

the
switch

Annual Report

2020-21

theswitch.org

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About us

Educational experiences that change everything

Founded 30 years ago in the Tower Hamlets area of London, The Switch is a charity committed to helping children and young people break the endless cycle of poverty.

Through a wide range of volunteer-based programmes, The Switch provides a vital link between education and the world of work. Bringing communities together, we're helping businesses to give back and enabling schools to achieve more. The result: we're permanently changing the future outlook for thousands.

Childhood poverty should never be a barrier to success, in Tower Hamlets, or anywhere else. By working together, we can improve social mobility and bring about urgent change.

Welcome



Helen Sanson

Director,
The Switch

Welcome to our last ever Annual Report as Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership! We are not closing down, but you will see from the report cover that we are changing our name and undergoing a full rebrand. From November 2021 we will be known as 'The Switch'.

This rebrand has been a part of our development strategy to coincide with our 30th year anniversary, which we will celebrate in the coming year with events, fundraising campaigns and a spotlight on some of our achievements. Many of our supporters have been partnering with us for 30 years and some are very new, but we look forward to sharing this with all of you.

It has been a privilege to lead the Charity through this exciting transformation. It is not just about changing our name. We hope you will join with us in 'switching' the narrative about Tower Hamlets from a borough steeped in poverty and disadvantage, to one of rich opportunities, great career paths and a talented, diverse future workforce. Of course, we will continue to focus on the connections between schools and businesses in Tower Hamlets, but as part of the new branding we intend to make those connections even more dynamic and even more impactful on young peoples' lives.

This last year has continued to present Covid 19 challenges to our work. When schools closed for the second time in January 2021, we were forced to pivot our programmes once again, but this time we were more prepared. We knew that some students lacked capability at home to access live lessons and that schools were under immense pressures to deliver curriculum-based learning. To provide something different and motivational for students we prepared a series of recorded webinars, 'ConnectED' involving our fantastic business partners, whose volunteers brought to life a huge variety of careers, sectors and job roles. We made these freely available to schools all over the country via our network of Education Business Partnerships and students were able to watch them in their own time. We also upscaled our Writing Partners Programme, brought in during Covid to replace Reading Partners. Based on the 'pen-pal' model, I am proud to say that nearly 700 children have written and received regular letters from volunteers as far afield as Columbia, India, Belgium, Scotland and Dubai as well our core London based volunteers. Truly bringing the World of Work into the classroom and re-igniting a love for a forgotten art form.

We hope you enjoy reading all about our past year and we hope you will continue to support us as The Switch into our next 30 years. Schools say our services are as much needed as ever and we will be sharing more exciting innovations with you in 2022.



Mark Campbell

Chairman,
The Switch

When schools went back in September 2020 we were optimistic that we would begin a return to face to face volunteering and some semblance of ‘business as usual’.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has continued to disrupt our charity and our core operating model. This has had a knock-on effect on our finances, and we report a deficit for this financial year. This is due largely to being unable to deliver key, fee generating services such as work experience. Fortunately, the Charity has healthy reserves for a rainy day, and we have been able to withstand this loss of income in the short term. We will make adaptations should the situation with Covid not improve in the near future.

As one of Tower Hamlets EBP’s longest standing Reading Partners with almost 30 years of weekly reading sessions, I can vouch for the many benefits of volunteering with local school pupils. Volunteers are our lifeblood, and it is their stories, their experiences, their time and their interest in a young person that can change a child’s future. As we look forward to our next 30 years, we have some exciting additions to our work. We will begin to support young people aged 18–25 in the space between school and work, helping them to navigate whether an Apprenticeship, University degree or a job is the best pathway for them and supporting them during these crucial transitions. In parallel we will be offering our corporate partners support with developing bespoke recruitment pipelines for their young employees.

During the pandemic, the attainment gap between the most affluent students and the most disadvantaged widened once again. Through our aspirational programmes we can all help narrow that gap. As we build on our legacy of Tower Hamlets EBP and start a new era as The Switch, we are more determined than ever to ensure that all young people can discover their best future.



