

citizens^{uk}

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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ORGANISING AND SOCIAL IMPACT



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THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A MORE IMPORTANT TIME FOR COMMUNITIES TO WORK TOGETHER FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

Citizens UK helps its 450 member institutions to develop leaders, so they can participate in public life and hold politicians and other decision-makers to account on the issues that matter to them.

We prioritise personal relationships and membership of institutions rooted within the community. Together we organise to influence people who hold power in government, business and public life.

Our members are a diverse range of organisations including schools, churches, mosques, synagogues, parents' groups, health practices, charities and trade unions.

WE'RE CHANNELING ANGER INTO ACTION AND PEOPLE-POWERED CHANGE



MATTHEW BOLTON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is hard to start this without a deep reflection on what a uniquely difficult year 2020 has been.

Citizens UK had to deal with an extremely hard first wave of Covid-19. Two much-loved former colleagues, Josephine, our longest serving member staff between 2007-19; and Mona, a tireless refugee campaigner with our former project Safe Passage, both tragically died from Covid-19.

We saw huge upheaval personally, for our method, our members and the people we support. With the health and financial impacts disproportionately falling on those least able to weather the health and economic storm, it was clear our mission to organise for justice and the common good was more urgent than ever.

Even amongst the tragedy and sadness felt this year, I take heart from the many good things we have achieved.

Together we strengthened the bonds between communities at a time when people needed each other most.

We organised **£100,000 in direct donations of money, food and technology** to members and people they work with.

The Living Wage Foundation secured tens of thousands of real Living Wage pay-rises for key workers and we organised with care workers fighting for a Living Wage.

We upgraded and rapidly rolled out new online infrastructure and training. We organised hundreds-strong Zoom meetings to come up with people-powered responses to structural racism, reopening refugee routes or housing for homeless people. And we launched into listening and action on mental health across England and Wales.

We should be proud of what we have done together in difficult circumstances.

I remain determined to support members and projects work in 2021 and undo the injustice and inequality made worse by the pandemic.

JUSTICE WON AND DIVERSE COMMUNITY ALLIANCES FORMED



KAREN ROOMS
CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

As the incoming Chair of Trustees I would first like to pay tribute to the incredible leadership and dedication of Kaneez Shaid, our outgoing Chair of Trustees. Under her stewardship, good governance and relationships have helped the organisation grow and make a difference.

It's been quite a year to take on this role. My Chapter, Leicester & Leicestershire Citizens, like others, faced massive disruption to our lives and ways of connecting together. We've been organising harder than ever, (even if it is mainly over Zoom rather than a good old-fashioned one-to-one.)

While the power of face-to-face assembly and leadership development remains central to our method of Community Organising, we have shown digital technology can also enable powerful and effective work.

With weekly training offers, and a new website and members area, **Citizens UK has not only responded to the**

crisis, but built the foundations for longer-term change, new resources and ways of working to add greater benefit to our membership.

A year on from the start of the pandemic, we can see the patient long-term work needed to undo the damage from Covid 19. **I'm particularly proud that we'll continue to stand with care workers in their struggle for a Living Wage.**

We'll support Parents and Communities Together (PACT) to gain confidence and become leaders. And we'll scale up community sponsorship of refugees.

I relish the opportunity to see more justice won and look forward to working with you all to achieve our many shared goals.

A NEW ONLINE HOME FOR ALL YOUR COMMUNITY ORGANISING NEEDS



WE'VE LAUNCHED A BRAND NEW WEBSITE!

Packed with campaign wins, Chapter pages, an exclusive members area and much more, our new website has everything you need to support you to campaign and organise in your local community.

NOT A CITIZENS UK MEMBER AND WANT TO LEARN MORE? HEAD TO PAGE 10

TOP 4 THINGS TO DISCOVER

ON CITIZENSUK.ORG

1. **TRAINING RESOURCES.**
2. **STORIES OF SOCIAL CHANGE WON.**
3. **SUBSCRIBE FOR LOCAL AND NATIONAL UPDATES.**
4. **EXCLUSIVE MEMBERS AREA.**

4 WAYS CITIZENS UK LEADERS ARE ORGANISING DURING THE PANDEMIC

The Covid-19 pandemic has had an overwhelming impact on so many vulnerable communities across the UK.

