Staffordshire Pathway Project

England & Wales · Charity number 1005976

Details

Other names	BURNTWOOD PATHWAY PROJECT, PATHWAY PROJECT, THE PATHWAY PROJECT
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	02635912
Registered	1991-11-14
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Hope Centre 3 Quonians Lane Lichfield Staffordshire WS13 7LB
Phone	01543442610
Email	wendyd@pathway-project.co.uk
Website	www.pathway-project.co.uk

Activities

Objects: 3. The ObjectThe Object (the Object) of the Charity shall be:3.1 To relieve the physical, mental, emotional, social, financial and sexual distress among adults of all ages and/or their children, who have been maltreated or controlled by their partners, family members or persons with whom they were living or having a relationship with, or had made acquaintance of, specialising in gender-based abuse against women and girls.

Activities: Domestic violence service provision including women's refuge accommodation, drop in centre, floating support services, children's services, counselling service, parenting service, group work and training provision.

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Classification

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Accommodation/housing
- **Who:** Children/young People, Other Defined Groups

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** NOT DEFINED BUT IN PRACTICE WEST MIDLANDS
- Birmingham City
- Coventry City
- Dudley
- Sandwell
- Solihull
- Staffordshire
- Walsall
- Wolverhampton

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£1,163,948	£1,147,753	£524,225	34
2024-03-31	£1,071,630	£1,114,841	£508,030	33
2023-03-31	£986,111	£945,656	£551,241	32
2022-03-31	£832,862	£860,619	£510,785	27
2021-03-31	£903,409	£780,287	£538,542	29

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Staffordshire Pathway Project

England & Wales - Charity number 1005976

Accounts

Company registration number: 02635912
Charity registration number: 1005976

The Staffordshire Pathway Project

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

Fruition Accountancy Limited
Unit 4 Three Spires House
Station Road
Lichfield
WS13 6HX

The Staffordshire Pathway Project

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Our Vision

To build a future where adults and children affected by domestic and sexual abuse live in safety and free from fear.

Our Mission

To ensure that every adult and child who comes to us seeking support for domestic and sexual abuse is given an opportunity to engage in services that can help them to make the journey from victim to survivor.

Our Values

To put people at the heart of what we do:

At Pathway we believe in being service user led. Nobody knows what services and support are needed, more than the people who access them. We are always here with an open mind and open heart to ensure that we shape futures together.

To be the best we can be:

No two people are the same. Whether you are a service user, volunteer or member of staff, we are all different. At Pathway we don't believe in a one size fits all approach. Instead we want to celebrate our differences, value opinions and learn from each other, so that we can provide the best services, in the best way, with the best people.

To share our experiences:

Good, bad or funny. We want our service users to feel that they can share their experiences and know that they will be listened to and will contribute towards our development. We want our staff to know that in good and bad times, our door is always open and that our shared experience is what drives the strength of the team. At Pathway, we want to share our experiences and collaborate with other specialist organisations, to provide solutions and services that meet the needs of the people we are committed to.

To be open:

We understand that everyone's journey begins at a different point and at a different time. At Pathway we won't put restrictions on the number of times you can access a service, or on the amount of time that has passed before you felt that you could ask for support. We also understand that your needs may not always meet a threshold, but that doesn't make them any less important to you. That's why our helpline is open access to all, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Whether you need a friendly voice, to know more about our services or help getting support elsewhere, we will be there.

Company number	02635912	**Country of incorporation**	United Kingdom
Charity number	1005976	**Country of registration**	England and Wales

Registered office and operational address

The Hope Centre
3 Quonians Lane
Lichfield
Staffordshire
WS13 7LB

Pathway Project is the trading name of The Staffordshire Pathway Project

Trustees

Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report are as below. Pathway Project has been granted "Trustee Dispensation" by the Charity Commission and as such names will be redacted from this report prior to being uploaded to the public domain :



Chair
Vice Chair
Vice Chair
Resigned December 2024
Resigned March 2025
Joined April 2025
Joined July 2024

Resigned November 2024

Key Management Personnel	Samantha Booth	Chief Executive Officer
	Wendy Dee	Chief Operations Officer: Resigned January 2025
	Amanda Barnard	Finance Manager: Resigned January 2025
	Kathryn Walker Stack	Refuge Manager
	Lynn Laughton	Volunteer & Training Manager

Bankers

NatWest Bank plc
47 Market Street
Lichfield
WS13 6LE

Solicitors

Moseleys Solicitors
Compton House
18 Bore Street
Lichfield
WS13 6LL

Auditors

Dains Audit Limited
2 Chamberlain Square
Birmingham
B3 3AX

Chair's Statement: A Year of Unwavering Commitment and Courage

It is with profound respect and gratitude that I look back on the past year. It has been a period marked by both unprecedented global challenges and inspiring local resilience.

In a world navigating sustained economic pressures and geopolitical uncertainty, our mission has become more critical than ever. These external difficulties often exacerbate the pre-existing vulnerabilities faced by individuals and families, leading to increased complexity in the cases we handle and placing greater demand on our resources. I want to acknowledge that this challenging environment meant our charity, too, faced significant operational hurdles and had to overcome considerable challenges just to maintain our service levels this year. Yet, in the face of these formidable headwinds, the sheer resilience of our clients continues to be our guiding light. Their courage in taking the first step toward safety and rebuilding their lives is the true measure of our success.

This lifesaving work is simply not possible without the extraordinary people who form the backbone of our organisation.

To our dedicated staff members: your professionalism, compassion, and emotional commitment are the foundation upon which trust is built. You show up every day to handle deeply challenging work with empathy and expertise, and we are eternally thankful for your steadfast dedication.

To our incredible volunteers: you are the heart and hands of our charity. From managing helplines to offering administrative support, your commitment of personal time and skill ensures that our services remain accessible to those who need them most. Thank you for making a tangible difference in the lives of so many.

Finally, to our supporters and donors: your generosity is an investment in safety, dignity, and a future free from violence. In a difficult fundraising climate, your loyalty has ensured that our doors remain open, our beds remain safe, and our programmes continue to evolve to meet emerging needs.

As we move forward, we do so with renewed determination, grounded in the belief that everyone deserves to live without fear. Thank you for being partners in this vital mission.

[redacted]

Chair

18 November 2025

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, The Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102. The trustees' annual report also contains a directors' report as required by company law.

Objectives and activities

The charity's objective is to relieve the physical, mental, emotional, social, financial and sexual distress among adults of all ages and/or their children, who have been maltreated or controlled by their partners, family members or persons with whom they were living or having a relationship with, or had made acquaintance of, specialising in gender-based abuse against women and girls.

a) Through our services we aim to provide adults and children with safety and support, whilst they make decisions about their future, and take the opportunity to change their lives in order to live a future in safety and free from fear.

b) Our main objectives for the year have been as follows:

- To remain cognizant of the current economic conditions in the country and the potential impact it may have on service users, our staff, and the overall functioning of the service.
- To mitigate the continued impact of rising expenses on the organisation by evaluating and overseeing contracts and services.
- To collaboratively work with Staffordshire Women's Aid to deliver the county sexual violence service. This contract is in place until 2027.
- To give assistance to providers located throughout the county by maintaining and expanding a specialised County Counselling provision with the assistance of our Counselling Lead.
- Under the guidance of our Fundraising Manager, to focus on cultivating local contacts, trusts and foundations bid writing and awareness raising in the community.
- To continue to focus on applications for funding opportunities both from Government/Councils and other funders.
- In addition to working towards the renewal of our Women's Aid National Quality Standards, we will be working to improve and develop our services through a full strategy review.
- To continue to support for those service users presenting with complex needs.
- To guarantee that employees continue to improve their abilities and retain their knowledge by providing them with a robust training and support programme.
- To maintain the high level of service we provide through our refuge accommodation.
- To provide the greatest and most comprehensive service available to service users by working in partnerships wherever feasible.
- To facilitate the healing process of children and young people who have experienced abuse and to enhance their comprehension of healthy relationships.

- To provide services offering legal advice to those unable to claim legal aid by way of our legal clinics.
- To consistently provide comprehensive services that focus on addressing needs and assisting service users in achieving complete and lasting recovery following experiences of domestic abuse.
- To continue delivery of our outstanding program of groupwork.
- To continue developing our volunteering opportunities.

Public Benefit

Pathway Project is dedicated to delivering services that benefit both children and adults who have been rendered vulnerable as a result of domestic and sexual violence, whether it has occurred within the household or in personal or familial relationships. Recognising that domestic violence is predominately a gendered issue, Pathway Project is an organisation that advocates for women and girls. Pathway Project, in accordance with our funding arrangements and in recognition of the fact that abuse can affect anyone, provides a limited selection of services for male victims. Each service we provide is charitable, accessible to abused adults and children and provided at no cost to the user, except for refuge provision which incurs rental and service charges. The local government pays the majority of this amount in the form of Housing Benefit for women whose income falls below the specified threshold.
Our beneficiaries have a philanthropic requirement that we strive to fulfil through the diverse array of services we provide. Furthermore, we are consistently innovating our offerings to guarantee a comprehensive and all-encompassing service.

The charitable purposes that we meet are:

a) The prevention or relief of poverty

b) The advancement of health or the saving of lives

c) The relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill health, disability, financial hardship, or other disadvantages

The trustees review the aims, objectives, and activities of the charity each year. This report looks at what the charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period.

The trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the trustees ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remained focused on its stated purposes.

The trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

pathway project

Pathway Project's Impact 2024-2025

585 survivors were supported across our services

3763 calls received on our Helpline

68 women lived in our refuges

128 children supported through refuge and outreach services

229 clients engaged in our counselling services

225 adults through our outreach services

Over 25 men were supported by our services



We supported client's from 11 different countries



57% of our adult clients were between 31-50 years old

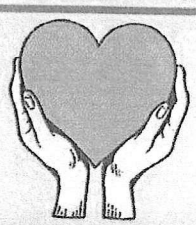
9% of our adult clients were 25 or under

7% of our adult clients were over 61



Some of the abuse our clients have faced

- 80% Controlling and Coercive Behaviour
- 58% Economic Abuse
- 48% Physical Abuse
- 38% Post-separation Abuse
- 38% Stalking/Harassment
- 87% Emotional/Psychological Abuse



74% of refuge clients felt they were safer

86% of children, who we engaged with our services, had improved safety, mental health and social relationships

88% of counselling clients felt better able to recover and cope with daily life

74% of outreach clients, who left the alleged perpetrator, did NOT reconcile with them

Intensive Support Safe Accommodation

Pathway provides intensive support safe accommodation across two sites for 20 families, with an additional dispersed property for families in the community. Many clients have complex needs, and bespoke support packages are developed on arrival, including debt and financial advice, capacity-building workshops, and referrals to specialist services such as substance misuse programs.

