

WAND UK THREE-YEAR STRATEGY 2022-2025

Developed by The Social Innovation Partnership

Tyler Fox, February 2022

TSIP

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This strategy was developed in consultation with trustees, staff and volunteers at WAND UK. The process included a strategy session with the team, a review of the charity's previous three-year strategy and recent organisational review.

01 ABOUT WAND UK

ABOUT THE CHARITY

Empowering women to become agents for their own change

WAND UK is an independent, volunteer-led charity run by and for women from isolated and excluded communities. It was founded in 2004 by a group of West African women who had been involved in a similar organisation in Sierra Leone. The charity serves women and girls from various backgrounds, including migrant women, through drop-in sessions, outreach services and networking events. The charity works across six London boroughs, including: Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster, Islington, Hackney and Camden. In 2021, WAND UK supported 1,120 women with the support of 25 volunteers – three of whom moved into paid positions in the charity in 2022.

Since 2005, WAND UK has supported women with sexual health and HIV prevention, computer literacy, mental health and wellbeing and domestic violence. It also organises cultural activities for women to meet and strengthen their social networks. Outreach services are offered in accessible community spaces through 1:1 and group sessions. WAND UK takes a client-centred approach, and services are developed based on the emerging needs of its clients, as well as in response to gaps in local service provision.

WAND UK prioritises holistic approaches that encourage the prevention of crisis points and help build resilience. Its work is community-based and considers social and cultural context in order to make the changes in women's lives sustainable. WAND UK also serves as an anchor for women in the community through promoting and signposting them to other relevant services of which they may not be aware.

VISION, MISSION & USP

Our vision

Our vision is a world free from discrimination and oppression, where people respect and value differences, and where every woman and man enjoys all their human rights and has the opportunities to realise their full potential.

Our mission

In pursuit of our vision, our mission is to contribute to female empowerment by supporting women to become agents of positive change for themselves, their families, their communities and society at large.

Our USP

- We have an understanding of, and empathy for, the issues that women from various Black, minoritised and migrant communities face
- We embrace the whole person and provide holistic support by providing multiple entry points for clients to access our services
- We are invested in tackling the crisis behind the presenting problem

VALUES

Equality & fairness

WAND UK is committed to equality and non-discrimination. It will ensure that the activities and services it provides are inclusive, accessible and respond to the diverse needs and specificities of women and their families.

Inclusion

WAND UK believes that everybody can positively contribute to community life and to society. WAND UK therefore works in partnership with a range of charities, grassroots informal organisations and faith-based organisations for a better future for women and their families. WAND UK also involves its clients in the design of its activities and provides them with opportunities to engage in activities as volunteers.

Holistic & person-centred

WAND UK support takes into account all aspects of women's lives, including physical, emotional, social and economic wellbeing.

Clients, staff and trustees describe WAND UK as:



SERVICES AT A GLANCE

Reflexology

Young Girls' Project

Beauty & self-care

Happy Healthy Family Club

Dance & yoga

1:1 digital literacy support

Advice & information

Community food distribution

Multilingual befriending

Green Shots Gardening

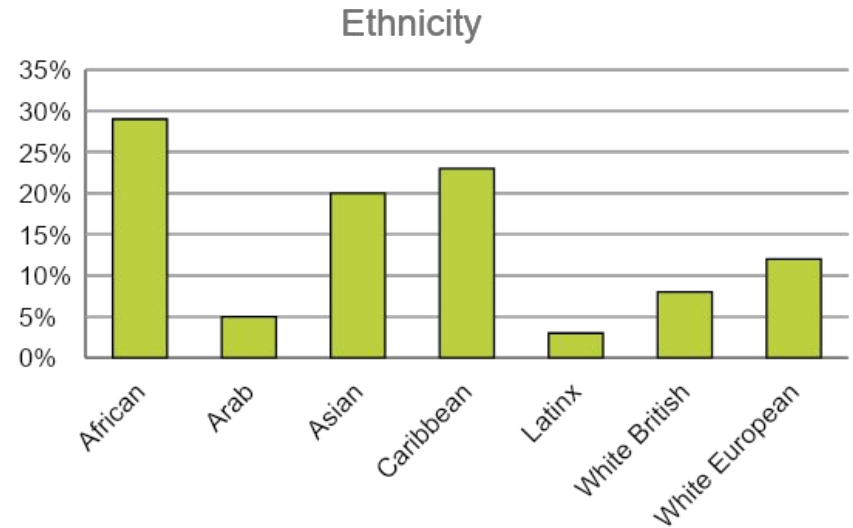
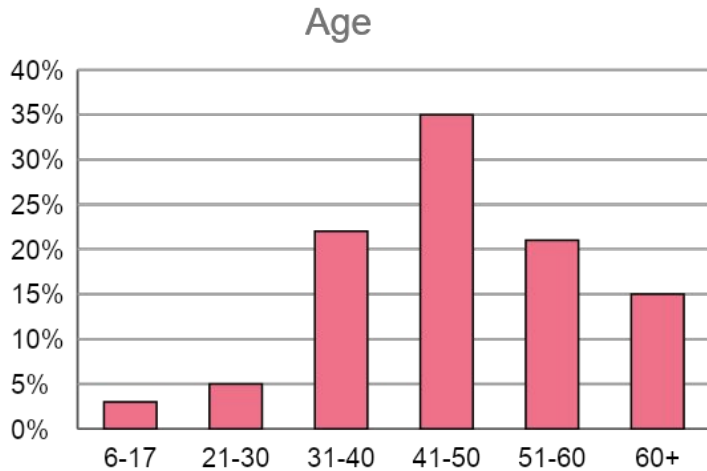
Educational excursions