In early 2020, we ran a rapid listening campaign to hear from our members about their concerns and fears.

Citizens UK Chapters listened to their communities - and these are just some of the ways they have been organising to support people through Covid-19.

Head to page 8 for a full update on our campaigns.



TACKLING BAME HEALTH INEQUALITIES

“

OUR WORK WITH [CITIZENS UK] HAS HELPED SAVE THOUSANDS OF LIVES.

- Abbas Mirza, Barts NHS Trust

”

The pandemic shone a light on the injustice that people of colour face in healthcare.

Citizens Chapters up and down the country, like Nottingham and Birmingham, ran a listening campaign on BAME health inequalities and issue workshops.

Members have been working on a range of fronts, to distributing video appeals and information about social distancing guidelines in translated languages. to opening their doors as vaccination centres.

LIVING WAGE EFFORT

The Living Wage movement grew from strength to strength even in such a difficult year.

In November 2020, 1,400 new Living Wage employers joined the movement, giving additional 33,000 pay rises for some of the lowest paid workers.

“

OVER 20,000 PAYRISES WERE FOR KEY WORKERS INCLUDING OVER 5,000 IN SOCIAL CARE.

”

And our first Living Hours Employers - Aviva and Standard Life Aberdeen committed to efforts to tackle insecure hours in employment, progressing this new initiative to tackle in-work poverty.

DIGITAL INCLUSION

Chapters across the country have been providing digital support to members.

Through South London Citizens' Latinx parent group, Leaders have worked with their local council to provide translated Covid-19 advice. In Milton Keynes, laptops and tablets were given to young people so they wouldn't miss out on school.

“
**LOCKDOWN HAS BEEN HARD FOR OUR
EAL (ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL
LANGUAGE) CHILDREN. CITIZENS
HELPED ME GET FUNDING TO RUN A
SUMMER SCHOOL AND TABLETS FOR
A NEW BEDTIME BOOK CLUB. NOW
I FEEL SO CONFIDENT. THIS IS HOW
OUR COMMUNITY SHOULD WORK
TOGETHER WITH OTHERS.**

- Rooda Abdillahi, Chair of Africa Diaspora

10 iPads were provided to Colchester YMCA to help residents access vital online Universal Credit and housing applications.

TOGETHER WE CAN

Many of our members said they were concerned about people with insecure immigration status and whether they would be eligible for much-needed support.

Over 30 Leaders formed and are campaigning to settle the status of everyone who calls the UK home. They have organised despite the pandemic - over 6,000 people have signed a letter to Boris Johnson, tens of thousands have shared a video on the issue, and Leaders have met with key politicians.

The team, led by undocumented people, have also been trained in campaigning and advanced communications techniques, true to our values of putting people in charge of their own campaigns strategy.

Find out more at citizensuk.org/campaigns.