In 2024/25, 68 women accessed safe accommodation, while 287 referrals were declined due to high demand and the complex needs of residents, which often require longer stays. Clients with additional mental health needs received specialist support. A resettlement worker supports clients moving into new homes, ensuring a smooth transition, and post-resettlement, clients can continue to access group therapy and other services.

A dedicated children's support team engages with children residing at both sites, offering one-to-one and group support, creche facilities, parenting guidance, and activities during term time and holidays. In 2024/25, 55 children were supported, with 86% reporting feeling safer.

Funding from the MHCLG, Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, and Tamworth Council ensures continued delivery of safe accommodation and specialist services. Additional support from grant-making organisations, including Smallwood Trust, enables clients to access essential household items or school uniforms, promoting financial resilience.

24/7 Helpline

Pathway's Helpline operates 24/7 via phone, email, and an online referral system launched in 2025. The service provides immediate support, guidance, and risk assessment for victims, their families, and friends. In 2024/25, 3,763 calls were answered. Currently managed by one staff member, Helpline is supported by volunteers to ensure timely response. Staff provide ongoing emotional support for clients not yet ready to leave abusive relationships, and high-risk cases are referred to commissioned services such as New Era and referred to MARAC.

Outreach Services

Pathway's outreach team, comprising five part-time staff, supports clients in the community with domestic abuse risk reduction, safety planning, emotional support, and practical guidance. In 2024/25, 255 clients received outreach support. Young women and girls receive specialist support, including preventative workshops such as *Us Girls*. Drop-in sessions are held across Lichfield, Tamworth, Burntwood, and surrounding villages, including Manna House Café during foodbank hours, providing discreet access to support. The Hope Centre remains the hub for counselling, group work, training, and meetings.

Groupwork and Support Services

Pathway delivers a range of group support programs to help clients transition from victim to survivor, including:

- **Reaching Out** – understanding abuse and preventing re-entry into abusive relationships
- **Anxiety Group** – peer support to manage anxiety
- **Wellbeing Group** – self-care and wellbeing peer group
- **Crafternoons** – creative sessions promoting peer connection
- **Legal Clinics** – free legal advice from three volunteer solicitors

Workshops are delivered at safe accommodation sites, the Hope Centre, and outreach venues, with funding from MHCLG, National Lottery, and private donors.

Children's Services

Children in refuge are victims in their own right, they receive one-to-one and group support from two children's support workers, addressing physical, emotional, and educational wellbeing. Activities include Lego club, creche, external trips, and theatre outings, funded by donations and fundraising. A Children's Outreach worker engages with children in schools, offering 121 appointments and offering talking and play therapies, supported by private donors. Pathway is seeking additional funding to expand this service due to high demand.

Counselling Services

Pathway delivers domestic abuse counselling countywide, funded by the Ministry of Justice, and sexual violence counselling via the Survive Partnership. The team comprises a lead counsellor, two part-time counsellors, and student counsellors. In 2024/25, 229 individuals received counselling, with waiting times of 6–9 months due to high demand. Anxiety workshops and ongoing counselling programs provide clients with practical coping tools.

Survive Partnership

ISVA and CHISVA staff support child and adult victims of sexual violence in South Staffordshire, in partnership with Staffordshire Women's Aid and Savannah. The survive contract also funds some elements of the counselling offer.

Volunteering

Volunteers are essential to Pathway's operations, supporting Helpline, counselling, group work, fundraising, PR, and legal clinics. Specialist skills provided by volunteers, including peer mentoring and craft instruction, are vital to client support. Pathway is grateful to volunteers and trustees for their expertise and commitment.

Additional Projects

The *Behind Closed Doors* project, an art therapy initiative, showcased clients' experiences of abuse through co-produced artwork and sculpture. The installation was unveiled on International Women's Day 2025 and is touring Lichfield, Cannock, and Tamworth. During international Women's Day Pathway celebrated its birthday at Lichfield Garrick Theatre with clients, supporters, funders, and partners. Councillor Dave Robertson presented an Early Day Motion recognising Pathway's achievements in supporting abuse victims.

Fundraising and Community Engagement

Pathway's Fundraising and Awareness Manager delivered community engagement sessions this year, raising the charity's profile locally and educating the public about domestic abuse. Talks were delivered to schools, community groups, and companies, while fundraising activities ranged from marathons and community events such as Barn Dances and the Barton Teddy Bear Festival, to innovative initiatives by local businesses. For example, the Pink for Pathway cocktail raised funds at a local bar, and charity bingo events generated significant income.

Creativity in using donations maximises impact. A donation of over 2,000 lip balms was distributed across Lichfield with QR-coded labels, resulting in increased donations and several new clients contacting the Helpline. Similarly, the Adopt a Bear campaign around Valentine's Day raised awareness of positive relationships and generated funds for Pathway.

Financial Landscape

Funding remains a core priority. Rising costs of living and increased competition for grants have made fundraising more challenging. Pathway follows an income generation strategy targeting all areas of fundraising, including smaller trusts and grants. In 2024/25, applications were made to Tamworth Council, Another Way Foundation, Lichfield Council, and other funders.

Larger grants often span multiple financial years. Successful applications for 2025/26 include £30,000 per annum from the Masonic Charitable Foundation and a £50,000 one-off grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation. Increased fundraising has helped offset rising operational costs, and Pathway successfully negotiated higher MHCLG grant support to cover National Insurance contributions from April 2025.

The Fundraising and Awareness Manager focuses on partnerships, campaigns, and smaller grants, allowing the CEO to concentrate on larger, competitive funding bids. In 2024/25, Pathway secured several grant applications which included a £50,000 grant carried forward to the financial year 2025/26 with a further £109,888 raised through donations and our Patron scheme.

Core funding continues from central government for safe accommodation services (MHCLG, secured until March 2027), counselling services (Ministry of Justice), sexual violence services (Survive Partnership), and outreach (National Lottery). Private donors provide critical support, including funding the Hope Centre's running costs and the salary of the Young Women and Girls Worker, ensuring vital services remain operational.

The trustees have examined the charity's requirements and financial risks of the organisation and aim to build up our reserves to give us future financial stability. The nature

of our Charity is that we are susceptible to shortfalls in funding due to how activities are funded in short terms, for example the annual renewal of the Ministry of Justice funding.

Our finance policy target is to hold a minimum of 6 months and a maximum of 12 months operating expenditure in free reserves. Six months' operating costs currently equates to £573,877. As of 31 March 2025, unrestricted free reserves were £433,741 equating to 4.5 months' worth of operating reserves (in 2024 free reserves were £360,085) The Charity is working to build free reserves, as you can see by the increase in reserves from last financial year to this financial year by using a cost saving model and increasing unrestricted fundraising and unrestricted donations.

While the organisation aims to build unrestricted reserves, its free reserves are currently supported primarily by cash resources. The Charity has consistently demonstrated agility in responding to significant changes in its business model, including the historical loss of key funding sources whilst maintaining tight budgetary controls. These disciplined practices will continue, alongside regular monitoring of the income pipeline, to ensure that the Pathway Project can sustain delivery of its core services amid ongoing external uncertainty.

Through the continual review of reserve levels and cash flow, the trustees are satisfied that it is appropriate to approve these financial statements on a going concern basis.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Board of Trustees regularly reviews key risks and mitigation strategies through the Risk Management Policy, Business Plan, and Income Generation Plan. The principal risks are financial, operational, and reputational:

Financial:

Income generation remains a strategic priority, focusing on securing core funding, capital support, and sustaining service delivery. Fundraising is continuous, targeting unfunded roles, contracts nearing completion, and core costs. The ongoing cost-of-living crisis presents challenges; however, the organisation's commitment to staff pay increases supports retention and stability.

Operational:

The primary operational risk is the Hope Centre, given rising costs and building management requirements. A private funder currently covers the annual rent, reducing financial exposure. The organisation continues to support clients with complex and high-risk needs, underpinned by comprehensive insurance coverage.

Reputational:

Safeguarding vulnerable service users is paramount. Staff adhere to strict safety protocols, including risk assessments, joint visits, and personal security measures. Media presence is monitored, and professional networks are leveraged to manage reputational risk and respond to emerging issues promptly.

Future Plans

Pathway plans to refresh its values, vision, and mission to ensure alignment with the founder Kathy Coe MBE's vision while meeting the evolving needs of those affected by domestic abuse.

Plans include:

- Maintaining the Hope Centre as a safe haven for victims seeking support, advice, or guidance.
- Expanding outreach sessions to engage victims unable to access the Hope Centre.
- Developing preventative education for young women and girls locally to reduce future abuse.
- Growing services for children, including a partnership with Refuge in Literacy to raise educational attainment for young people living in refuge, scheduled for delivery later in 2025.

Employee Information and Remuneration Policy for Key Management Personnel

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chief Operating Officer (COO) have delegated authority for the day-to-day management of the organisation.

Our employees are central to our success, and we are committed to keeping them informed and engaged through regular team meetings and internal communications. When organisational changes are proposed that may affect staff, full consultation takes place to ensure their views are considered.

The remuneration of key management personnel is determined by the Board of Trustees. The Chair conducts the annual appraisal of the CEO, and the Board approves any adjustments to remuneration. Salaries are benchmarked against comparable roles within similar-sized organisations in the health and social care sector to ensure fairness and competitiveness.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 7 August 1991 (in England and Wales) and registered as a charity on 14 November 1991.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. This was revised and accepted by the Charity Commission and Companies House in October of 2021.

All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. No expenses are reclaimed from the charity as disclosed in note 9 to the accounts.

Code of Governance

Trustees have considered best practice set out within the Charity Governance Code and use this to form the basis of their work.

Appointment of trustees

A process is in place following best practice guidelines, to recruit and appoint new trustees in a similar process to that used to appoint staff members. The charity plans strategically to have a board of trustees who can bring a range of expertise and skills to the board meetings.