Personal financial grants

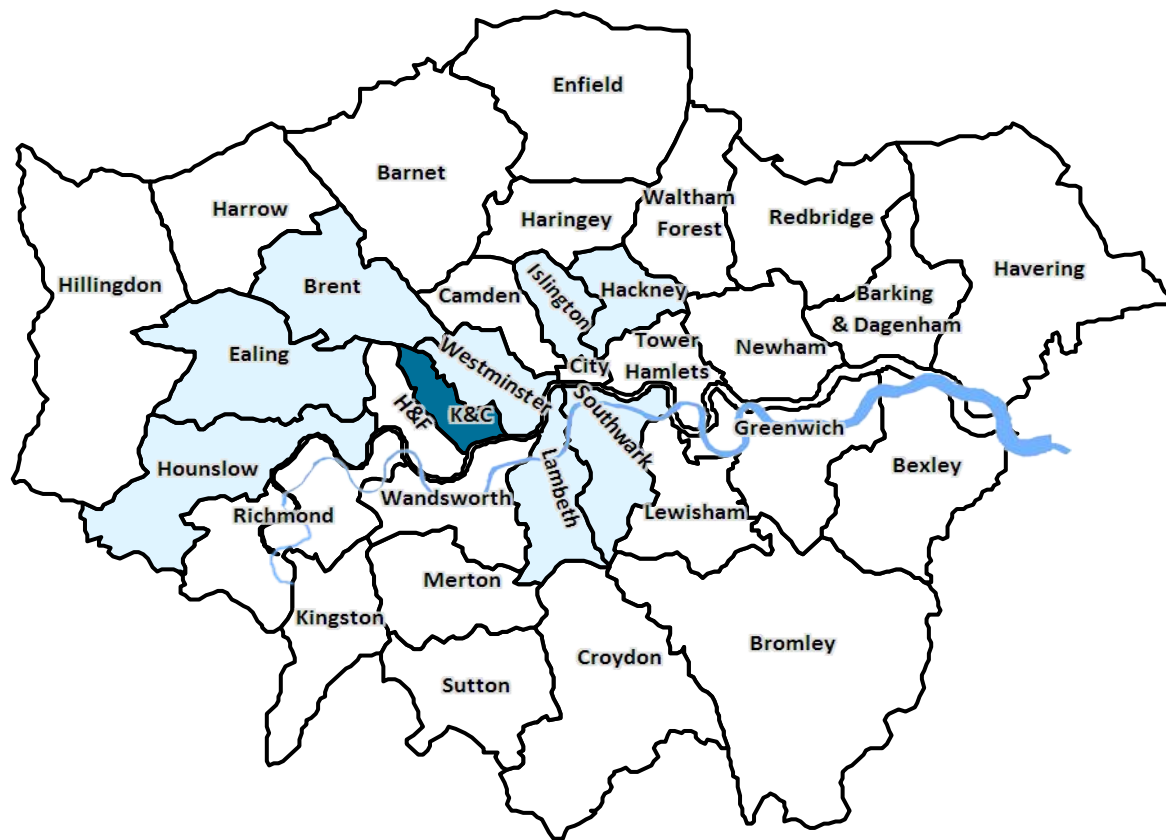
VAWG helpline and workshops

CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

WAND worked with 1,120 women and girls in 2021. The breakdown of their demographics are as follows:



CLIENT BOROUGHES



KEY PARTNERSHIPS

WAND UK works with a range of local partners to deliver its work, including:



CURRENT FUNDERS

WAND UK is currently funded by the following trusts, foundations and institutions:



02 CLIMATE, CHALLENGES & CLIENT NEED

CURRENT CLIMATE

Like other small charities in the UK, WAND UK is operating in a challenging socio-political climate.

After more than a decade of devastating cuts to public services, schools and the voluntary sector which have been further compounded by two years of a global pandemic, specialist service providers who support women from Black, minoritised and migrant backgrounds are responding to increased and more complex needs – yet specific services catering for these women in particular continue to be disproportionately affected by funding challenges.

In the case of WAND UK, need for their services has increased during the pandemic, as clients faced isolation and loneliness, food poverty and an increase in domestic abuse. Now, they're facing a sharp increase in the cost of living and continue to struggle accessing food. Despite this, securing core costs to support the infrastructure and growth of the organisation, instead of just short-term project funding, continues to be a challenge.

Simultaneously, the wider political situation continues to worsen, signalled by the Policing, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill (currently in its final stages), as well as the Nationality and Borders Bill (currently in the House of Lords) – both of which are projected to disproportionately impact women from Black and minoritised communities, and in particular, migrant women.

Ultimately, WAND UK's services are more needed than ever.

ONGOING CHALLENGES

Funding

Securing core costs that support the infrastructure of the organisation and allow it to grow in line with client need has been a challenge for WAND UK since its inception. Currently, the organisation provides a number of different services that are each supported by a different funder. The breadth of services delivered is wide, and they are not consolidated or linked in a way that allows the charity to apply for larger pots of funding that could support multiple projects under one stream of work, or portions of core salaries. The charity ran a deficit in its last financial year ('19-'20), but has since rectified the situation through securing additional Covid19-specific funding in '20-'21.

Staffing

The charity is largely volunteer-led and currently employs four part-time members of staff, each of whom is dedicated to project administration. However, there is no dedicated resource for operational staff of any kind, and the day-to-day running of the charity is overseen by the organisation's founder and trustee. The Board recognises that this is unsustainable, but has struggled to implement an alternative, long-term solution. In the previous strategy period ('19-'21), the charity attempted to use its reserves to fund a Director position, but this was unsuccessful.

Service provision in the context of Covid19

Trustees, staff and volunteers highlighted the challenges of trying to maintain contact and engagement with their regular client base during the pandemic. Although the charity attempted to move some services online, digital literacy and exclusion were huge barriers to many of their clients continuing to access their services, particularly for older women. This has been further compounded by transport cutbacks, making it difficult for staff and volunteers to help combat the isolation and loneliness that clients were experiencing during this time. As restrictions are lifted, it's been a challenge to re-engage clients in face-to-face provision.

