

Community Partners Association (COPA)

Registered Charity No. 1027117



Invitation, Agenda and Reports

relating to the

30th COPA Annual General Meeting

Saturday, 16th October 2021 at 10.30am

which will be held remotely, via Zoom

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	2020/21 £	2019/20 £
Incoming resources		
Regular income from sponsors	33,553	40,838
Gift Aid on sponsorship income	4,574	5,500
Contributions from Project Trust	1,324	3,066
Donations for specific purposes	1,634	1,324
Donations for general purposes	1,000	110
Promotional and fundraising income	33	22
Interest received	108	55
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	42,226	50,915
Resources expended		
Support for our work in the Dominican Republic	24,457	54,531
Newsletter costs	388	1,242
Administrative and other costs	1,383	1,909
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	26,228	57,682
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year	<hr/>	<hr/>
	15,998	(6,767)
Funds brought forward	100,350	107,117
Funds carried forward	<hr/>	<hr/>
	116,348	100,350

BALANCE SHEET	31 March 2021 £	31 March 2020 £
Net current assets:		
Bank balances	113,171	102,879
Gift Aid recoverable	4,574	12,121
Less amount due to COPA USA	(1,397)	(1,512)
Less amount due to COPA DR	0	(13,138)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	116,348	100,350
Representing funds:		
To support our work in the Dominican Republic	89,927	73,799
To react quickly to emergencies in the DR	12,848	12,348
For general purposes	13,573	14,203
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	116,348	100,350

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8	Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet
<p>The detailed annual accounts, including the Trustees' and Independent Examiners Reports, will be available on the COPA website (www.copa.international) or can be obtained from the COPA Secretary, contact details on page 2.</p> <p>A summary of these accounts can be found on page 8 of this booklet.</p>	

Community Partners Association (COPA)

Registered Charity No. 1027117



30th COPA Annual General Meeting Saturday, 16th October 2021 at 10 30am

Dear Sponsors & Friends of COPA,

We are pleased to invite you to the 30th AGM of COPA UK to be held on Saturday, 16th October 2021. Due to the coronavirus pandemic this year's AGM will be held remotely, via Zoom. The meeting will commence at 10 30 am but the line will be open from 10 00 am. If you are joining the meeting using the Zoom client on a computer, phone or tablet please use the following details:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87844393918?pwd=dkJuSTlQMmpaCtZTEpKR3hFNHNmUT09>

Meeting ID: 878 4439 3918

Passcode: copaagm

If you are joining the AGM by dialling in by phone (audio only) please use the following details:

Dial in number: +44 330 088 5830 The United Kingdom

Meeting ID: 878 4439 3918

Passcode: 5220903

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87844393918>

During the meeting we will use the Chat and Polling functions to allow you to vote on motions, to ask questions and to interact with the COPA Committee.

Should you have any queries on the above please contact Elizabeth Robertson, Secretary COPA UK (details below)

If there are any topics that you would like discussed at the AGM, please send your suggestions to Elizabeth Robertson by 2 October 2021 and we will do our best to include them.

Secretary, COPA UK: Elizabeth Robertson

3 Branders, Cricklade

Swindon, SN6 6NQ

e-mail: copa.secretary@gmail.com

Tel: 01793 751166

Chairman, COPA UK: Peter Gardner

35 Orchard Rise, Tibberton

Gloucester, GL19 3AT

e-mail: peter@familygardner.plus.com

Tel: 01452 790564

years. Ian Robertson came forward from the Committee to be nominated for the important role of treasurer, for which we are very grateful.

With the handing over of maintenance issues to the Fundacion in July 2021, the Committee has made every effort to encourage them to refurbish the buildings to a high standard. The Chair of the Fundacion, Project Director and Maintenance Adviser have all worked hard in trying to reach this objective. Jeffrey Toussaint our Maintenance Adviser finished his two-year contract in February 2021 and we thank him for his service to COPA. The Committee has recently given permission for money to be spent on replacing the roof on the La Hoya dining shelter and the roof of the volunteer house. The Dominican Ministry of Education are now hoping to have kindergarten classes in all their schools, which COPA Schools have operated as an "extra" for over twenty-five years. Bombita needs a third classroom to accommodate the expected numbers and the Fundacion are envisaging using this volunteer house for a class of three-year olds in the coming academic year. With COPA not now sending volunteers to work in the schools, the other houses have been rented out by the Fundacion to provide further financial resources for COPA.

Our Project Director, Luciana Mendez Matos (Maribel), has a central role in administering the finances to fulfil our objectives of providing the "extras" to enhance the quality of education and health for our pupils. Each school is supposed to receive funding from the State, but this is often intermittent or non-existent (La Hoya School has not received funding since April 2020). Hence the schools appreciate the great generosity of UK donors as it provides educational resources, kindergarten provision, building refurbishments and additional staffing, which would not be possible from state funding. Maribel, as a former headteacher, is in an excellent position to promote COPA Schools with the Ministry of Education and to seek the appointment of teachers sympathetic to the COPA ethos of providing good quality learning and teaching. She has a strong relationship with both headteachers and despite the withdrawal of our educational advisers at the beginning of last year, the COPA objective is now being perpetuated within the leadership structure. As we continue our strategy of gradually "releasing the reins", we can have confidence that the COPA influence is embedded within the values of the staff and will continue into the future.