Trustee induction and training

Trustees are inducted and trained through a formal training system, which includes having a Mentor who is a more experienced board member. Part of the annual Trustee Away Day is sometimes a particular briefing session to inform and build knowledge. The Chair meets with each trustee annually to discuss their progress, skills, training needs and aspirations, and this contributes to the Board's succession planning. All trustees are welcome to attend training / briefing sessions that are being held for staff.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of Pathway Project for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report including the strategic report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

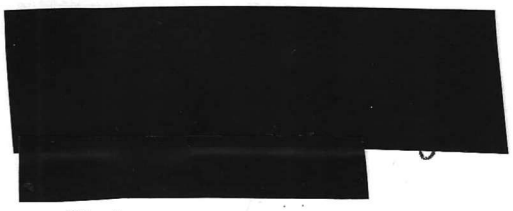
In so far as the trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware
- The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

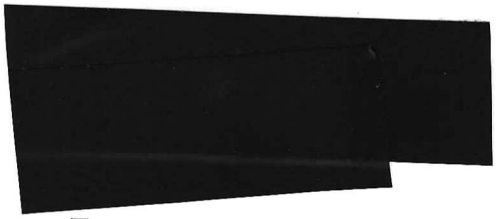
The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The trustee's annual report has been approved by the trustees on 18 November 2025 and signed on their behalf.



Chair



Treasurer

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Staffordshire Pathway Project

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Staffordshire Pathway Project (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2025, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows, and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is United Kingdom Accounting Standards, comprising Charities SORP - FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and applicable law (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the original financial statements were authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Staffordshire Pathway Project

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Strategic Report and for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Strategic Report and has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Strategic Report and the .

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the (set out on page), the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Staffordshire Pathway Project

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularies, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the senior statutory auditor ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company through discussions with Trustees and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the charity sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulation which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the charitable company, including the financial reporting legislation, Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation, anti-bribery, employment and environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Staffordshire Pathway Project

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC, relevant regulations and the charitable company's legal advisors.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater including irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Auditors' Report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Dains Audit Limited

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Mark Gurney FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of
Dains Audit Limited

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

Birmingham

8 December 2025

The Staffordshire Pathway Project

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2025 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2025 £
Income and Endowments from:				
Donations and legacies	3	65,754	44,134	109,888
Charitable activities	4	295,564	743,162	1,038,726
Investment income	5	4,022	-	4,022
Other income	6	11,312	-	11,312
Total income		376,652	787,296	1,163,948
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds		(15,078)	-	(15,078)
Charitable activities		(383,147)	(749,528)	(1,132,675)
Total expenditure	7	(398,225)	(749,528)	(1,147,753)
Net (expenditure)/income		(21,573)	37,768	16,195
Transfers between funds		109,437	(109,437)	-
Net movement in funds		87,864	(71,669)	16,195
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward		376,502	131,528	508,030
Total funds carried forward	17	464,366	59,859	524,225

The notes on pages 22 to 36 form an integral part of these financial statements.

The Staffordshire Pathway Project

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2025 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £
Income and Endowments from:				
Donations and legacies	3	84,552	82,762	167,314
Charitable activities	4	450,103	430,427	880,530
Investment income	5	4,050	-	4,050
Other income	6	19,336	400	19,736
Total income		558,041	513,589	1,071,630
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds		(8,437)	-	(8,437)
Charitable activities		(542,127)	(564,277)	(1,106,404)
Total expenditure	7	(550,564)	(564,277)	(1,114,841)
Net income/(expenditure)		7,477	(50,688)	(43,211)
Transfers between funds		(89,979)	89,979	-
Net movement in funds		(82,502)	39,291	(43,211)
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward		459,004	92,237	551,241
Total funds carried forward	17	376,502	131,528	508,030

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

The funds breakdown for 2024 is shown in note 17.

The Staffordshire Pathway Project

(Registration number: 02635912)
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	11	30,625	32,679
Current assets			
Debtors	12	138,394	131,868
Cash at bank and in hand	13	414,711	384,059
		553,105	515,927
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	14	(59,505)	(40,576)
Net current assets		493,600	475,351
Net assets		524,225	508,030
Funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds			
Restricted funds	16	59,859	131,528
Unrestricted income funds			
Unrestricted funds		464,366	376,502
Total funds	16	524,225	508,030

The financial statements on pages 18 to 35 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 18 November 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

[redacted]

Chair

[redacted]

Treasurer

The Staffordshire Pathway Project

Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash income/(expenditure)		16,195	(43,211)
Adjustments to cash flows from non-cash items			
Depreciation		7,373	3,360
Investment income	5	(4,022)	(4,050)
		19,546	(43,901)
Working capital adjustments			
Increase in debtors	12	(6,526)	(75,980)
Increase in creditors	14	18,929	2,241
Net cash flows from operating activities		31,949	(117,640)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest from investments	5	4,022	4,050
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	11	(5,941)	(24,919)
Sale of tangible fixed assets		622	-
Net cash flows from investing activities		(1,297)	(20,869)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		30,652	(138,509)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April		384,059	522,568
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March		414,711	384,059

All of the cash flows are derived from continuing operations during the above two periods.

1 Charity status

The charitable company is limited by guarantee, incorporated in the United Kingdom, registered in England and Wales, and consequently does not have share capital. The principal activity of the charitable company is given in the Trustees' Report. Each of the trustees is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the charity in the event of liquidation.

The address of its registered office is:
The Hope Centre
3 Quonians Lane
Lichfield
Staffordshire
WS13 7LB

2 Accounting policies

Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)) (issued in October 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Basis of preparation

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern.

Public benefit

The Staffordshire Pathway Project meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

Income

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of the income receivable can be measured reliably.

Grants receivable

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, and performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Deferred income

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

Donations and legacies

Donations are recognised when the charity has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance by the charity before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that these conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

Expenditure

All expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to that expenditure, it is probable settlement is required and the amount can be measured reliably. All costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure heading that aggregate similar costs to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources, with central staff costs allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use. Other support costs are allocated based on the spread of staff costs.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Raising funds

These are costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, the management of investments and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Support costs

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources, for example, allocating property costs by floor areas, or per capita, staff costs by the time spent and other costs by their usage.

Governance costs

These include the costs attributable to the charity's compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, including audit, strategic management and trustees meetings and reimbursed expenses.

Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £500.00 or more are initially recorded at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Asset class	Depreciation method and rate
Office equipment	25% reducing balance
Fixtures and fittings	20% reducing balance
Children's play equipment	20% reducing balance

Debtors

Trade debtors are amounts due for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business.

Trade debtors are recognised initially at the transaction price. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. A provision for the impairment of trade debtors is established when there is objective evidence that the charity will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the receivables.

Other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due and prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resluting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

Fund structure

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Restricted income funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

Financial instruments

Recognition and measurement

The charity only has basic financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised costs using the effective interest method.

Pension costs

The Charity has a defined contribution pension scheme to offer all employees in order to comply with the requirements of auto-enrolment. The Charity is contributing a minimum employer contribution into the scheme as set by the Pension Regulator

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2025	2025	2025	2024	2024	2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Alrewas All Saints Church PCC	-	-	-	2,100	-	2,100
Anonymous	-	40,000	40,000	5,052	39,952	45,004
Balfour Beatty, Vinci - Christmas Charity Appeal	1,734		1,734			
Barton Family Festival	4,500		4,500			
Barton under Needwood WI	1,027	-	1,027	2,165	-	2,165
Clarionis	-	-	-	1,471	-	1,471
Coop	1,654		1,654			
Energy Portfolio Ltd	1,000		1,000			
Keon Homes	-	-	-	2,500	-	2,500
Lichfield Mayor & Sherriff's Charity	-	-	-	5,001	-	5,001
Longman Legacy Fund	-	-	-	-	30,000	30,000
Maier UK Ltd	2,000		2,000			
National Grid Community Matters	1,000		1,000			
Pathways Patrons	2,500	1,026	3,526	3,000	2,010	5,010
Philip Barnes & Co	3,000		3,000			
St Johns Community Church	2,747	-	2,747	1,997	-	1,997
Stafford & Cannock Sleep Out	1,576		1,576			
Sweeney Foundation	5,000	-	5,000	13,500	10,000	23,500
Gift aid income tax recovered	14,540	-	14,540	13,614	-	13,614
Donations of £1,000 and under	23,476	3,108	26,584	33,032	800	33,832
Total for donations	65,754	44,134	109,888	84,552	82,762	167,314

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2025	2025	2025	2024	2024	2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Domestic violence prevention						
Barratt Homes	-	-	-	-	1,500	1,500
Garfield Weston	-	19,500	19,500		-	-
Lichfield DC	-	-	-	-	8,800	8,800
National Lottery Community Fund	-	117,342	117,342	-	135,637	135,637
Smallwood Trust	-	30,000	30,000	-	45,000	45,000
Staffordshire Women's Aid	-	74,193	74,193	-	66,136	66,136
Staffs County Council - MHCLG	-	62,129	62,129	-	48,531	48,531
Grants £1,000 and under	-	10,202	10,202	-	500	500
Sub-total for domestic violence prevention	-	313,366	313,366	-	306,104	306,104
Refuge						
Accommodation charges	295,564	-	295,564	271,943	-	271,943
Garfield Weston	-	21,500	21,500	-	-	-
Staffs County Council - MHCLG	-	257,213	257,213	165,452	13,976	179,428
Talisman Charitable trust	-	-	-	2,599	-	2,599
Tamworth Borough Council	-	31,583	31,583	7,350	-	7,350
Grants £1,000 and under	-	-	-	2,759	1,000	3,759
Sub-total for Refuge	295,564	310,296	605,860	450,103	14,976	465,079
Refuge based activities / Outreach and Support Services						
Garfield Weston	-	4,500	4,500	-	-	-
Staffordshire PCC	-	57,649	57,649	-	57,649	57,649
Staffs County Council - MHCLG	-	22,845	22,845	-	14,503	14,503
Sub-total for Refuge based activities / Outreach and support services	-	84,994	84,994	-	72,152	72,152
Children's projects						
Garfield Weston	-	4,500	4,500	-	-	-
Staffs County Council - MHCLG	-	30,006	30,006	-	37,195	37,195