CLIENT NEEDS

WAND UK recognises that women from Black, minoritised and migrant backgrounds face an intersection of challenges that can keep them in poverty, sustain low levels of confidence and prevent access to appropriate services. For instance, relationships, discrimination and housing access directly relate to poor mental and physical health.

Trustees, staff and volunteers identified the following pressing needs of their client base:

- Access to food
- Access to free services and activities to support mental and physical wellbeing
- Access to activities and spaces that help reduce isolation, loneliness and stress
- Advice and support around energy and pension poverty
- Support building confidence around seeking new skills and employment
- Relationships education and advice around domestic abuse, including elder abuse
- Digital literacy and exclusion
- Systems literacy and navigating services

There is a wider interest within the team in further developing a service offer for young women around personal safety and relationships education, as well as providing opportunities for older women facing loneliness and social isolation to come together.

Overall, there is a desire amongst the team to continue to grow the breadth of the charity's service offer. However, over the next three years, WAND UK must work to deepen provision and further develop the service areas that prioritise clients' most pressing needs.

03 CONSOLIDATION & GROWTH

CONSOLIDATING THE CHARITY'S WORK

The recent organisational review carried out by Cranfield Trust points to a general agreement across the team that WAND UK may be attempting to deliver too many varied services at the risk of diluting its impact. There is currently a lack of strategic direction and development across the service offer that could be affecting the charity's ability to easily communicate what it does to clients and funders, and in turn, its ability to secure longer-term core funding.

Over the next three years, WAND UK must work to invest in, and further develop, priority services that address the most pressing needs of its clients in order to retain focus and create a case for ongoing funding. It can achieve this through:

1. Consolidating its work under overarching service strands
2. Assessing whether services should be launched, developed or wound down by determining whether the following criteria are broadly met:
 - The charity has relevant expertise to deliver the service
 - The charity has an existing client base that would be interested in the service
 - The service is relatively easy to fund

Below are the service strands under which WAND UK's services should sit. Going forward, the charity should look to develop its service offer under each strand and apply for funding to support part or whole service strands where possible.

SERVICE STRAND 1: ADVICE & ADVOCACY

Aim of the service strand

To empower women to advocate for themselves through free advice and support around welfare benefits, housing, health and finance, and through signposting to other reliable and accessible advice and legal services where necessary.

Services currently running

- Needs assessment
- Up to 12 1:1 sessions of general information and advice
- Personal financial grants
- Workshops around navigating services, e.g. universal credit

Opportunities for investment & development

WAND's advocacy service makes up roughly 30% of the charity's activity, but the service isn't funded and is currently relying on reserves. Once these services are consolidated under one strand, WAND should secure funding for a freelance Casework Coordinator role at 2-3 days per week who can: conduct needs assessments, provide 1:1 advice, run workshops related to navigating services and generally oversee the service strand (including M&E and contributing to funding applications to further expand the service).

Service review

The Board might review the standard number of sessions offered to each client. In an advocacy context, some clients will need more or longer sessions than others. The Board should ensure a bespoke service by retaining flexibility and determining need on a case-by-case basis.

Funding opportunities

Trust for London's Connected Communities Fund – Advice work – for charities led by Black and minoritised communities that are already providing providing social welfare advice and to improve the quality of that advice and which have clear referral pathways to specialist advice where it is needed.

SERVICE STRAND 2: LIFELONG LEARNING

Aim of the service strand

To enable women to become their own agents of change through access to informal, community-based education that supports them to build internal resources to deal with issues as they arise and reduce the incidence of future issues.

Services currently running

- VAWG telephone befriending and awareness raising through Happy Healthy Family Club and healthy relationships workshops
- Young Girls' Project
- 1:1 digital literacy sessions
- E-learning courses accessed on site: pediatric first aid, food hygiene, equality & diversity, time management, conflict resolution
- Educational excursions to London museums and landmarks

Opportunities for investment & development

WAND is currently delivering a number of seemingly disparate educational activities that can be developed into an overarching, year-long learning programme to create a coherent pathway for clients to upskill and gain new knowledge. The programme should have multiple entry points so clients can access the programme at any point in the year, as well as specific pathways for girls and young women. WAND should secure funding for the overall learning programme through a freelance Learning Coordinator role at 2 days per week who can: oversee the learning programme (including M&E and contributing to funding applications), run 1:1 sessions, help women access e-learning, lead educational excursions, and coordinate VAWG & Young Girls' Project volunteers.