Despite all the challenges of the year there is much to celebrate, and we do marvel at the fact that COPA is still changing the lives and opportunities of so many children. The committee are determined to continue the work of COPA as long as funding allows. We would like to say a sincere thank you to all our donors. As explained in last year's report, we departed from the idea of sponsoring individual children, which has resulted in many sponsors ceasing to be involved, but we estimate that we are still receiving donations of an estimated £26000 annually. I want to assure you that your donation is making a marked difference to nearly 700 pupils in both COPA Schools.

Thank you on behalf of the pupils of La Hoya and Bombita Schools.

Peter Gardner

September 2021

Chairperson's Report 2021



Covid-19 has had a devastating effect on people's lives throughout the world and families in the Dominican Republic have suffered similarly, with a slow vaccination programme and endless lockdown measures and curfews. The whole world has had to come to terms with living with Covid and reviewing how we manage our activities. The COPA UK and US Committees, the Fundacion and the leadership in la Hoya and Bombita Schools have risen to the challenge. Despite many obstacles and challenges, we have learnt new ways of working together and managing the two schools and furthermore, through the great efforts of our staff, the education of our pupils has continued at a good pace.

Recent reports have highlighted the strong leadership shown by the headteachers of La Hoya and Bombita Schools in organising a structured programme of teaching via virtual learning, and the staff committed their skills to this new kind of teaching – each teacher being provided with a laptop by the Ministry of Education. Most parents got involved with their children's learning, providing or sharing phones and IT equipment. When families could not afford the equipment, the schools offered help to small groups of children and set work to be completed at home. To encourage this learning staff organised gifts and scrolls of recognition for those pupils who excelled with their work. Feedback from parents has acknowledged the dedication and enthusiasm of the teachers in creating the virtual learning school for their children and they are most appreciative. However, the staff also recognised that the year has had a negative impact on the pupils and this weakness needs to be addressed by everyone in the future.

In February, Rev. Anthony Hick donated a plaque to Bombita School in memory of his wife Rosalind. Both Ros and Anthony have been longstanding supporters of COPA and sponsored a child in Bombita. The plaque will be presented to the class who display the "spirit of COPA" in their learning and behaviour. Doreen and Sebert Lane donated a similar plaque to be used in la Hoya School.

Last year, all COPA UK Committee meetings and the Annual General Meeting were conducted via zoom. This has had the added benefit that the Chair of the Fundacion and the Project Director in the DR, and representatives from COPA US have all participated in our committee meetings. This sharing of experience and ideas has for the first time in the history of COPA drawn all parties together in discussing immediate issues and finding a united approach, which had previously really only been possible at our irregular international meetings or by endless emails. We have learnt that in the future when face-to-face committee or annual general meetings re-start, committee members and our supporters, especially those living at a distance can join us by zoom. At the Annual General Meeting, we were sorry to receive the resignation of Pam Tovey who had worked loyally for the Committee for over twenty years and also edited the Newsletter. With Roger she will continue to organise the printing and despatch of COPA information to our members. In November, the Committee received with sadness the resignation from David Rush on personal grounds. He had worked tirelessly for COPA both as a volunteer in the DR and treasurer for many

AGM AGENDA



1. Welcome and Opening Devotions
2. Apologies for absence: *Please send apologies to the Secretary prior to the meeting*
3. Adopt the minutes for the AGM held on 10th October 2020
4. Presentation and Acceptance of Treasurer's report plus questions
5. Presentation and Acceptance of Chairman's report plus questions
6. Election of members of the UK Executive Committee for 2021/22. Sponsors and Members may vote at the AGM. Appointment of the COPA UK officers for 2021/22.
7. Appointment of Independent Examiners
8. Question & Answer Session relating to COPA activities and achievements

Nomination of members to serve on the Executive Committee

The COPA constitution stipulates that the Executive Committee shall comprise not less than 5 or more than 15 members and that the committee shall be elected annually at the AGM.

When elected, the committee has powers to co-opt additional members.

The members currently in office are listed below. The constitution also requires that nominations of Honorary Officers and Committee Members must be made at least 14 days before the AGM. Nominations should be sent to Elizabeth Robertson (Secretary, COPA UK) either by post or e-mail to arrive by 2nd October 2021. In the event that nominations exceed vacancies, a ballot will be held at the AGM.