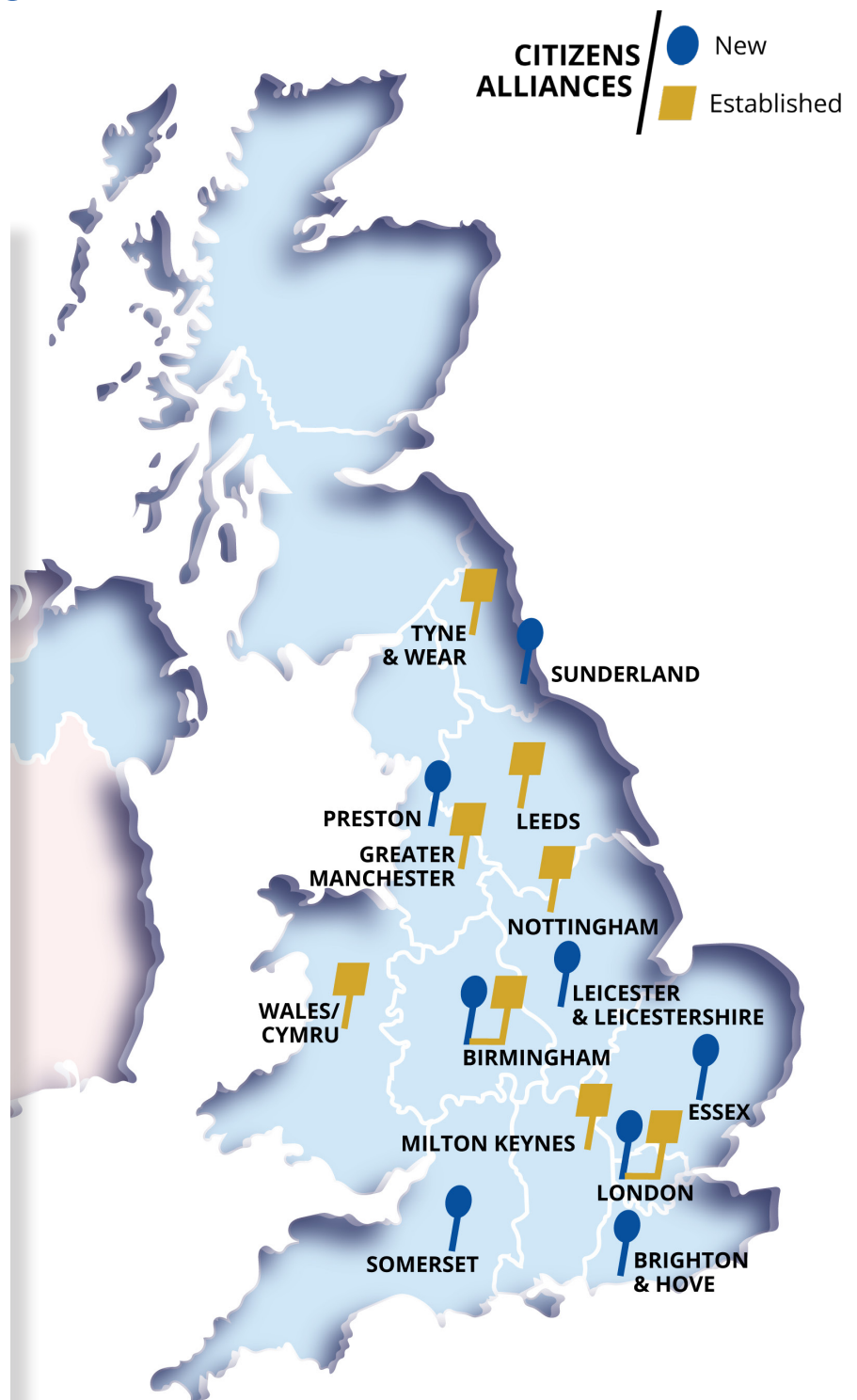


GROWTH PROJECT

Over the last three years, we worked on a report to analyse how Community Organising has been used to increase civic leadership and ordinary people's power to make change in 10 areas across England.

Growing across England and Wales

- **Nine of the 10** planned new alliances have established themselves and three new alliances are in development.
- There are **71 civil society institutions** in membership and a further 41 civil society institutions are becoming members.
- **746 people** are currently actively involved in their Citizens alliance through leadership groups, core teams and campaign teams.
- In 2020, **994 people** turned out to the various actions led by the alliances.
- **£195,050** has been secured in annual dues with a **further £52,000** committed as other institutions join.
- **A 11th growth area**, Peterborough, recruited its first community organiser in 2020.



Citizens UK polling showed 25% of adults have volunteered during the Covid-19 pandemic. Many new Chapters are playing key part in their communities Covid-19 response.*

5 LOCAL WINS FROM NEW CITIZENS CHAPTERS



ESSEX Leaders won a campaign for their local swimming pool to offer all women only swimming sessions.