Pupil journey

We offer tailor-made programmes which encourage participation and engagement from Primary School right through to working life.

1

5-11 year olds

- Writing Partners
- Number Partners
- Reading Partners
- BEE (Business Enterprise Employability)
- Abacus
- The Transitions Project

2

11-16 year olds

- Aim2Attain
- Business Mentoring
- CV Clinic
- East Potential Project
- Getting Ahead
- Head to Head
- Language Mentoring
- Pre-16 Skills Workshops
- The Transitions Project
- Work Experience



3

Post 16

- Aim2Attain
- Business Mentoring
- Post-16 Skills Workshops
- Work Experience

4

Alumni

Our Alumni Support Network offers The Switch alumni a series of one off events and networking opportunities with local employers. We also regularly recruit Alumni Ambassadors.

Case studies

Barclays: Quickly adapting to reach students virtually

When schools closed in January 2021 as part of the UK's second lockdown, Barclays was quick to ensure its volunteering support continued to reach the students it was designed for. By working together, Barclays and The Switch developed two successful virtual activities to reach a large number of students.

The first activity was virtual CV Clinics where volunteers shared constructive, written feedback for students to help them improve their CV content and look, and to tailor their CVs to job applications for greater success. The first virtual clinic held by Barclays volunteers reviewed 35 CVs and the second, 130 CVs. By the third clinic, colleagues reviewed an impressive 350 CVs! Given its scale and success, the virtual CV clinics will continue throughout 2022, supported by Barclays volunteers.

The second activity was virtual Fireside Chats where leaders from Barclays joined panel sessions to discuss their personal experiences with students from George Green's Secondary School. The sessions covered a range of topics from scary new starts and difficult transitions, to imposter syndrome. The sessions proved such a success, that we have since run more and have made them longer following feedback from the students.

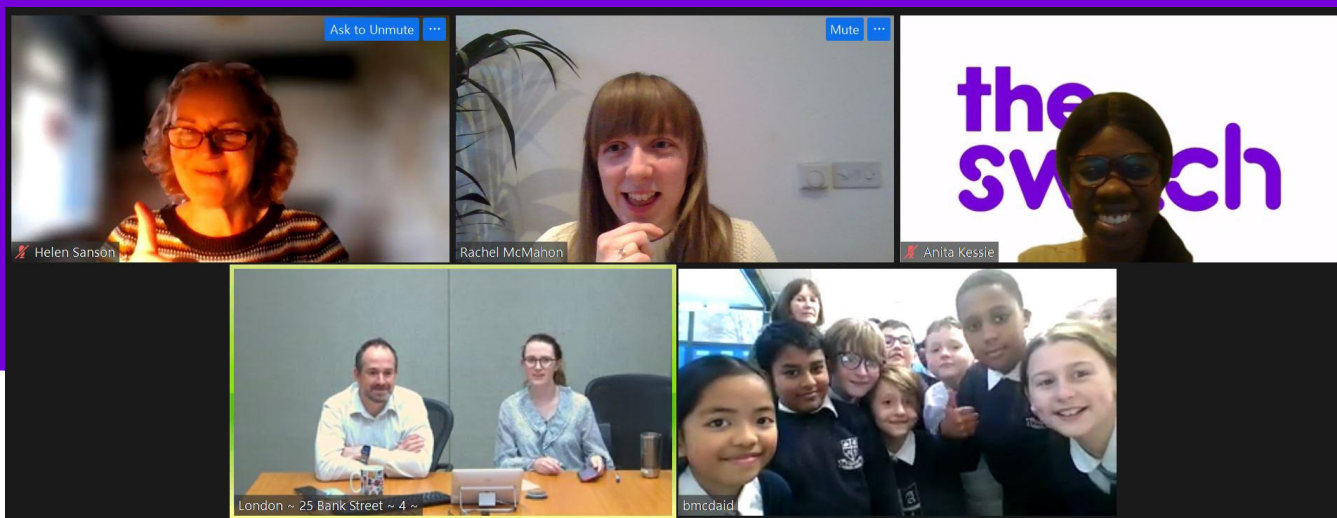
In addition, Barclays donated 225 recycled iPads to three local schools in June 2021. Tech provision for students is still a challenge in our borough – which has only been exacerbated by the pandemic – and this was a very important boost to these schools.