Sub-total for Children's projects	-	34,506	34,506	-	37,195	37,195
Total income from charitable activities	295,564	743,162	1,038,726	450,103	430,427	880,530

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Bank interest receivable	4,022	-	4,022	4,050

6 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Fundraising - Events	10,268	-	10,268	14,226	60	14,286
Fundraising - Item sales	544	-	544	1,859	-	1,859
Training and services income	500	-	500	2,000	-	2,000
Sundry	-	-	-	1,251	340	1,591
	11,312	-	11,312	19,336	400	19,736

7 Expenditure on charitable activities

Analysis of expenditure 2025

	Raising funds	Domestic violence prevention	Refuge	Children's activities / Outreach projects	Refuge based and support services	Support costs	Governance costs	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	-	248,872	289,291	53,854	47,700	130,792	-	770,509
Refuge costs	-	-	162,000	-	-	-	-	162,000
Management	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Finance	-	5,589	6,074	1,457	1,329	-	-	14,449
Information technology	-	8,937	2,877	1,915	1,915	-	-	15,644
Office costs	-	17,771	7,948	3,545	3,545	-	-	32,809
Audit fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	12,600	12,600
Professional fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other sundry expenses	15,078	(3,170)	6,520	297	53,790	67,227	-	139,742
	15,078	277,999	474,710	61,068	108,279	198,019	12,600	1,147,753
Support costs	-	77,226	85,149	17,822	17,822	(198,019)	-	-
Governance costs	-	4,914	5,418	1,134	1,134	-	(12,600)	-
Total 2025	15,078	360,139	565,277	80,024	127,235	-	-	1,147,753
Restricted	-	279,277	324,532	41,973	103,746	-	-	749,528
Unrestricted	15,078	80,862	240,745	38,051	23,489	-	-	398,225

Analysis of expenditure 2024

	Raising funds	Domestic violence prevention	Refuge	Children's projects	Refuge based activities	Support costs	Governance costs	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	1,337	190,935	228,838	35,554	17,888	131,060	520	606,132
Refuge costs	-	-	181,077	-	-	-	-	181,077
Management	-	11,793	10,690	-	17,600	-	-	40,083
Finance	-	-	16,257	-	-	-	-	16,257
Information technology	-	5,593	4,260	779	96	-	-	10,728
Office costs	-	13,214	17,981	2,361	578	-	994	35,128
Audit fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,800	10,800
Professional fees	-	-	-	-	43,785	-	97	43,882
Other sundry expenses	3,208	50,621	69,867	18,750	28,308	-	-	170,754
	4,545	272,156	528,970	57,444	108,255	131,060	12,411	1,114,841
Support costs	3,892	79,220	11,987	33,772	2,189	(131,060)	-	-
Governance costs	-	7,731	1,170	3,296	214	-	(12,411)	-
Total 2024	8,437	359,107	542,126	94,512	110,658	-	-	1,114,841
Restricted	-	359,107	-	94,512	110,658	-	-	564,277
Unrestricted	8,437	-	542,126	-	-	-	-	550,563

Support and governance costs are allocated according to the time spent by the relevant staff on each activity.

8 Net incoming/outgoing resources

Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year include:

Audit fees for 2025 are shown inclusive of VAT.

	2025 £	2024 £
Operating leases - other assets	43,907	32,147
Audit fees	12,600	10,800
Depreciation of fixed assets	7,373	3,360

9 Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charity during the year.

The amount expenses waived by the trustees during the year totalled £Nil (2024 - £Nil).

10 Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Staff costs during the year were:		
Wages and salaries	676,375	537,015
Social security costs	47,336	47,458
Pension costs	16,804	21,659
	740,515	606,132

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management / leadership team) employed by the charity during the year expressed as full time equivalents was as follows:

	2025 No	2024 No
Average number of employees	34	33

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year.

The total employee benefits (including employer's pensions contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £101,954 (2024: £179,321). Reduction in cost was due to the CEO position being vacant for several months and the Finance Manager finishing at the end of January. The Finance Manager was then outsourced for the rest of the period.

No Trustee received any remuneration, expenses or benefits during the year ended 31 March 2025.

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Office equipment £	Children's play equipment £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 April 2024	34,750	3,475	22,179	60,404
Additions	4,362	1,579	-	5,941
Disposals	(2,920)	(2,255)	-	(5,175)
At 31 March 2025	36,192	2,799	22,179	61,170
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2024	12,953	2,936	11,836	27,725
Charge for the year	4,952	352	2,069	7,373
Eliminated on disposals	(2,308)	(2,245)	-	(4,553)
At 31 March 2025	15,597	1,043	13,905	30,545
Net book value				
At 31 March 2025	20,595	1,756	8,274	30,625
At 31 March 2024	21,797	539	10,343	32,679

12 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	99,231	102,009
Prepayments	13,768	26,046
Accrued income	11,734	-
Other debtors	13,661	3,813
	138,394	131,868

13 Cash and cash equivalents

	2025 £	2024 £
Cash on hand	510	382
Cash at bank	414,201	383,677
	414,711	384,059

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	5,090	11,527
Other taxation and social security	11,955	-
Other creditors	7,531	2,177
Accruals and deferred income	34,929	26,872
	59,505	40,576

15 Obligations under leases and hire purchase contracts

Total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Within one year	43,907	32,147
In two to five years	172,932	124,849
In over five years	37,448	73,591
	254,287	230,587

16 Pension and other schemes

Defined contribution pension scheme

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The pension cost charge for the year represents contributions payable by the charity to the scheme and amounted to £16,804 (2024 - £21,659). Contributions totalling £3,110 (2024 - £Nil) were payable to the fund at the balance sheet date. (2024 - £21,659).

17 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2025 £
Unrestricted funds					
General					
General funds	376,502	376,652	(398,225)	109,437	464,366

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2025 £
Restricted funds					
Refuge based activities / outreach and support services	-	84,994	(103,746)	23,252	4,500
Children's Projects: Other	61,420	34,506	(41,973)	(49,453)	4,500
Central costs	-	44,134	-	(44,134)	-
Domestic violence prevention: Big Lottery Funding	5,000	-	(5,000)	-	-
Domestic violence prevention: Other	27,793	283,366	(242,244)	(48,417)	20,498
Refuge	26,421	310,296	(324,532)	9,315	21,500
Smallwood Trust	10,894	30,000	(32,033)	-	8,861
Total restricted funds	131,528	787,296	(749,528)	(109,437)	59,859
Total funds	508,030	1,163,948	(1,147,753)	-	524,225

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Unrestricted funds					
General					
General funds	459,004	558,041	(550,564)	(89,979)	376,502
Restricted					
Refuge based activities / outreach and support services	17,710	-	(21,390)	3,680	-
Children's Projects: Other	25,992	71,483	(36,055)	-	61,420
Central costs	-	8,836	(95,135)	86,299	-
Domestic violence prevention: Big Lottery Funding	5,000	-	-	-	5,000
Domestic violence prevention: Other	23,464	295,530	(292,201)	1,000	27,793
Refuge	15,123	91,741	(80,443)	-	26,421
Smallwood Trust	4,947	45,000	(39,053)	-	10,894
Total restricted funds	92,236	512,590	(564,277)	90,979	131,528
Total funds	551,240	1,070,631	(1,114,841)	1,000	508,030

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:

Refuge Based Activities: Funding received for the provision of support to service users whilst resident with the project. Such funding is provided to work with women in the refuge through a specialist support worker, a counselling service and activities to promote a healthier life style.

Children's Projects: Funding received for the provision of support to children in the refuges who are suffering because of living in a home with domestic violence. The funding received is provided to work with children both in the refuge and as an outreach to service users through a children's worker, a parenting support carer and a sessional crèche worker, together with additional costs such as outings and equipment.

Central Costs: Funding received towards the central costs which impact all services provided.

Domestic Violence Prevention: funding received for the provision of support to women who have suffered because of domestic violence. The funding is provided to work with women both in the refuges and as an outreach to service users through the provision of an early intervention worker, an independent domestic violence adviser and a 24-hour helpline operated by the project.

Smallwood Trust: Funding received to make financial grants to vulnerable female service users, to help them better manage their financial circumstances, or support activities that will help improve their mental health. Applications are made through their Support worker, providing proof of their financial circumstances prior to allocation of grants.

Transfers between unrestricted and restricted funds cover any deficit of funds spent on projects compared to grant income received. During the year, management have performed a detailed review of historic funds and transferred any funds deemed not to be restricted or already fully spent back to unrestricted funds.

18 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total funds at 31 March 2025 £
Tangible fixed assets	30,625	-	30,625
Current assets	486,752	66,353	553,105
Current liabilities	(53,011)	(6,494)	(59,505)
Total net assets	464,366	59,859	524,225

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total funds at 31 March 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	16,417	16,262	32,679
Current assets	388,127	127,800	515,927
Current liabilities	(28,042)	(12,534)	(40,576)
Total net assets	376,502	131,528	508,030

19 Analysis of net funds

	At 1 April 2024 £	Financing cash flows £	At 31 March 2025 £
Cash at bank and in hand	384,059	30,652	414,711
	384,059	30,652	414,711

	At 1 April 2023 £	Net increase/ (decrease) in cash £	At 31 March 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	522,568	(138,509)	384,059
	522,568	(138,509)	384,059

20 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year.

Staffordshire Pathway Project

England & Wales - Charity number 1005976

Accounts

pathway project

Charity No: 1005976
Company No: 02635912

The Staffordshire Pathway Project

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended
31 March 2024

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

LOTTERY FUNDED

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Our Vision

To build a future where adults and children affected by domestic and sexual abuse live in safety and free from fear.

Our Mission

To ensure that every adult and child who comes to us seeking support for domestic and sexual abuse is given an opportunity to engage in services that can help them to make the journey from victim to survivor.

Our Values

To put people at the heart of what we do:

At Pathway we believe in being service user led. Nobody knows what services and support are needed, more than the people who access them. We are always here with an open mind and open heart to ensure that we shape futures together.

To be the best we can be:

No two people are the same. Whether you are a service user, volunteer or member of staff, we are all different. At Pathway we don't believe in a one size fits all approach. Instead we want to celebrate our differences, value opinions and learn from each other, so that we can provide the best services, in the best way, with the best people.

