



Swansea City of Sanctuary

Annual Report and Financial Statements For the year end 31 July 2026

Charity number 1184613

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Reference and Administrative Information

Charity number	1184613	Registered in Wales
Registered Address	% 7 Walter Road, Swansea, Wales, SA1 5NF	
Trustees	Tom Avery	Chair
	Funmilayo Olanyian	
	Krys Williams	
	Stephen Richardson	Until Nov 2025
	Martha Ako	Until Aug 2025
	Gareth May	Co-opted Aug 2026
Treasurer	Rhys Manning	Appointed by Trustees
Bankers	Lloyds Bank, PO Box 1000, BX1 1LT	

Trustees' Report

Introduction

The trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2026.

Swansea City of Sanctuary is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) by membership. It makes governance decisions at general meetings with a quoracy of membership, which is the highest between either 12 people or 5% of the membership.

While we have in practice been a community charity since 2008, and our City of Sanctuary status has been recognised since 2010, we officially became a CIO in August 2025. We held a Special General Meeting on 20th September 2025 to vote on becoming a CIO and formalising Charitable Objects which define our aims and objectives as a charity. Because we are an affiliated member of a larger charity, City of Sanctuary UK (charity number 1184613), we chose to adopt their charitable objects as our own.

Charitable Objects

1. To advance the education of the public in general in subjects relating to refugees and those seeking asylum in such ways as the trustees shall think fit in particular but not exclusively by:
 - a. Supporting, promoting and organising the city of sanctuary network, including identifying the needs of the network and establishing projects or resources to address them;
 - b. Raising awareness of the work of city of sanctuary network to the public and media;
 - c. Encouraging cities, towns, villages, regions, areas, places, organisations and institutions to become welcome and safe, through the provision of information, advice and support;
 - d. Advancing the education and training of people who are refugees or asylum seekers;
 - e. Liaising with other private, voluntary and statutory organisations on relevant issues; and
2. The promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit by promoting activities to foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds including promoting activities to foster understanding between the general public, refugees and asylum seekers."

Activities

We have summarised our activities from across the year organised by the charitable object they speak best to. We recognise that some activities may be suited to more than one object.

1a Supporting, promoting, and organising the City of Sanctuary network

During the year, Swansea City of Sanctuary continued to coordinate sanctuary activity across the city, acting as a focal point for organisations, institutions, volunteers and individuals working to make Swansea a more welcoming place for people seeking sanctuary. This included maintaining links with the wider City of Sanctuary movement and supporting the development of local sanctuary initiatives.

We relaunched networking events, which had fallen to the wayside during the COVID crisis, through the launch of SAFE (Swansea Asylum Forum and Exchange) events, creating opportunities for supporters, partner organisations and community members to connect, learn from one another and explore issues affecting people seeking sanctuary. The first SAFE events were piloted in September 2025 and March 2026, and we began a consistent programme of events held at the Grand Theatre Multicultural Hub starting July 2026. Currently these are scheduled for once every 3 months.

In late 2025, we hosted a Supporters' and Members' Event, providing an opportunity to reflect on progress, share developments across the organisation and strengthen engagement with those who support our work. This was particularly important for two reasons: we had just become a charity and we were in the lead-up to the Senedd elections. It was an opportunity for Members to share their ideas and concerns and set the direction for the charity. One of the key outcomes from this was the need for a positive, shared public message from SCoS.

As a result of the Supporters' and Members' event and in advance of the 2026 Senedd elections, Swansea City of Sanctuary organised a public hustings event, bringing together community members and election candidates for discussion and engagement on issues affecting people seeking sanctuary and local communities.

- We also convened a community meeting with local MP Tosten Bell, gathering questions from the local community and hearing Torsten answer them together.
- Reviewing and renewing membership process.
- Volunteer recruitment and project co-ordination - getting things in order to recruit more (we recruited a treasurer, project co-ordinator, set up volunteering policy, set up liaison role, had a student intern)

1b Raising awareness of the work of city of sanctuary network to the public and media;

Refugee Week

Refugee Week 2026 provided an important opportunity to celebrate the contribution of people seeking sanctuary and to promote understanding within the wider community. Swansea City of Sanctuary worked alongside partners to support a programme of events that highlighted stories of welcome, community and belonging, helping to raise the profile of

sanctuary issues across the city. This year we opted not to hold a week of co-ordinated events, but instead focus on more targeted support for and sharing of events held by and with other local groups; we are reflecting as a charity on the value of holding our own events vs supporting other groups to hold events as part of a network.

Media Presence

- A big focus of our activity has been the development of our public presence through the strengthening of our supporter structures and our media strategy.
- We relaunched our newsletter in July 2025, rebranded as “The Welcome Update”.
- We also developed our Social Media presence, using an intentional and strategic approach to getting information out to followers and members in good time.
- We also welcomed an intern from Swansea University, who supported the development of our media presence on the lead up and aftermath of our Hustings event, helping to strengthen our communications.