Gemma Scoines, Citizenship at Barclays commented:

“At Barclays, we’re proud of our partnership with The Switch and our continuing support for young people, particularly through the pandemic. By working together, we were able to quickly adapt our volunteering offering by moving it online which enabled us to continue to reach young people who need it.”



Bow School students with recycled i-pads donated by Barclays, June 2021



Volunteers from JPMorgan Chase work with students from St Agnes Primary School and The Switch team

Students across East London benefit from JPMorgan Chase support

JPMorgan Chase is committed to supporting young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to access opportunities and pursue successful career pathways. Since the start of the pandemic, many of the already existing barriers and inequalities have been further exacerbated by the effects of Covid-19, particularly for young people from low-income backgrounds who have



“It felt special: the children were very motivated all the way through it because they were getting personalised responses. Children who don’t normally know what to write – it gave them a real purpose so they needed less support and could produce more written work [than usual]. It improved their stamina and their skills in the [letter writing] genre and writing for a purpose.”

Class teacher, Writing Partners
with JPMorgan Chase

been disproportionately affected by the impacts of remote learning. Through JPMorgan Chase’s partnership with The Switch, we are supporting 500 students in Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Newham and Southwark to re-engage with education, enabling them to catch-up on vital curriculum content following remote learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. The intervention aims to recover their motivation and confidence in study skills through engaging workshops, and empower students to develop aspirations for future career pathways. To enable their participation, we have provided each young person with Chromebooks and data dongles. We’ve also been able to connect the time, skills and expertise of 80+ employees through virtual mock interview training and a writing scheme with primary school students to help 160+ young people in Tower Hamlets build their skills for the future.



“The children absolutely loved receiving the letters – the level of excitement in the classroom was off the scale. It was a delight to see. They and I, are so pleased to be involved in this partnership.”

Librarian, Writing Partners
with JPMorgan Chase

Our year in numbers

In the autumn term of 2020 we delivered our schemes remotely to schools, and then faced the challenge in January 2021 of adapting as many activities as we could to online learning from home, as our nation faced a long winter lockdown. The result was a huge innovation in our programmes, with weekly career-focused talks forming our ConnectEd series. In April 2021 we then returned to delivering our expected digital programmes in schools, including our new Virtual Work Experience. The success of these activities can be seen here:



576

secondary school students took part in our new Virtual Work Experience Programme.

"We worked in groups which really developed our teamwork skills. We were all assigned different tasks which helped develop our management skills. As we were working with a case-study it allowed us to really understand what type of work goes on in firms."

Student on our Virtual Work Experience Scheme in March 2020

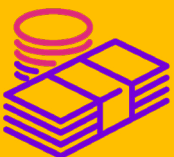


673

primary school students did our Writing Partners scheme, with 95% of the supporting volunteers recommending it to their colleagues.

"One of the best volunteer activities ... I genuinely looked forward to receiving the letters from my writing partner..."

Business volunteer Eleanor, taking part in Writing Partners



330

primary school students completed our financial literacy programmes Abacus and BEE.

1,500+ 57

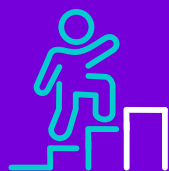
students took part in our Virtual Mock Interview practise, Head to Head, with over 800 volunteers supporting them.

schools took part in our ConnectEd lockdown programme, from multiple boroughs as the word spread..!