Service review

Trustees, staff and volunteers agreed that digital literacy workshops had been a challenge to deliver over the pandemic. The Board should review this area of delivery and perhaps identify appropriate partners to bring in who could provide this type of programming for clients free of charge.

Funding opportunities

NLCF Awards for All to support the overarching learning programme and Your Best Friend Fund to further develop healthy relationships education for young women

SERVICE STRAND 3: HEALTH & WELLBEING

Aim of the service strand

To support women to take control of their own lives through improving their health and wellbeing and increasing their self-esteem.

Services currently running

- Community food distribution and delivery
- Online dance and yoga classes
- Manicure and pedicure sessions
- Reflexology sessions
- Green Shots gardening group
- Sanitary products distribution
- Multilingual befriending programme

Opportunities for investment & development

Trustees, staff and volunteers agreed that WAND's health and wellbeing services are what many clients value most, particularly as they are often totally inaccessible elsewhere. WAND should secure funding for further development of its health and wellbeing activities and a freelance Health & Wellbeing Coordinator role at 2 days per week who can: oversee the different services (including M&E and contributing to funding applications), coordinate the volunteers delivering the activities and work with clients to further develop the service offer. Additional provision like workshops with health visitors and 1:1 health surgeries could be explored.

Service review

Trustees, staff and volunteers agreed that this was an area that both the team and clients would like to see further developed.

Funding opportunities

Continued City Bridge Trust Advice & support – food poverty funding to support food distribution. There is also an opportunity to explore partnerships with grocery stores who might donate surplus food.

MAXIMISING IMPACT

Consolidating services under the above strands will also help the organisation better track the impact it has on its clients. In turn, this will serve as evidence that can help the Board make more informed decisions about where services should be expanded or wound down.

As each service strand has an aim, services under a given strand should all be working towards the same goal. Services that don't work towards achieving the outcomes of a given strand should be reviewed. Equally, if the current services aren't providing enough support to fully meet the outcomes for the strand, there may be space to expand by opening a new service that can meet the need identified.

Ultimately, the service strand model will allow for better impact measurement and improved evidence-based decision-making across the staff team and the Board.

It's recommended that WAND creates a Theory of Change to guide service strand delivery and monitor impact.

04 STRENGTHENING INFRASTRUCTURE

STRATEGIC FUNDRAISING

Trusts and foundations

Once service strands are in place, WAND can begin playing to its strengths around holistic provision for clients by securing funding for whole strands of work, or the wider service offer, instead of focusing so heavily on funding individual projects. This would allow for core funding that supports salaries, for example, to be spread across each service strand.

For instance, WAND applies to Trust for London for funding to support the Advice & Advocacy service strand, using part of the budget to cover the Casework Coordinator role, part to cover a third of the Operations Manager salary and part to cover a third of WAND's operational costs (possibly excluding rent). If the same model is applied across each strand, the majority of core costs are eventually covered.

Commissioning

There is an opportunity for WAND to strengthen its commissioning relationships. The Board should take stock of what else can WAND could provide for the WLCCG or Kensington & Chelsea Council – for instance, becoming one of its trusted providers for social prescribing.