1c Encouraging cities, towns, villages, regions, areas, places, organisations and institutions to become welcome and safe, through the provision of information, advice and support;

Sanctuary Awards:

Supporting local organisations through the Sanctuary Awards process remained an important part of our work this year. By providing advice, encouragement and local knowledge, we helped organisations explore how they could embed welcome, inclusion and sanctuary values within their settings. We worked with City of Sanctuary UK, who are responsible for making national awards, to advise, assess, and recommend awards for the following local organisations:

- Glynn Vivian Art Gallery
- The National Waterfront Museum
- Swansea University

We have also reaffirmed our commitment to local Sanctuary Awards. The first local sanctuary awards were made 15 years ago in Swansea and inspired the national awards. These are only for organisations who do not fit into any of the available national streams. We haven't had capacity to maintain these in recent years, but at the end of this year we began to reassess our local awards processes after the Oxfam Castle Street Bookshop's expressed a desire to renew their award. We will look to further develop our local awards stream over the coming year as a core strategy.

During the year, Swansea Council reaffirmed its commitment to sanctuary values. We continued to engage with the local authority as it explored future approaches to recognising and strengthening its commitment to people seeking sanctuary. We have also been supporting Swansea Council to submit an application to become a Local Authority of Sanctuary, a scheme which is replacing the now disused 'City of Sanctuary' label.

Schools of Sanctuary

This year we were delighted to celebrate six schools who have demonstrated their commitment to creating safe, welcoming and inclusive learning environments for all. This makes the total number of Schools of Sanctuary in Swansea 22, almost a quarter of all local schools.

Working alongside Swansea Council's Education Directorate and our dedicated Schools of Sanctuary panel, we recognised how the schools demonstrated a commitment to creating safe, welcoming and inclusive learning environments. Through the Schools of Sanctuary programme, pupils, staff and governors engaged with themes of welcome, belonging and inclusion, helping to build a culture of sanctuary across local education settings.

We extend our congratulations and thanks to all the schools who remain involved and committed to this scheme, especially in the face of heightened political challenges this year.

1d Advancing the education and training of people who are refugees or asylum seekers;

Our main means of meeting this object has been through the development of volunteering and leadership roles. We have begun this year to develop more formal volunteering roles, to welcome and encourage specific contributions. This year we developed a volunteers policy, recruited a volunteer project co-ordinator for community cohesion events, and formalised a network liaison role. These are all open to refugees and asylum seekers, and we have seen some takeup from these.

We continue to have success involving asylum seekers in our partnership with Swansea University's Lleisiau Profiadol (experienced voices) programme. This yearly offering sees two refugees support the undergraduate Social Work programme at the University. Opportunities have included supporting student recruitment and contributing to lectures and conferences. One of the volunteers for this has since received a sanctuary scholarship to study a master's course at Swansea University for the 2026/27 academic year.

Our events are always open to support from asylum seekers and refugees, and we have had particular success this year with their involvement with our Swansea Hustings. This large public event was designed to be welcoming and safe for asylum seekers, and to facilitate this we tested running a lived experience advisory board. We had 8 members sign up to this and met a couple of times in the run up to the event to discuss different aspects of how the event was advertised, planned, and run. Some of these board members joined the volunteering for the event itself, which involved 14 volunteers total.

1e Liaising with other private, voluntary and statutory organisations on relevant issues

We have continued to build our asylum sector network through the nurturing of our Asylum Seeker and Refugee Co-ordination group, which meets every two months. The membership list for this group continues to grow, though the core attendance has remained constant.

This year, we have experimented with bringing in various external groups to give reports and updates on items of relevance to our sector, facilitating up to date learning for

practitioners and encouraging a shared vision for our work across the city. We have also begun to run sub-groups from this initiative, including a refugee week sub-group which has enabled us to better co-ordinate Swansea Refugee week into a co-ordinated set of events and publicity.

2 Promoting activities to foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds

All of our events are designed to foster mutual understanding between different communities. We have won funding to continue this work, mostly under the label of 'community cohesion'.

A core innovation was our Sandfields Fun day, which was designed by an asylum seeker volunteer as a general fun day which encouraged attendees to interact and become more familiar with one another, for instance through a cooking challenge or language games. We held one of these events, and have the materials and funding to hold future iterations as well.

We also won funds from the Befriending Network to hold events that brought people together, especially to combat loneliness. We have used this funding so far to run a climbing activity with a local climbing centre, and also to hold a free arts and crafts day with a group of local artists.

Where possible, we have looked to partner with existing community groups or organisation for this. For example, we collaborated with Christwell Church to hold a public event which celebrated different cultures. We also supported Killay Community Council to hold a One World Day event, which saw multi-cultural groups come together to share food, stories, and performances.

Achievement and Performance

During this first year of activity as a CIO, most of our effort has gone into ensuring that we have the essentials in place. This includes writing key policies and procedures, maintaining our usual pace of events, and developing a media presence.