To share our experiences:

Good, bad or funny. We want our service users to feel that they can share their experiences and know that they will be listened to and will contribute towards our development. We want our staff to know that in good and bad times, our door is always open and that our shared experience is what drives the strength of the team. At Pathway, we want to share our experiences and collaborate with other specialist organisations, to provide solutions and services that meet the needs of the people we are committed to.

To be open:

We understand that everyone's journey begins at a different point and at a different time. At Pathway we won't put restrictions on the number of times you can access a service, or on the amount of time that has passed before you felt that you could ask for support. We also understand that your needs may not always meet a threshold, but that doesn't make them any less important to you. That's why our helpline is open access to all, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Whether you need a friendly voice, to know more about our services or help getting support elsewhere, we will be there.

The Staffordshire Pathway Project
Reference and administrative details
For the year ended 31 March 2024

Company number	2635912	**Country of incorporation**	United Kingdom
Charity number	1005976	**Country of registration**	England and Wales

Registered office and operational address	The Hope Centre 3 Quonians Lane Lichfield Staffordshire WS13 7LB
	Pathway Project is the trading name of The Staffordshire Pathway Project
Trustees	Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

TRUSTEE NAMES REDACTED SBooth 15/5/25

[redacted]	Chair
	Vice Chair
	Treasurer: Resigned July 2024
	Appointed January 2024
[redacted]	Appointed January 2024
	Appointed January 2024
	Appointed January 2024
	Appointed January 2024
	Appointed July 2024

Key Management Personnel	Samantha Booth	Chief Executive Officer
	Wendy Dee	Chief Operations Officer
	Amanda Barnard	Finance Manager
	Kathryn Walker Stack	Refuge Manager
	Lynn Laughton	Volunteer & Training Manager

Bankers	NatWest Bank plc 47 Market Street Lichfield WS13 6LE
Solicitors	Moseley's Compton House 18 Bore Street Lichfield WS13 6LL
Auditors	Dains Audit Limited 2 Chamberlain Square Birmingham B3 3AX

Chairperson's Foreword

As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with immense pride in the work and accomplishments of the Pathway Project. Our mission to relieve the physical, mental, emotional, social, and financial distress of those impacted by domestic and sexual violence remains as crucial as ever. We continue to focus on supporting adults and children, particularly women and girls, who have been subjected to abuse and control within their homes or personal relationships.

The demand for our services underscores the critical need for our work. Over the past year, we received over 500 enquiries for refuge spaces and were able to provide safety and shelter to 71 families; it is heartbreaking that we had to turn away and refer so many others.

The evolution of our refuge services into comprehensive support systems reflects our commitment to addressing the complex needs of those who seek our help. Beyond providing shelter, we assist with debt management, tenancy maintenance, life skills development, and more, ensuring that our service users are equipped with the tools they need to rebuild their lives.
Our 24-hour helpline remains a lifeline for those in crisis, receiving over four thousand calls this year, which is a 4% increase from the previous year. This service continues to be the initial point of contact for many, offering crucial advice, guidance, and support in moments of urgent need.
The Hope Centre has grown into a vibrant community hub, offering a variety of activities and support services, including domestic abuse education, wellness programmes, and a countywide counselling service. Our outreach efforts have expanded, enabling us to reach even those who cannot physically access our centres. Through drop-in sessions and specialised services, Independent Sexual Violence Advocate's and Children's Independent Sexual Violence Advocate's, provide both emotional and practical support to survivors of sexual violence.
Our Children's Services team has faced increased demands as more children require our help. Ensuring these young individuals have a safe and nurturing environment remains one of our top priorities going forward.

Financially, the past year has been challenging due to the rising cost of living and economic pressures. However, thanks to the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and trustees, we remain optimistic about the future. Our community's strong support and our reputation as a trusted organisation in the Midlands gives us confidence as we move forward. Fundraising will continue to be a vital part of our strategy, allowing us to sustain and grow our services.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to our volunteers, whose unwavering commitment and generosity of time and spirit are at the heart of our success. Additionally, I want to acknowledge the resilience and strength of our staff, who have navigated this challenging year with professionalism and dedication. The leadership transition following our CEO's departure was handled with great care, and we are fortunate to have a senior management team and board of trustees that bring a wealth of experience and expertise to guide us through these times.
As we look ahead, we remain steadfast in our mission to support those affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence. We will continue to advocate for women and girls, ensuring that our services evolve to meet the ever-changing needs of our community.

Thank you for your continued support of the Pathway Project.



The Staffordshire Pathway Project
Trustees' annual report
For the year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, The Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102. The trustees' annual report also contains a directors' report as required by company law.

Objectives and activities

The charity's objective is to relieve the physical, mental, emotional, social, financial and sexual distress among adults of all ages and/or their children, who have been maltreated or controlled by their partners, family members or persons with whom they were living or having a relationship with, or had made acquaintance of, specialising in gender-based abuse against women and girls.

a) Through our services we aim to provide adults and children with safety and support, whilst they make decisions about their future, and take the opportunity to change their lives in order to live a future in safety and free from fear.

b) Our main objectives for the year have been as follows:

- To remain cognizant of the current economic conditions in the country and the potential impact it may have on service users, our staff, and the overall functioning of the service.
- To mitigate the continued impact of rising expenses on the organisation by evaluating and overseeing contracts and services.
- To collaboratively work with Staffordshire Women's Aid to deliver the county sexual violence service. This contract is in place until 2027.
- To give assistance to providers located throughout the county by maintaining and expanding a specialised County Counselling provision with the assistance of our Counselling Lead.
- Under the guidance of our Fundraising Manager, to focus on cultivating local contacts, trusts and foundations bid writing and awareness raising in the community.
- To continue to focus on applications for funding opportunities both from Government/Councils and other funders.
- In addition to working towards the renewal of our Women's Aid National Quality Standards kite mark, we will be working to improve and develop our services through a full strategy review.
- To continue to support for those service users presenting with complex needs.
- To guarantee that employees continue to improve their abilities and retain their knowledge by providing them with a robust training and support programme.
- To maintain the high level of service we provide through our refuge accommodation.
- To provide the greatest and most comprehensive service available to service users by working in partnerships wherever feasible.
- To facilitate the healing process of children and young people who have experienced abuse and to enhance their comprehension of healthy relationships.
- To provide services offering legal advice to those unable to claim legal aid by way of our legal clinics.
- To continuously work to improve our services.

- To consistently provide comprehensive services that focus on addressing needs and assisting service users in achieving complete and lasting recovery following experiences of domestic abuse.
- To continue delivery of our outstanding program of groupwork.
- To continue developing our volunteering opportunities.

Public Benefit

Pathway Project is dedicated to delivering services that benefit both children and adults who have been rendered vulnerable as a result of domestic and sexual violence, whether it has occurred within the household or in personal or familial relationships. Recognising that domestic violence is predominately a gendered issue, Pathway Project is an organisation that advocates for women and girls. Pathway Project, in accordance with our funding arrangements and in recognition of the fact that abuse can affect anyone, provides a limited selection of services for male victims. Each service we provide is charitable, accessible to abused adults and children and provided at no cost to the user, except for refuge provision which incurs rental and service charges. The local government pays the majority of this amount in the form of Housing Benefit for women whose income falls below the specified threshold. Our beneficiaries have a philanthropic requirement that we strive to fulfil through the diverse array of services we provide. Furthermore, we are consistently innovating our offerings to guarantee a comprehensive and all-encompassing service.

The charitable purposes that we meet are:

a) The prevention or relief of poverty

b) The advancement of health or the saving of lives

c) The relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill health, disability, financial hardship, or other disadvantages

The trustees review the aims, objectives, and activities of the charity each year. This report looks at what the charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period.

The trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the trustees ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remained focused on its stated purposes.

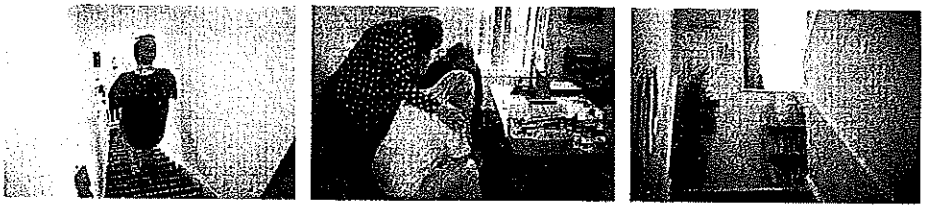
The trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

Refuge Accommodation

Refuge accommodation continues to be an essential and highly necessary service for the Pathway Project. With an increasing number of women seeking emergency accommodation having complex needs, refuges have evolved into comprehensive services that go beyond providing a place to stay. Our refuges now offer extensive support in areas such as debt management, maintaining tenancy, developing life skills, budgeting, and improving reading and numeracy. In addition to our general support workers, we provide a Financial Abuse Specialist who conducts an initial financial assessment for all individuals seeking refuge.

This assessment enables us to create a customised support package based on their specific needs. We also have a Resettlement Worker who accompanies our residents to their new homes in the community, ensuring they have the optimal start to independent living. Financial assistance continues to be a crucial service we provide, as service users are increasingly affected by the escalating cost of living.

In 2023/24, we received 518 enquiries and referrals for refuge space. We were able to house 71 families but had to turn away, refer on or signpost 489 families.
We continue to see an increase in those service users with complex mental health needs and those who have ongoing issues with drugs and alcohol. We have also supported several families with no recourse to public funding, which also means that these families stay in refuge for longer periods of time while they wait for their immigration status to be changed to indefinite leave to remain. Our refuge staff have also worked with more service users this year who cannot speak English. These service users have been supported by way of using translators, language line and ultimately enrolment with an English tutor.



We continue to work in partnership with the Smallwood Trust, which allows us to make grants to women that help them better their financial position and their mental health. Facilitated by our Financial Abuse Specialist, this has helped women in refuge to pay off housing arrears, clear debts with utility companies, purchase essential items for their new homes, and pay for transport to medical appointments. It has also been hugely beneficial in enabling us to support service users who have no recourse to public funding while they wait for their DV concessions to come through - in some cases, without this fund, we may not have been able to take these families at a time when they needed us the most.