1,800+

volunteer opportunities



5,000+

student opportunities



85

schools engaged



4

brand new remote-delivery programmes developed from scratch

Directors

Mark Campbell
(Chair)

Clifford Chance

Saiam Ahmed
Sarah Barnes
Anita Bhardwaj
Jennie Bird
Rachel Dodds
Richard Foley
Jayant Kumar
Gerry McDonald
Jemima Reilly
Tina Sode
Iveren Yongo

University College London
Queen Mary University of London
Morgan Stanley
Harry Gosling School
KPMG
The Portal Trust
Barclays
New City College
Morpeth School
London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Travelers



"I first started collaborating with The Switch in 2004 because, as someone who works in Canary Wharf, I felt it was really important to give back to young people from Tower Hamlets. I also wanted to make a difference by using the skills I have gained and use day to day in my job; either through pro bono work for the charity, or sharing my experience and providing 'real-world' advice to young people about how to reach their goals. Becoming a trustee has made me even more committed to The Switch and to helping it make more of an impact."

Trustee

Anita Bhardwaj, Morgan Stanley

Risk policy statement

The trustees and executive management of the charity believe that sound risk management is integral to both good management and good governance practice. Risk management forms an integral part of the charity's decision-making and is incorporated within strategic and operational planning. Risk assessments are conducted on all new activities and projects to ensure they are in line with the charity's objectives and mission. Any risks or opportunities arising will be identified, analysed and reported at an appropriate level.

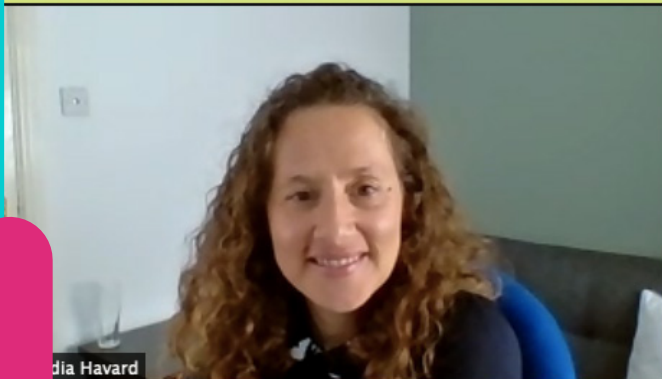
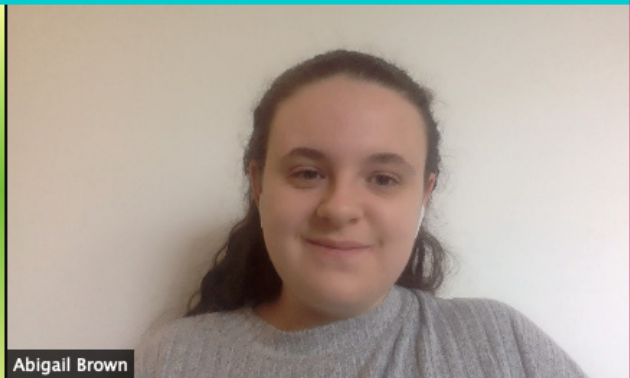
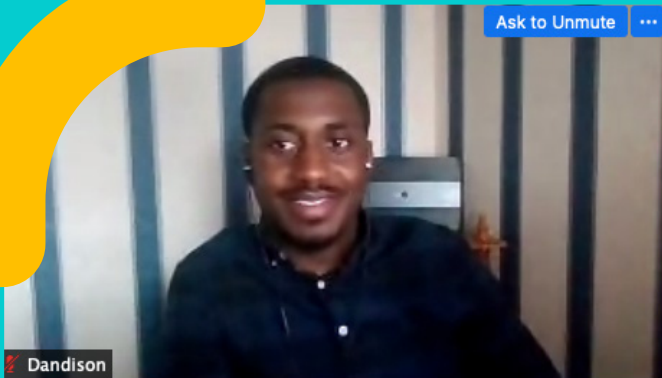
All staff are provided with adequate training on risk management and their role and responsibilities in implementing this. The charity will regularly review

and monitor the effectiveness of its risk management framework and update it as considered appropriate.

