Dudley and Geoffrey Cox Charitable Trust
Grange Farm
K W Family Trust
Jaffe Family Relief Fund
John Lyon's Charity
Miss A B Pollen Trust
Multithon Charitable Trust
The A & G Golding Charitable Trust
The Ashcroft Charitable Trust
The Band Trust
The Childhood Trust
The Clover Trust
The Elizabeth Bennett Charitable Trust
The Kilfinan Trust
The Gilander Foundation
The Girdlers' Company Charitable Trust
The Kensington and Chelsea Foundation
The Lightbulb Trust
The MAYO Foundation
The Rockspring Charitable Trust
West London Zone

Legacy donations

Ann Chorley
Elizabeth Fergusson
Muriel Marsh

Gifts in Kind & Other Donors

Artgo Limited
BBC Television Centre
Chelsea Pensioners
Chelsea Methodist Church
Chiswick Baroque
The Church of The Holy Innocents
Clover Trust
Community Days Out
Finlay Brewer
French Huguenot Church

Friends of Brook Green
Fulham Methodist Church
Gerson Lehrman Group
Godolphin & Latymer School
Goldman Sachs International
Go Live Theatre Project
Horton & Garton
Imperial College London
John Lewis
Junior League of London
Kew Green Prep School
Kilfinan Trust
Latymer Upper School
O3e Charity Bike Build
Olympia Auctions

Philip Wooller
Ravenscourt Park Prep School
Royal Albert Hall
St Paul's Church, Chiswick
St Paul's Church, Hammersmith
St Paul's Girls' School
Stanhope PLC
Treblemakers
Unicorn School
Vitol Services Limited
West 6 Garden Centre
Young Hammersmith and Fulham Foundation

A big thank you to all our supporters from all of us at West London Action for Children.



Major Funders



CITY BRIDGE
FOUNDATION



JOHN LYON'S
CHARITY



SKE



West London Action for Children

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