SUNDERLAND Local Authority became accredited as a Living Wage employer after campaigning from Citizens Sunderland Leaders.

CITIZENS SOMERSET negotiated with their local councils at their first assembly, with several agreeing to work with Leaders on issues like public transport, housing and securing a real Living Wage.

SOUTH BIRMINGHAM Leaders started an online campaign to help a community business for home care workers to secure PPE. It resulted in national media coverage, with companies like Jaguar donating.

BARKING AND DAGENHAM Leaders raised £36,000 for local members as part of their response to Covid-19.

*Leaders from new Citizens alliances said Community Organising equips them to build better relationships in their organisation (90%) and to better connect with people of different backgrounds in their area (82%).**



BECOME A MEMBER

WHAT DOES BECOMING A MEMBER LOOK LIKE?

Head to citizensuk.org/local-chapters to find your local Organiser

From schools, to trade unions and faith institutions, over 450 organisations across the country make up Citizens UK's diverse membership.

We are most powerful when organising together in our communities. And we're always looking for new members to continue fighting social injustice!

Initiate and participate in local campaigns for **social justice.**

Benefit from the support of a professional **Community Organiser.**

Access **training and leadership development** opportunities for your **members.**

Build **stronger relationships** with **other local groups.**

Use Community Organising for **institutional development.**



OUR ONLINE MEMBERS' AREA IS PACKED WITH RESOURCES!

By becoming a Citizens UK member, you'll get access to our exclusive members' area which includes:

ORGANISE:

Organising reading list

LISTEN:

Twelve steps to plan an listening campaign

PLAN:

Communications resources

ACT:

A story of action: Tesco and the Living Wage

Find out more at citizensuk.org/become-a-member

Are you already a member? Don't have your login? Email your local Organiser!

CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

citizens

Leicester & Leicestershire

West London Citizens pioneered a listening campaign on climate change, engaging 550 people from across the city and developing concrete asks for green jobs and better insulation.

West London
citizens

West London Citizens pioneered a listening campaign on climate change, engaging 550 people from across the city and developing concrete asks for green jobs and better insulation.

Greater Manchester
citizens

Greater Manchester Citizens organised with care workers to gain national coverage for our demand for a Real Living Wage for those on the frontline of the pandemic.

SPONSOR REFUGEES

At December's Refugees Still Welcome Assembly we celebrated the 20,000 refugees resettled in the UK since 2015 with the Immigration Minister, Chris Philp MP.

Refugee resettlement is now up and running again and a £1 million investment pledged by philanthropist, Ed Shapiro, means an extra thousand refugees could come to the UK if 200 communities are willing to step up and sponsor them.

If you are up for the challenge, our Sponsor Refugees team is ready to help.

Get in touch communitysponsorship@citizensuk.org



MENTAL HEALTH

"I'm struggling to find the words to express how utterly brilliant it was [to attend Citizens mental health training]. For so many reasons and on so many levels, it was incredible validation and I'm excited up to the eyeballs about the possibilities."

- Nottingham Citizens Leader

Ensuring people are supported with mental health issues was another key concern amongst members. Leaders from **Brighton & Hove** secured a commitment from the Mental Health Trust to train 50 volunteers in mental health first aid.

And 30 leaders in **Nottingham Citizens** received mental health training - they will deliver this across their Chapter in 15 different institutions including schools, churches, trade unions, and mosques.



LIVING WAGE

We stood with key workers during the pandemic. Leeds, North London, Cardiff and other Chapters took action with low paid staff.

Find out more about our wins at citizensuk.org/campaigns/our-wins



MEET OUR LEADERS

Citizens UK Leaders are tirelessly organising up and down the country for change in their local communities.

Nirushan Sudarsan and Alison Webster are two Leaders fighting injustices and campaigning on issues including employment, education and a real Living Wage.