Remuneration for services

The review from Cranfield Trust recommends that WAND explore charging for some services where possible. This could be achieved in two ways:

- By asking clients to donate as they wish for services like yoga, reflexology and the food bank
- By charging social workers a standard rate for clients referred by the council

STAFFING STABILITY

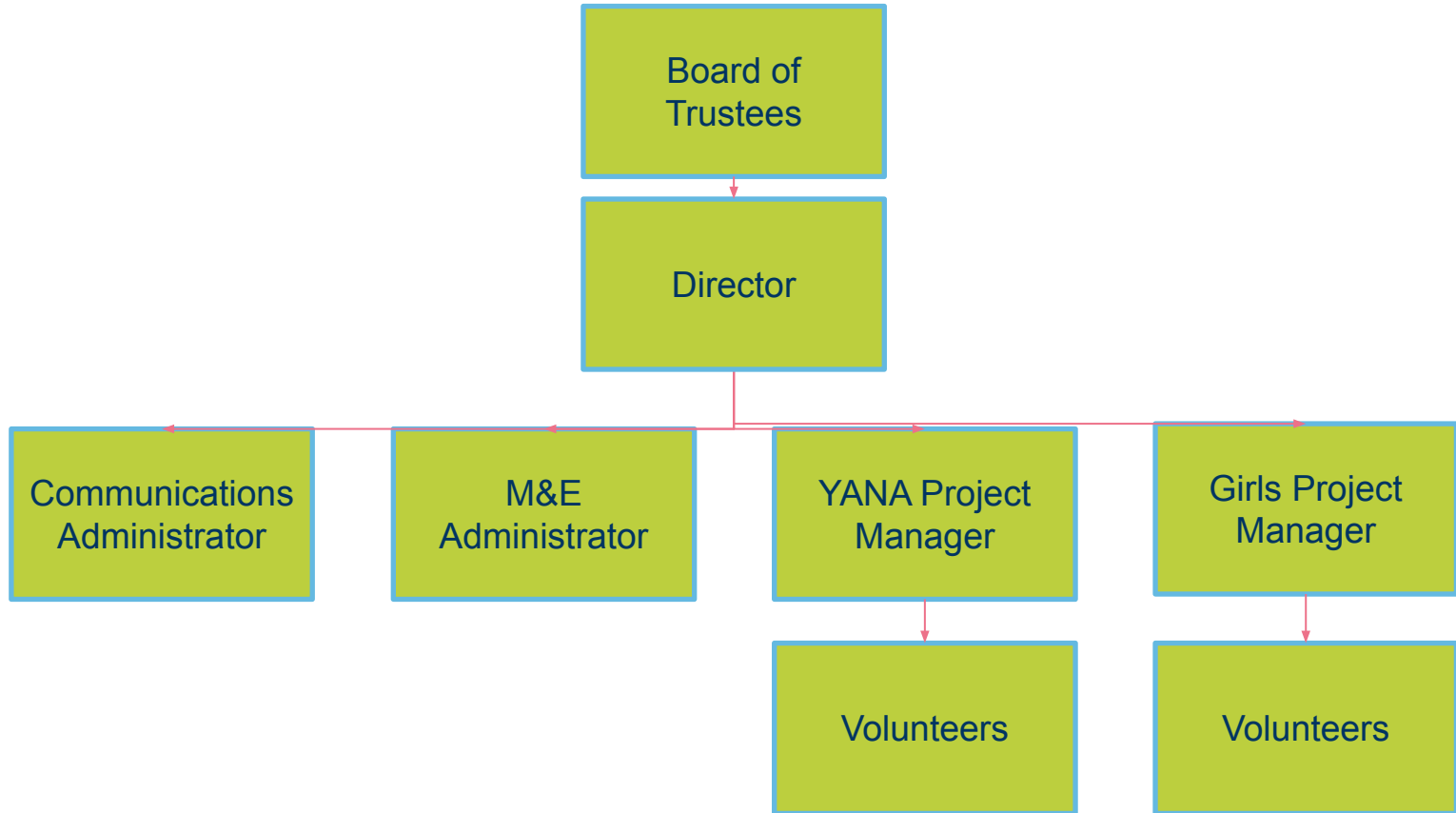
Currently, the salaries for three members of staff are being paid out of the charity's reserves. This is something that should be addressed with urgency.

The Cranfield Trust review points to strong support across the team to recruit someone to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. Cranfield recommends recruiting a part-time, freelance Senior Operations Manager for 10 hours per week at £20/hour. The review also recognises the need to contract a freelance fundraiser who can work with the team to complete funding applications.