COPA UK COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2020/21

PRESIDENTS

Sebert and Doreen Lane

TRUSTEES & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Peter Gardner	Chairman
John Youe	Vice Chairman/HR
Ian Robertson	Insurances/Treasurer
Elizabeth Robertson	Secretary
Paul Arthurs	Fund Raising/Publicity/IT
Bryony Clear Hill	Newsletter
Teresa Cornish	
Sandra Samways	Sponsorship
Verona Smith	Education
Roger Tovey	International Finance

Minutes of the COPA UK Annual General Meeting held on 10 October 2020 via Zoom, due to the Coronavirus Pandemic



Present: Paul Arthurs, Robin Cassingham, Kate Colechin, Mary Coole, Christine and Peter Gardner, Ann Gratton, Anthony Hick, Doreen and Sebert Lane, Debra Lilley, Margaret and Richard Roberts, Elizabeth and Ian Robertson, Caroline Seglov, Verona Smith, Sandra Samways, Sandra Spraggs, Pam and Roger Tovey

Welcome

Peter Gardner, COPA UK Chairman, welcomed everyone to the 29th AGM of COPA and the first COPA AGM to be held remotely via Zoom. Peter explained that during the pandemic Committee meetings had been held via Zoom when we had been joined by members of the Committee in the US.

Apologies received: Maureen Baulch, Brian Chunn, Marilyn Chunn, Bryony Clear Hill, Paul Colechin, Joy Gaze, Paul Gaze, Helen Kear, David Rush and John Youe

Devotions

The Meeting began with Devotions and prayers based on Ecclesiastes Chapter 7 verse 8.

Adoption of the 2019 AGM Minutes

All present indicated that the minutes of the AGM held on 5 October 2019 at Cricklade United Church (previously circulated) were adopted as a true record. Peter to sign a copy and send to the Secretary. No matters arising,

Treasurer's Report

Roger Tovey presented the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2020 and paid tribute to the enormous amount of time that David Rush had spent on collating and preparing the figures. The full accounts were available to all to access on the website.

The accounts, having been fully examined by Messrs Kingscott and Dix, were agreed and accepted by all.

The Chairman thanked Roger and David for all their hard work in looking after the finances, monitoring spending and ensuring that all money raised and donated by sponsors was spent wisely. Due to ill health, David was unable to attend the meeting and it was agreed to send a letter of appreciation to him.

Chairman's Report

Peter elaborated on his report, previously circulated, and spoke about the challenges this year due to the impact of the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic. It was noted that the Education Advisors had returned to the US at the beginning of the 2020 and the Project Trust girls had returned home at the end of March. Peter thanked them all for the valuable contributions. The Schools had been closed since May with the Minister of Education making workbooks available to all classes so children could work from home.

Peter thanked Maribel for her hard work as Project Director, liaising with the authorities, and working closely with the Committees in the UK and US in moving COPA forward. He paid tribute to the Committees in the US and UK as they worked closely together to empower the Fundacion.

Peter expanded on his letter to sponsors, outlining the strategy of handing over responsibility for the projects to the Fundacion wef July 2021 with the UK Committee continuing as a grant making committee. As a result some sponsors had decided to

withdraw their sponsorship, though many were keen to be kept informed of COPA's work in the future. At this point Debra Lilley made a moving personal testimony, supporting the future direction of COPA. Peter hoped that as a Committee we would continue to upload news on the COPA website. The Committee to discuss whether a newsletter could also be continued.

Peter concluded by thanking all involved in COPA, the sponsors, members of the UK Committee, our partners on the US Committee and the Fundacion for their support over the last year.

Election of Members of the UK Executive Committee and Appointment of the officers for 2020/2021

It was reported that Pam Tovey who had served on the Committee for many years was not seeking re-election. Pam had served as Secretary and had also edited the newsletter, arranged for it to be printed and had posted it out. Peter expressed his appreciation to Pam and was grateful for her offer to help with the distribution of any newsletters in the future. It was also reported that due to ill health David Rush had resigned from the Committee and as Treasurer. He too was thanked for his many years of service.

At this point Paul showed a list of the proposed Committee for the forthcoming year. No new members were forthcoming and members of the Executive were approved and re-elected en bloc by the meeting. Peter thanked all Members for their help and support.

Appointment of Independent Examiners

Roger Tovey proposed and Sebert Lane seconded that Messrs Kingscott & Dix be appointed as the Independent Examiners for a further year. All agreed. On behalf of COPA Peter expressed appreciation for their continuing support in providing their professional services at no cost. A letter of appreciation to be sent to Peter Morgan.

Suggestion by Anthony Hick

The Revd Anthony Hick asked about the possibility of an annual presentation being made to a pupil at La Hoya School in memory of his wife Ros. The award to be given to the pupil who most displayed the values of COPA in their schooling as determined by the staff at the School. The presentation to be in the form of a wooden shield with a smaller "silver" shield to be engraved with pupil's name annually.

Agreed that Anthony to be invited to the next Committee meeting when his suggestion would be considered.

Reflection

Sebert reflected on the work of COPA over the years. He commented that God's hand could be seen in the work of COPA over the years, from the mercy ships, the hard work of individuals, in schools and clinics and whenever there had been a need, that need had been met; money had always been forthcoming and equipment provided as required eg ambulance, generators, radios provided and installed, medicines

He expressed his gratitude for all the many donations and to all the sponsors, volunteers and working parties who had contributed to the COPA story over the years bringing it to the point where the Fundacion was now empowered to take over responsibility for the projects.

Peter thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The meeting ended in prayer.