BUILD YOUR POWER BY CONNECTING WITH FELLOW LEADERS



**Nirushan Sudarsan,
Citizens Cymru Wales**

Find out what you're passionate about changing. What matters to you and what are the issues that you care about?

More often than not, you'll find people in your local community who are just as passionate as you and are organising on those issues too.

It really helps by having and building a relationship with someone who is already organising, like other Leaders and hearing their experience. It'll empower you to do that yourself!

Don't be afraid to ask questions either - I still have so many! Take every opportunity that comes in terms of learning and don't be disappointed or disheartened if things aren't going the way you expect to straightaway when you take action.

Not everything you will win, and you might have to compromise here and there in order to achieve change. But that's fine – it's part of it! Once you understand that you'll be really great at using organising for a tool for change.



BUILDING BRIDGES AND CHALLENGING HATE

**Alison Webster,
Diocese of Oxford,
Thames Valley Citizens**

One of the first events I went to with Citizens Milton Keynes was an event to highlight hate crime within the city, and what could be done about it.

I loved that the platform was shared between a Muslim who'd experienced Islamophobia, an Asian man who'd experienced racist abuse through his work running a small business in Milton Keynes, and a gay man who'd experienced homophobic abuse through his job at a local train company.

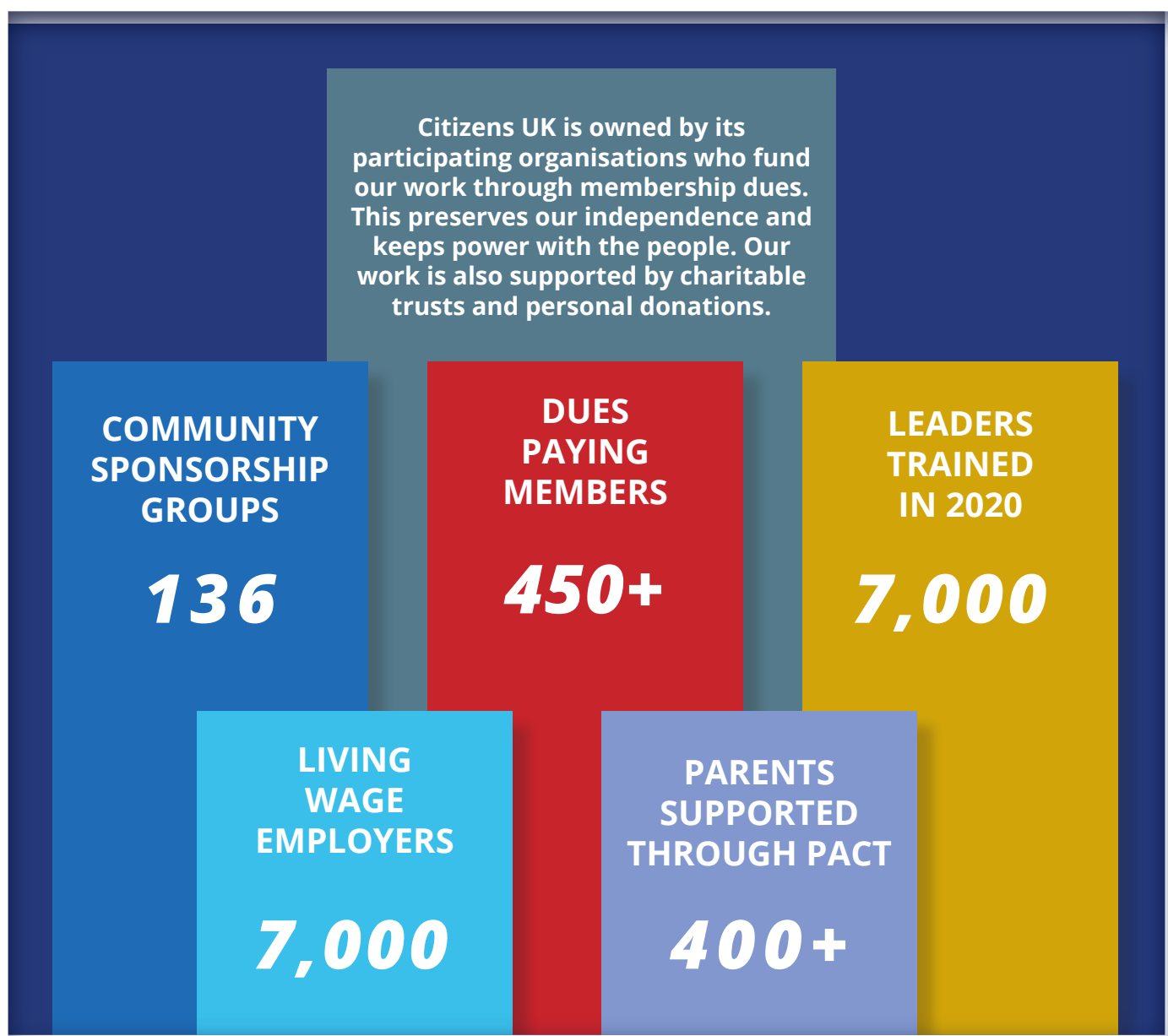
The fact that the event was in a church building, and that that could happen was both a surprise and a delight for me.