Policies and procedures developed:

- Volunteer Policy
- Finance Policy
- Membership and Supporter structures
- Whatsapp Community
- Events Pack
- Social media calendar

Events held:

Event	Date	Attendees
Christwell Community Cohesion	Aug 2025	40
SAFE Sep 2025	Sep 2025	20
Climate Film Screening	Nov 2025	27
MP Q&A	Feb 2026	24
Twmpath	Mar 2026	80
SAFE Mar 2026	Apr 2026	15
Swansea Hustings	Apr 2026	75
Climbing Event	Apr 2026	12
Sandfields Fun Day	May 2026	35
Sandfields Art Event	May 2026	23
SAFE July 2026	Jul 2026	25

Membership:

Only this year's numbers are shown, as we are a new legal entity.

	Individual	Organisation	Total
Members	36	48	84
Supporters	27	80	107

Media presence:

Only this year's numbers are shown, as we are a new legal entity.

Platform	Subscribed (Sep 2026)	Posts
Newsletter	506	20
Instagram	608	59
Facebook	1943	97

LinkedIn (new account)	106	22
Twitter	Closed	Closed

2026 Reflections and Looking Forward to 2027

The past year has been one of consolidation and renewal following the stepping down of our long-term Chair, Alan Thomas, in 2024 and our registration as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in July 2025. We have maintained the momentum built over many years while investing significant time and energy in strengthening the organisation's foundations. This has included developing governance and policy documents, reviewing our membership and events models, and beginning to implement a strategy focused on growing Swansea City of Sanctuary as a genuine community movement.

Alongside this work, we were pleased to achieve a number of important milestones. These included recruiting new volunteers into key roles, expanding our organisational capacity, piloting and relaunching SAFE networking events, and successfully delivering large-scale public engagement activities such as the Swansea Hustings.

Nevertheless, we remain a small charity that relies heavily on the commitment, enthusiasm and generosity of a relatively small number of volunteers. The individuals who give their time to Swansea City of Sanctuary are invaluable, and the scale of our ambitions continues to exceed our current capacity.

Looking ahead to 2027, our priority will be to build a broader and more sustainable volunteer base. We want to move beyond a model in which a small group carries most responsibilities and instead foster a larger network of supporters, each contributing their own skills, ideas and time. Achieving this will enable us to increase our impact while ensuring that volunteering remains rewarding and sustainable for everyone involved.

We have also developed an Events Pack to support greater consistency in the planning, delivery and evaluation of our activities. This will help us improve quality, strengthen reporting and provide better support and recognition for the volunteers who make our work possible.

Financial Review

This report and accounts were approved by the board of trustees on 10th September 2026.




GARETH MAY 10/09/2026




Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ending 31 July 2026

Receipts & Payment Accounts

2025/26	Unrestricted Fund (£)	Restricted Fund (£)	Total (£)
Donations	5,658	0	5,658
Grants	500	11,485	11,985
Sponsorships	0	500	500
Other	0	0	0
Receipts	6,158	11,985	18,143
Reclassification between funds	262	(262)	0
Adjusted Receipts	6,420	11,723	18,143
Admin & Comms Support	4,385	3,102	7,487
Charitable Activities	510	1,085	1,595
Travel Costs	401	172	573
Transfers to other charities	132	0	132
Other	278	0	278
Payments	5,706	4,359	10,065

Statement of Assets & Liabilities

2025/26	Unrestricted Fund (£)	Restricted Fund (£)	Total (£)
Assets	2,830	10,492	13,322
Cash at bank	2,714	10,492	13,206
Petty Cash	116	0	116
Liabilities	0	0	0
Net Assets	2,830	10,492	13,322

Notes to the Accounts

1. Accounting policies

1.1 Basis of preparation

These financial statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act and the guidance issued by the Charity Commission for charities preparing receipts and payments accounts. These accounts cover the period from 9th August 2025 to 31st July 2026 and represent the first financial statements of the CIO.

1.2 Income

Income is recognised when it is received. Income subject to restrictions on its use is treated as restricted income. Any income without restrictions is treated as unrestricted income.

1.3 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on payment. Payments are allocated to the activity they relate to and allocated between unrestricted and restricted funds.

1.4 Restricted funds

Restricted funds are funds held by the charity, subject to conditions on how they can be used. Such funds are only used for the purpose by which they are given

1.5 Unrestricted funds

Unrestricted Funds are funds which may be used at the Trustees discretion for any of the charitable purposes of the CIO subject to the governing document and applicable charity law.

1.6 Cash & bank balances

Cash balances comprise of balances held as at the financial year end.

2. Opening funds

Upon the cessation of operations of the predecessor charity, and the establishment of the CIO, unrestricted funds of £2,060 and restricted funds of £3,363 were transferred as an opening balance.

3. Funds held on behalf of others

The charity holds £900 on behalf of another charity as agreed by the Board of Trustees.

These are not the Charity's funds and therefore are not included in the statement of assets and liabilities nor the receipts and payment accounts.