Funding for our refuge provision was secured in October 2023 for a period of 3 years, with a possible extension for a further 12 months. Again, we have been hugely thankful for the support we have received from Tamworth Borough Council (TBC) in enabling us to begin to extend our services at Tamworth Refuge. The additional staffing hours that TBC have funded have enabled us to support our service users with activities such as the popular Sunday Lunch, various fun evening activities and events at weekends. This has helped to support the residents in weekends and evenings, often when feelings of isolation and worry are at their highest.
We pride ourselves in our Children's services, and have a fantastic team of Children's workers, based at refuge. We run a creche, offer respite during holidays, support mums with their parenting skills and offer one to one support to the children, who are often the silent victims of domestic abuse.

24 Hour Helpline

Our 24-hour helpline remains the initial point of contact for service users and agencies. The helpline offers a combination of advice, guidance, support, and urgent assistance during a crisis. Additionally, it serves as our primary point of contact for all referrals.

This year, we answered 4,014 calls, which is an increase of 4% on the year before.

Our helpline team continues to maintain a high-quality service to those who are in crisis and are the first point of contact for those seeking support.

Regardless of the duration of a person's involvement with the project, we maintain our victim-centered, person-centered support from the beginning, and that starts with the helpline.
We have consistently great feedback from service users about our helpline staff, here is a typical email:

> *Hi Jan,*
> *I feel so ready for this next chapter of my life, and I want to say thank you because, being that voice at the end of that phone that day, you've helped me so much. I'll keep you updated with how the legal aid turns out.*

We are currently training some helpline volunteers to work on the helpline from refuge three evenings per week. Currently, at 5pm, the helpline switches over to refuge, and this can sometimes be challenging when dealing with service users, both face to face and then on the phone. Having a dedicated person to answer the helpline at refuge will give the staff the time they need to focus on service users in house and allow them to write up notes.

Through the year we have answered 4,014 calls and taken 1,029 referrals for adults and children's services. This is down 29% on last year, mainly reflecting the significant decrease of the number of referrals made to refuge, due to the spike of the number of service users who need to stay in refuge for a longer period than is the norm. This is due to the increase of those service users who have no recourse to public funds and those with complex needs. Service users who fall into this bracket stay, on average, 9 months longer than those who have no additional specialist requirements.

The significance of comprehensive, all-encompassing support is demonstrated by the fact that many individuals who self-referred utilised multiple services. We frequently provided ongoing support to individuals who were not yet prepared to participate in a formal support service but who contacted the helpline on a regular basis for emotional support for a period of time. We also receive numerous calls from individuals who require assistance beyond domestic violence and provide appropriate referrals to other local organisations. Additionally, we handle calls that are classified as high-risk and make onward referrals to the commissioned service accordingly.

This year, our two most significant challenges remain the management of service users with extremely severe mental health needs and the high influx of inappropriate referrals, particularly for individuals who are still dependent on drugs or alcohol. We work closely with other supporting agencies so that, even though we are not the appropriate service provider for the individual, they still deserve a service that can improve their quality of life.

The Hope Centre

The Hope Centre continues to be a vibrant centre for both our employees and the individuals who use our services. Our comprehensive group work curriculum encompasses a wide range of activities, including domestic abuse education and wellness, as well as craft sessions and chat and chill. This programme is available both during the day and in the evening. Additionally, the centre functions as the primary location for our County Counselling Service.

We have an opportunity to utilise some additional space within the building and are excited to continue with our research and scoping for a potential new social enterprise. This project will be presented to the board of trustees in November, with the hope of completion by early 2026.

Outreach

We are fortunate to have 7 members of staff within the outreach team, and thanks to the National Lottery, Lichfield District Council and private funders we have been able to also retain our Young Women and Girls Worker, Housing Support, Family Support, Risk Assessment Worker and our Economic Abuse Specialist. We also have a privately funded Children's Worker, who works to support children in the community via support in schools, home or at the centre. Whether the abuse is historical in nature, if they are still with their partner or have recently split up, our outreach team offers service users at any stage of their journey, a mix of emotional and practical support.



We also do a variety of drop-in sessions across the community. This allows us to reach those who either cannot physically access support at the centre due to lack of transport or from fear of alerting suspicion from the perpetrator. We are also continuing to offer drop-ins at Tamworth in the church/community cafe and via a church in Burntwood. On top of this we are also offering drop-ins at Spark in Burntwood, this is an established charity which supports the community – alongside the drop ins we have done talks on domestic abuse awareness, menopause, red flags and healthy relationships.

In the outreach centre, we are fortunate to be able to offer a legal clinic on a regular basis. This allows service users to access free advice and support from solicitors who kindly give their time without charge. This has been a lifeline to many service users, as they otherwise would not be able to access valuable legal support. We also offer legal advice via workshops, where solicitors will focus on one topic, ie divorce, child contact arrangements and wills.

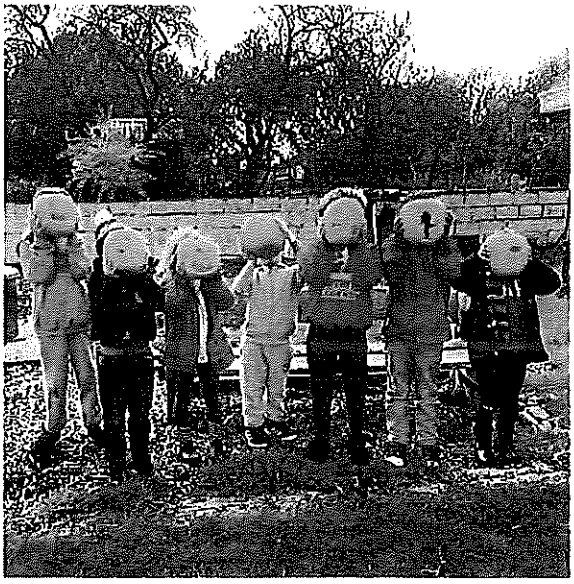
Sexual Violence Services

We continue to deliver Survive (Sexual Violence Services) in conjunction with Staffordshire Women's Aid and are delighted this service has been commissioned for a further 3 years. We have retained both our ISVA and CHISVA and are now offering sexual violence counselling support. Again, we thank Staffordshire Women's Aid for allowing us to be a key delivery partner for such an important service.

Children's Services

We currently employ three dedicated children's workers, who provide support to children and young people both in safe accommodation, and in the wider community. This area has garnered more focus this year as a result of a significant surge in the number of children necessitating more comprehensive support.

The children's team work hard to provide a variety of support through one to ones and play therapy and organise much needed days out during the school holidays for families who otherwise could not afford to do so. Last year we organised days to the theme park, farm park, cinema, zoo and local theatre. We are so appreciative of the free tickets that we are allocated from these attractions, as it allows these families a much-needed break from the trauma of their day to day lives.



County Counselling Service

Our county wide counselling service continues to thrive, and we now have 3 Pathway employed counsellors, supported by 7 volunteer/student counsellors. This service is exceptionally well regarded in the county, and we work closely with local universities to ensure that the quality of our student counsellors (who complete their placement with Pathway) is maintained at the highest standard. The contract was extended for 12 months and will end next April; however, we will be looking to keep the service going and are hopeful that the Ministry of Justice will recommission the service.
Counselling is provided in the most appropriate manner for the service user, whether it be in person or using Zoom or WhatsApp. Prior to fully participating in the counselling program, all service users undergo an assessment conducted by our Counselling Lead.

During 2023/24 we supported a total of 138 service users in our counselling service, and over 40 through our linked anxiety sessions.

In the counselling service we often get positive feedback about being heard and understood for the first time in a lifetime of abuse. In this space we see people reclaim their life with a new mindset that enables them to make changes. It grants them a permission to think and believe in themselves. We have a lot of feedback to evidence this, but this is not about the client in this setting. The following was shared by our Lead Counsellor:

> *I want to share a precious moment I was privileged to experience with one of our new placement counsellors K. Following the covid K sought to study counselling in a personal mission to help people, she felt she could do this best through a career in counselling. K embarked on a journey of study as a mature student, which is no mean task while a mother and wife as well. K applied to do her placement with Pathway having passed her Fit to Practice exam. At this time K had the devasting news that she had breast cancer. K's life was on hold while she embarked on a year of treatment. Having completed her journey with a positive outcome, K reapplied to us for a placement. On interviewing K , we were struck by her debt of understanding in domestic abuse and her deep desire to work in this area.*
>
> *We were delighted to learn that K had accepted our offer of a placement. Having completed the counselling induction, K offered her availability to commence her placement. A client was referred to K for 4pm on a Thursday evening. K eagerly prepared for this appointment and began her first counselling session as the therapist. Upon finishing the session K came up stairs to write her note and discuss her first session with me. K through her arms in the air and said, "god I loved it" and thanked me for this opportunity while giving me a big hug in tears. She added "its begun now"*
>
> *It was a privilege to share that moment of triumph for a student counsellor who had overcome so much to follow her purpose and her gratitude to be doing it with Pathway.*

Volunteers

Pathway volunteers are the heart of Pathway. Pathway started with volunteers, the first one, our founder Kathy Coe M8E. It has been onward and upward since then.

Our team changes periodically as we lose volunteers into paid employment, sometimes within Pathway, and gain new volunteers who become part of our team and help in many varied areas of Pathway's work. Our current volunteer team of 14 general volunteers, provide support through helpline, group work in refuge, assisting with groups in our outreach centre, fundraising, finance, administration and they give their time freely and always willingly.

Most of our volunteers have skills that are transferable in their roles, such as LGBTQ+, Mental Health, group work and are a very valued group of people.

Our trustees and our counsellors are also volunteers and they provide continued support to service users and staff alike.

In the last year we have taken on 6 new volunteers, and they have come from varied backgrounds. Some of them have been service users and want to offer something back to others to show that there is life after abuse.

Aside from the volunteer team, we mustn't forget the hours that are donated by external providers, such as our legal clinics. We currently have 2 solicitors who provide legal advice to our service users on a regular basis. We also have other services who offer our service users options to build on their skills by giving

their own time in group work etc.

We are always amazed at the commitment, hard work and passion that they show and how quickly they integrate into our teams.

Group Work and Training

Our group work continues to go from strength to strength and we are fortunate to have a highly skilled and experienced set of staff who deliver the groups both in the Hope Centre and from refuge.