Reports will be made to the trustee board and Director each quarter of continuing and emerging high concern risks and those where priority action is needed to effect better control. Financial risk has additional scrutiny through the Finance & General Purpose Committee, a sub group of the trustees which meets 4 times per year to review the finances of the charity.

Day to day management of our risk policy is overseen by the Director and the Senior Management team. The board of trustees ensures that risk is managed well within the charity and is a central consideration in all business decisions.

Inspire the next



generation

Financials

Statement of Financial Activities for the period ended 31st August 2021.

These summarised accounts are taken from the The Switch's full and unqualified accounts. They were approved by Goldwins Chartered Accountants and have been filed with the Charity Commission and Companies House.

The Trustees have agreed to unrestricted reserves of up to 12 months' expenditure, providing an essential buffer as The Switch continues to operate in an uncertain funding environment.

Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership Limited

Statement of Financial Activities (including the Income and Expenditure Account) for the period ended 31st August 2021

Income from	Period ended 31 August 2021 (12 month accounting period)	Period ended 31 August 2020 (12 month accounting period)
Donations	£32,716	£7,718
Charitable activities	£870,813	£925,032
Investment income	£4,657	£8,994
Total income	£908,256	£981,744
Expenditure on		
Raising funds	£-	£-
Charitable activities	£1,040,939	£971,177
Total expenditure	£1,040,939	£971,177
Net income / (expenditure) for the period	(£132,683)	£10,567
Transfers between funds	£-	£-
Net movement in funds	(£132,683)	£10,567
Total funds brought forward	£1,177,480	£1,116,913
Total funds carried forward	£1,044,797	£1,177,480

Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership Limited

Balance Sheet as at 31st August 2021

Current Assets	2021	2020
Fixed assets	£34,025	£40,179
Debtors	£76,659	£80,938
Cash at bank and in hand	£1,436,043	£1,259,620
Creditors		
Amounts falling due within one year	(£501,930)	(£203,257)
NET current assets	£1,010,722	£1,137,301
Total NET current assets	£1,044,797	£1,177,480
Funds		
Restricted funds	£418,870	£592,998
Unrestricted funds:	-	-
Designated funds	£-	£100,000
General funds	£625,927	£484,482
Total unrestricted funds	£625,927	£584,482
Total funds carried forward	£1,044,797	£1,177,480

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The accounts were approved by the board of directors on 26th November 2021.



Mark Campbell

Chairman,
The Switch

2020-21

Supporters

We would like to thank all of our supporters for their help over the last year.

AIG Foundation

Arnold Clark Community Fund

Baker Mckenzie

Blackrock

Bloomberg

BNP Paribas

BP

Buzzacott

Canary Wharf Group

CLSC

Derwent London

East End Community
Foundation

Edge Insurance Brokers

Faraday

Fitch Ratings

Global Aerospace

Underwriting Managers

Goldman Sachs

Holman Fenwick Willan

ICBC

ING

ION

KBC Bank

Magrath Sheldrick Solicitors

Morrison and Foerster

Numberly

Partners Group

Point72

Reddie & Grose

RMS

Royal Bank of Scotland

Royal Society
of Chemistry

Talbot Underwriting

The Co-op Local
Community Fund

Travers Smith

Thomson Reuters

The Vintners' Foundation

UBS

Waitrose

We Are Adaptive

Whitechapel Building

Wogen

Wood PLC

Worldpay



Lloyd's
Community
Programme



ADM Investor Services
International Limited



ALLEN & OVERY



CLYDE & CO



CLIFFORD
CHANCE

J.P.Morgan



Morgan Stanley





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 **The Switch**

 **theswitchcharity**

Tower Hamlets Education Business Partnership trading as The Switch