Citizens is at its best when it is bringing people from all walks of life, including those who have never organised together in an inclusive campaign to challenge injustice and realise their own power.

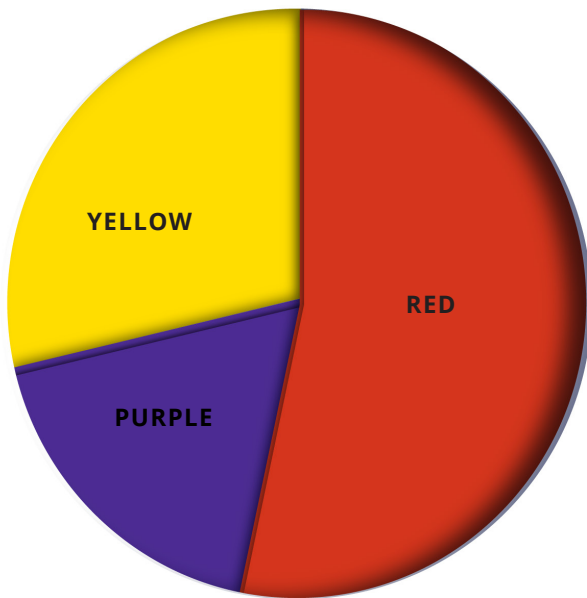


FINANCIAL REPORT

2019/2020

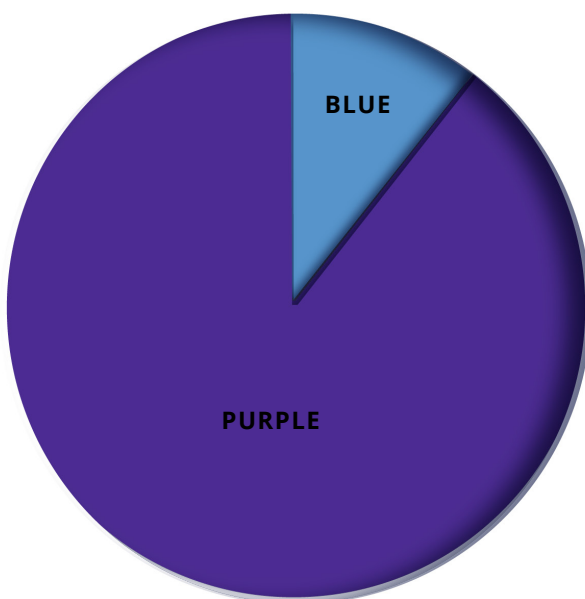


TOTAL INCOME: £5,663,047

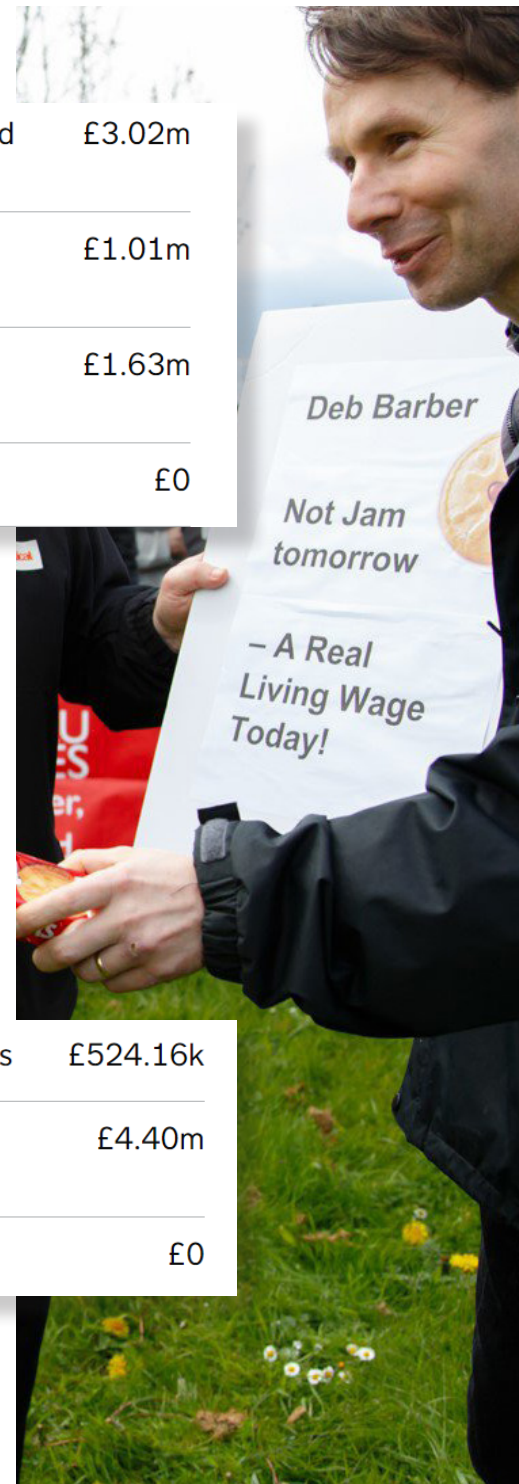


RED	Donations and legacies	£3.02m
PURPLE	Charitable activities	£1.01m
YELLOW	Other trading activities	£1.63m
GREEN	Investments	£0

TOTAL EXPENDITURE £4,921,587



BLUE	Raising funds	£524.16k
PURPLE	Charitable activities	£4.40m
BLACK	Other	£0



For the full report, go to bit.ly/CitizensAnnualReport

SIGN UP TO OUR TRAINING

3-DAY COMMUNITY ORGANISING TRAINING

Book now at citizensuk.org/training

We're running our Community Organising training online in 2021!

Our 3-day Community Leadership Training course will equip you with more knowledge about Community Organising, applying practical skills to community leadership, and taking action for social justice.

You'll leave ready to take your learning and put it into action - booking in 1-2-1 in your organisations or groups and organising actions!

UPCOMING TRAINING DATES:

Wednesday 24th - Friday 26th
March, 2021
(online)

Monday 4th - Wednesday 6th
October, 2021
(location TBC)

Tuesday 29th - Thursday 31st
March, 2022
(location TBC)

JOIN OUR WEEKLY ONLINE TRAINING

EVERY THURSDAY AT 16:00 - 17:15

From learning more about what Community Organising is, to developing Leaders, our weekly Zoom learning sessions dive into many aspects of Organising and winning campaigns.

Find out more at citizensuk.org/training to sign-up!

**Get in touch with your
local Organiser at
citizensuk.org/chapters
to find out more.**