Reaching Out

Our Reaching Out program is the backbone of our group offering. It is currently running six times a year across our refuges and Hope Centre. It is a therapeutic group which looks at the dynamics and impact of abuse, the signs of an abusive relationship, safety planning and keeping safe in future relationships. This group has a huge impact and people start to identify the level of abuse that took place in their relationship and the impact it has had in their own and their children's lives. It also enables people to see how controlling and abusive behaviour can manifest and develop through a relationship.

Anxiety Group

Our Anxiety Workshop began two years ago as an offshoot of our Ministry of Justice funded County Counselling Service, and was put together by our Lead Counsellor, who noticed a huge amount of people being referred into counselling were struggling with general anxiety as well as dealing with domestic abuse. This course runs alongside counselling and allows people to explore anxiety and how to deal with it in a peer setting.
We also run this group for staff, who may be struggling with anxiety as a result of vicarious trauma.

Wellbeing Group

The Wellbeing Group the group is designed to focus on how you can manage your mental health, self-care and the impact domestic abuse can have on both. It is a combination of educational work alongside a fun group activity, with the intention being that it is a good starting group for those people who are struggling to complete larger pieces of work.

Chat and Chill

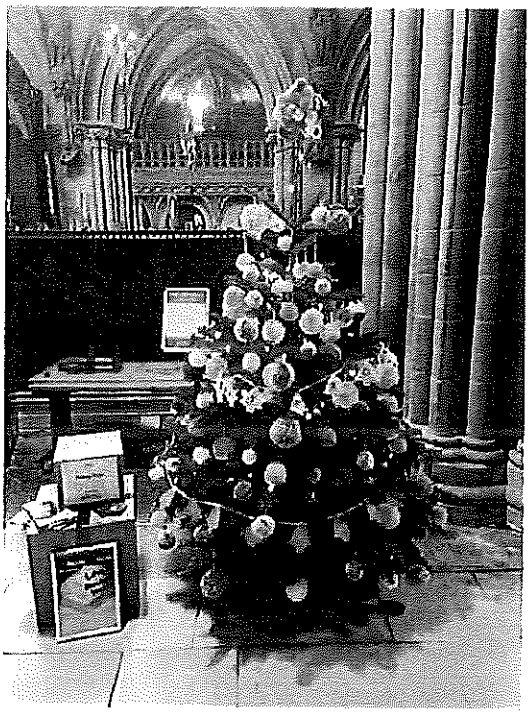
Chat and Chill runs monthly in the evening and our manager is supported to deliver this by one of most long-standing peer mentors. Essentially it is exactly what is says, an opportunity to have a coffee and sit and chat about anything you want to, with people who have had the same experiences that you have.

Family Support

Our same worker also began a Family Support Group so that can offer support to family members who are trying to deal with their own thoughts and feelings about having close family members in abusive relationships. This group also educated people on the best way they can support someone who is in that situation, as well as giving people the opportunity to chat with others who are in the same position.

Crafternoon

Over the past year, our Crafternoon program has remained one of our most successful initiatives, consistently attracting a high level of attendance. Held monthly during term times, each session features a unique craft activity. Participants have the opportunity to socialise, enjoy some light refreshments, and engage in activities such as making pom-pom wreaths, decorating tote bags, card-making, creating wellness journals, and crafting plant pots. Our service users have contributed in lots of ways, and last year, during these sessions, they all made several pink and grey pom poms, which then were added to a Christmas tree entry at Lichfield Cathedral, which we are proud to say, we won!



One-Off Sessions

This year, we introduced several popular one-off sessions. Notably, one of our service users led a session on card-making, demonstrating her craft to others. This session was particularly successful, providing the service user with a platform to build her confidence and share her passion with the other women.

External Training Sessions

Healthy Relationships Group Work

We have expanded our offerings to include external training sessions for local organisations and their service users. One notable program is the Healthy Relationships group work, delivered in collaboration with Lichfield District Council's 'Us Girls' program. This course encourages young women and girls to challenge their beliefs and opinions about love and relationships and helps equip them with the confidence to know their relationship rights for the future.

We also conducted Domestic Abuse Awareness Training at MHA Communities, located at Burntwood Mining College. This central venue serves older residents of Burntwood. The training was designed for staff and volunteers who support and befriend vulnerable older residents.

Collaboration with Heart of Tamworth via monthly drop-in service

Heart of Tamworth has requested our assistance in providing a monthly drop-in service for victims and survivors of domestic abuse. Recognising the prevalence of domestic abuse in their community, they aim to encourage more individuals to seek help and support.

Legal Clinics

Our legal clinics continue to be well attended and are run by two solicitors. The clinics provided much needed guidance to those who need clarity and support around legal issues, ranging from child contact, divorce, financial matters and non-molestation orders, to name but a few.

Fundraising and Community Engagement

In the last 12 months, we impressively secured over £40k in funding, whilst significantly raising our profile.

Key highlights of the role from the last 12 months include:

- Hosting a community quiz night in Lichfield, attended by the then Mayor.
- An Elvis night, which was so successful that we have another planned in June
- We were the recipients of the Sheriff of Lichfield events, which netted us £5,000.
- Close links with a local housebuilder have secured us over £20k in funding, which has been split between refuge refurbishment and funding for our economic abuse worker.
- There were various talks at clubs such as the Rotary, WI, Soroptimists, Probus Society, and several churches, to name but a few.
- The annual Pathway bingo night.
- We have attended numerous local markets, Christmas events, had buckets at supermarkets, clothing sales, sponsored sky dives and so much more!



General Update

It has been a challenging year for staff, as the economic landscape makes it difficult for charities to keep up with the increasing cost of living. We were fortunate to offer a 10% pay rise across the board last year, and that really did help us to get more aligned with other providers in the sector. However, as prices of even the most basic commodities continued to rise, we found ourselves losing staff to other sectors that were higher paid. In the last 12 months, we have seen several members of staff leave for teaching, airline administration, local housing, and private counselling. We reviewed our finances and were able to support a 3% pay increase for all staff this year, however we plan to start another benchmarking exercise within the next couple of months to ensure that we remain competitive within the sector.

At the beginning of 2024, our CEO stepped down, and Wendy Dee, Chief Operations Officer (COO), stepped in as Interim CEO. We have now secured a new CEO, Samantha Booth, in post from 2nd September 2024. We have been lucky to welcome several new trustees to our board in the last few months. These trustees bring a wealth of experience from within the HR, mental health, housing, finance and training sectors and we are fortunate to have such a diverse set of skills and experience within the board.

Financial Review

Fundraising remains a key priority for Pathway Project; this is through all mediums including community fundraising, grants, trusts and large funding streams. This is also across all areas including restricted funding for set projects or costs, unrestricted funding to help cover general costs, and capital funding to fund projects such as the refurbishment of Tamworth Refuge.

As always, the successful delivery of a professional organisation means that it is necessary to have management oversight and buildings to operate from, including their operating costs, and all of these contribute to the front-line services at the heart of Pathway Project. Our Hope Centre is a vital part of our service delivery, allowing for space for staff to work safely and access peer support, as well as providing a much-needed venue for our counselling and group work. Our management team ensure that we provide a safe and secure service provision, as well as overseeing the vital strategic and operational strategy for the organisation that allows us to remain viable. Funding both of these areas remains a constant struggle for charities, where there is a continued focus by funders on direct delivery, and not their associated costs. Despite this Pathway Project continues to work hard to source any funding that may support this, including working with private individual funders.

Thanks to the funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), which is dispersed to Staffordshire County Council to allow them to commission safe accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse, our refuge provision is now safe.

Fundraising for the organisation is now overseen by the CEO, COO and the Community and Engagement Worker. As well as overseeing organised fundraising events, our Community Engagement Worker is now leading on micro bids, as mentioned previously these have been around the £500-£1,000 mark and have focused on capital projects we need supporting. The COO is leading on small bids and funding opportunities as well as having the general oversight of the fundraising. In addition, they are also leading on the work with the landlord and private funder around the opportunities for the downstairs space. All of this allows the CEO to focus on larger funding opportunities and developing the fundraising strategy.

During this year our total income increased to £1,071,630 (2023: £986,111). We expected this increase due to the award we received for our Reaching Out project through the National Lottery Reaching

Communities funding pot. We were also able to negotiate funding for refuge that included the salary increase for staff and an increase to cover costs through Staffordshire County Council and DLUHC. Our funding for management and additional hours at Tamworth refuge was also extended. On top of this it was our second year with our Community Engagement Worker driving our community fundraising. Expenditure has been tightly managed. We agreed a 3% pay increase for all staff at the beginning of 2023.

Principal funding sources

Our refuge 'bricks and mortar' costs are funded through the housing benefit which is paid to us on behalf of residents, we review this yearly with our District and Borough Councils and we are thankful the campaigning that has secured government support for retaining housing benefit payments for refuges, as this remains our only consistent source of funding. The money from Staffordshire County Council, through DLUHC has been instrumental in funding the staffing of our refuges, which are critical to successful refuge provision. We are also very grateful to Staffordshire County Council for recognising increases in costs to organisations and increasing the refuge funding to help accommodate this. We are also hugely grateful for Staffordshire County Council and their decision to direct award the refuge commissioning contracts, and for their commitment to doing this for a longer contract period. We are very much looking forward to working more closely with them in the coming years.

The Ministry of Justice, through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), has continued to support our County Counselling project, which has been extended until March 2025. Due to us providing fully qualified and registered counsellors, the support costs for this are high, but the number of people seen and the current outcomes are excellent.

The Smallwood Trust has also continued to support us to be able to offer our grant making service to any women working us who are struggling with financial hardship. The fund provides a small amount to help cover the work that needs to be done by our Finance Manager to administer the payments, and the remainder of the money is paid out to service users to support them with things such as housing arrears, new furniture etc. The funding continues until December 2025.

We also have a number of other grants and gifts from trust funds, foundations and through private individuals, as well as in individuals in our Patron's scheme.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Board of Trustees is very aware of on-going risks and regularly reviews the work done to mitigate these. We have both a business plan and an income generation plan that we work towards and review. We have a Risk Management Policy and regularly review the principal risks identified, which are financial, operational and reputational.

Financial – Income generation still remains a key focus and priority for Pathway Project, both around securing contributions to core costs, raising funds for capital projects and for ensuring the continuity of current services and the development of new ones. Work will constantly be done on fundraising throughout the year, with the main focus being on unfunded posts, posts with imminently ending contracts, and core costs. As an organisation we recognise that the cost-of-living crisis is still very much continuing with no indication of when, or if, things will become more stable and we are remaining aware of this when considering things such as entering into new service contracts. We believe that our commitment to pay increases for staff has mitigated the immediate concern around staff retention, and this will remain on our agenda.