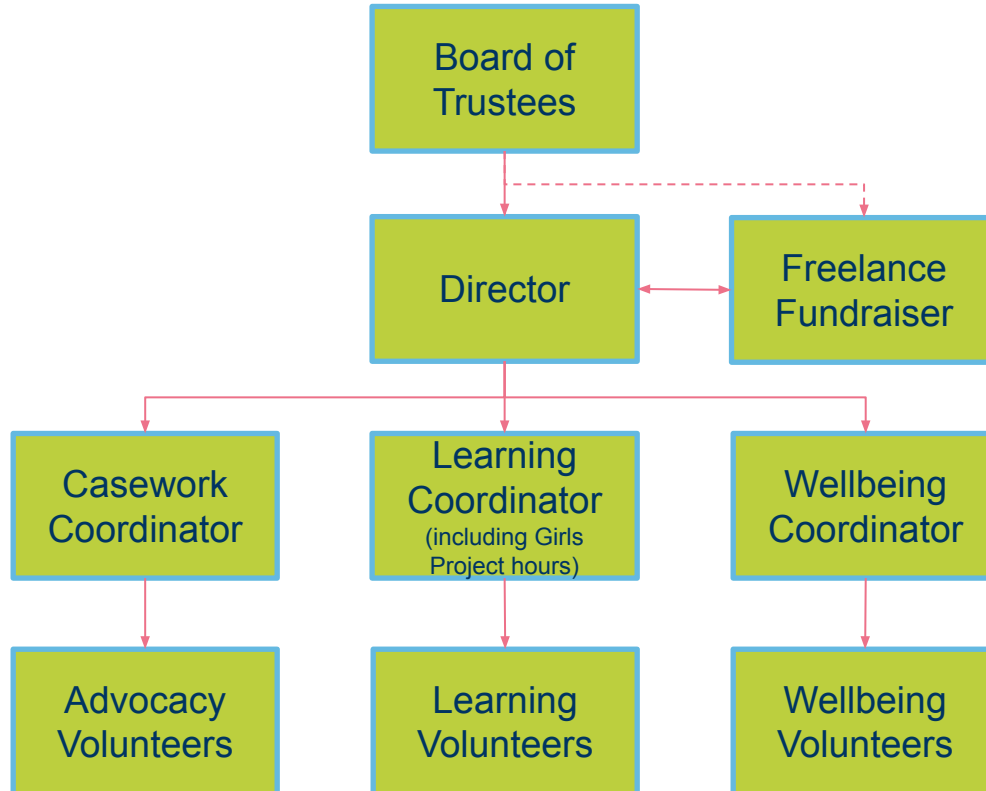
Based on the service strand model, WAND could restructure their staff team differently to provide more stability for the organisation and to encourage growth in a more focused and sustainable way. In the new staffing model based on service strands below, service strand coordinators oversee all the services under their strand, as well as coordinate volunteers and do some direct delivery themselves. The M&E Administrator's duties are subsumed by each service strand coordinator, and the Communications Administrator's duties are subsumed by the Operations Manager.

In this model, volunteers continue to play a vital part in the delivery of services under each strand, and now have a single point of contact (their service strand coordinator) for support.

CURRENT STAFFING MODEL



STAFFING MODEL BASED ON SERVICE STRANDS



TRUSTEE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE GAPS

The Cranfield review points to agreement across the team that the skillset on the Board of Trustees may need to be broadened or developed. Based on the skills audit in Appendix C of that report, there is a need for the following skills:

- Diversity and inclusion
- Safeguarding
- Health & safety
- Training and education
- Risk management

The Board will need to complete its skills audit in the first part of 2022 to determine whether additional trustees must be recruited to fill the above skills gaps.

05 HIGH-LEVEL MOBILISATION PLAN

YEAR 1

Goals

Steps

Measurement

YEAR 2

Goals

Steps

Measurement

YEAR 3

Goals

Steps

Measurement