Operational – Our biggest operational risk remains the Hope Centre, this is in terms of the potential impact of increasing costs and how we manage the building operationally, to help manage those, as it is key to our delivery package. We are fortunate to have a private funder who funds the annual rent.

We continue to work with people with complex needs, chaotic lives, and who are often at serious risk. Having done all that we can to minimise the risks, we also have insurance against many possible risks and losses.

Reputational – Once again the main issue is that we work with vulnerable service users with complex needs and we need to prioritise safeguarding all those who we work with. Where we need to ensure our staff's safety, they work jointly in pairs or do joint visits with other agencies. We only visit service users having undertaken a thorough risk assessment. Each member of staff has a security alert button. All of our working practices are aimed at supporting both staff and service users. We attend regular professionals' meetings in order to maintain awareness of risk to or from vulnerable service users, and we deal promptly with any issues which arise. We monitor out media presence so that we can take action wherever appropriate.

Reserves Policy and Going Concern

The trustees have examined the charity's requirements in light of the main risks of the organisation and aim to build up our reserves to give us some financial stability if problems arise. We are susceptible to shortfalls in funding where particular activities are funded by varied and unpredictable income streams. Our policy and target level of free reserves is to hold a minimum of 6 months and a maximum of 12 months operating expenditure. As a result, we estimate that we currently require between approximately £500,000 and £1,000,000 to meet this target. Our actual free reserves at the year-end were £376,502 (2023: £459,004) a decrease on last year, we will have a significant challenge ahead to continue to build our reserves until we meet this target level, especially with current economic challenges.

Restricted funds as at 31 March 2024 are £131,528 (2023: £92,237) and these funds will all be spent on the charitable activity to which they apply in the next financial year.

Despite the target to build unrestricted reserves, the free reserves of the organization are primarily supported by cash resources. We have demonstrated in the past our ability to be agile in how we have reacted to significant changes in our overall business model, including losing key sources of funding, and have demonstrated a tight control over our cost base. These practices will continue, along with the regular monitoring of the income pipeline to ensure that Pathway Project can continue to deliver its key services in an external environment presenting continued uncertainty. As a result of regularly monitoring both reserves levels and cash flow, the trustees are satisfied to approve these financial statements on a going concern basis.

Plans for the future

- To continue to secure funding for those posts whose contracts will be ending in 24/25, or just after.
- To continue to work on the potential plans for downstairs at the Hope Centre.
- To implement a rolling redecoration schedule for all the rooms at our Lichfield and Tamworth refuge.
- We are considering developing and recording an online training session that can be distributed for a cost, or for free depending on the target audience receiving it, which will cover domestic abuse awareness, signs to look for, challenges someone will face, why she stays or returns, what

to and not to say and providing them with a point of contact for next steps , and could be show in team meetings, internal training etc. for agencies and companies. There would also be the option to have additional support for the team alongside this.

- We are just in the fact-finding stage of putting together a podcast, which we would issue on our website every quarter. We envisage this being a combination of talking to staff about their work, DA awareness, service users sharing their stories and guest speakers.
- We will be looking to take on more volunteers, particularly those who are able to attend fundraising and awareness raising sessions on the weekends and evenings, to make sure that everything is not falling onto staff.
- We want to continue to grow our small range of Pathway merchandise that we sell on our website and at our stalls.
- Due to the success of our Hearts of Hope Campaign, which involved us placing knitted hearts and words of hope around Lichfield for people to find and tag us on social media, we will be launching a new initiative 'Men versus Bear'.

As always Pathway Project will continue to proactively develop models of working which best meet the needs of survivors as well as seeking opportunities for funding and collaborative working. We will also continue to work on raising awareness in both the local and wider community, to ensure that domestic and sexual violence and the work needed to be done to end it is truly understood.

Fundraising

As a charity we are working hard to broaden the base of our funding streams so that there is less reliance on any single source. We have continued to plan our applications to grant funders, both national and local. We have also taken a more pro-active approach to raising funds from the community, and particularly unrestricted funds.

We believe that our fundraising should be ethical, and in line with the Fundraising Regulator Code of Practice. Pathway Project operates a policy around the protection of vulnerable adults, and this includes ensuring vulnerable people are not negatively impacted by our fundraising. We have a Fundraising Group who plan and oversee community events. One trustee from the charity is part of this group and ensures that best practice is always followed. Our Community Engagement Worker is overseen by our COO and all fundraising has to be signed off by Senior Management.

We have a robust insurance policy which protects us for running events and we follow a risk assessment process when planning our events. The Head of Operations feeds back on the Fundraising Group in the following trustee meeting.

We are happy for the public, including our supporters, to complain if they are unhappy with our fundraising. We received no complaints during 2024/25. Complaints and comments are welcome and we aim to use feedback, whether positive or negative, to help us to improve our service.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 7 August 1991 (in England and Wales) and registered as a charity on 14 November 1991.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. This was revised and accepted by the Charity Commission and Companies House in October of 2021.

All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. No expenses are reclaimed from the charity as disclosed in note 8 to the accounts.

Code of Governance

Trustees have considered best practice set out within the Charity Governance Code and use this to form the basis of their work.

Appointment of trustees

A process is in place following best practice guidelines, to recruit and appoint new trustees in a similar process to that used to appoint staff members. The charity plans strategically to have a board of trustees who can bring a range of expertise and skills to the board meetings.

Trustee induction and training

Trustees are inducted and trained through a formal training system, which includes having a Mentor who is a more experienced board member. Part of the annual Trustee Away Day is sometimes a particular briefing session to inform and build knowledge. The Chair meets with each trustee annually to discuss their progress, skills, training needs and aspirations, and this contributes to the Board's succession planning. All trustees are welcome to attend training / briefing sessions that are being held for staff.

Policy for employment of disabled persons

Pathway Project believes in providing equality of opportunity for disabled persons. All jobs are advertised with a person specification outlining the particular aptitudes and abilities required in the role. The job is given to the person who best fulfils the requirements of the role. If necessary adjustments are required then we will seek to accommodate the adaptations.

Should a member of staff become disabled during their employment we will work with them to facilitate a return to work when possible, and will seek to accommodate their needs for adaptations or assistance.

Opportunities for training and career development will be equally open to disabled persons and they will not be disadvantaged in possible promotion opportunities.

Employee information and remuneration policy for key management personnel

The CEO and COO have delegated authority for managing the day-to-day operation of the organisation.

Employees are the foundation of our organisation and as such we seek to keep them informed and consulted about any changes that are being made in the organisation. This is done through regular team meetings and email memos.

When changes are being considered, which will impact on the working conditions of staff, they are fully consulted and offered opportunities to have an input into decisions being made.

The remuneration of the key management personnel is set by the Board. The Chair conducts the annual appraisal of the Chief Executive Officer and the board agrees her salary. Comparable salaries for executive

roles in other similar sized organisations in the health and social care sector are used as a benchmark for setting the salary.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of Pathway Project for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report including the strategic report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware
- The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The trustee's annual report has been approved by the trustees on 12 November 2024 and signed on their behalf.



Independent Auditors' Report to The Staffordshire Pathway Project

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Staffordshire Pathway Project (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024, which comprise the Statement of financial activities, the Balance sheet, the Statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of the charitable company's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of director's remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Report and from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement set out on page 20, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditors' Report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the senior statutory auditor ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company through discussions with Trustees and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the charity sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the charitable company, including the financial reporting legislation, Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation, anti-bribery, employment, and environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC, relevant regulators and the charitable company's legal advisors.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events

and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Auditors' Report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Mark Gurney FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of
Dains Audit Limited

Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants

Birmingham
Date: 12 November 2024

The Staffordshire Pathway Project
Statement of financial activities
For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Income from							
Donations	2	84,552	82,762	167,314	72,452	40,161	112,613
Charitable activities							
Domestic violence prevention	3	-	306,104	306,104	7,000	192,283	199,283
Refuge	3	450,103	14,976	465,079	447,078	63,300	510,378
Refuge based activities	3	-	72,152	72,152	5,007	63,910	68,917
Children's projects	3	-	37,195	37,195	-	70,615	70,615
Other trading activities	4	19,336	400	19,736	22,045	933	22,978
Investments	5	4,050	-	4,050	1,327	-	1,327
Total income		558,041	513,589	1,071,630	554,909	431,202	986,111
Expenditure on							
Raising funds	6	8,437	-	8,437	4,360	-	4,360
Charitable activities							
Domestic violence prevention	6	-	359,107	359,107	-	310,778	310,778
Refuge	6	542,127	-	542,127	467,566	-	467,566
Children's projects	6	-	94,512	94,512	-	54,614	54,614
Refuge based activities	6	-	110,658	110,658	-	108,338	108,338
Total expenditure	6	550,564	564,277	1,114,841	471,926	473,730	945,656
Net income / (expenditure) before transfers		7,477	(50,688)	(43,211)	82,984	(42,528)	40,656
Transfers between funds	15	(89,979)	89,979	-	(55,653)	55,653	-
Net movement in funds		(82,502)	39,291	(43,211)	27,331	13,125	40,656
Reconciliation of funds							
Fund balances brought forward		459,004	92,237	551,241	431,673	79,112	510,785
Fund balances carried forward		376,502	131,528	508,030	459,004	92,237	551,241

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. All gains and losses recognised in the year are included above.

The Staffordshire Pathway Project
(registered company number 02635912)

Balance sheet
As at 31 March 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	10	32,679	11,120
Current assets			
Debtors	11	131,868	55,887
Cash at bank and in hand		384,059	522,568
		515,927	578,455
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(40,576)	(38,334)
Net current assets		475,351	540,121
Total assets less current liabilities		508,030	551,241
Total net assets		508,030	551,241
Funds			
Restricted	15	131,528	92,237
Unrestricted	15	376,502	459,004
Total funds		508,030	551,241

Approved by the Board on 12 November 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

[redacted]

The Staffordshire Pathway Project
Statement of cash flows
As at 31 March 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period	(43,211)	40,656
Depreciation charges	3,360	1,618
Interest from investments	(4,050)	(1,327)
Increase in debtors	(75,980)	(23,456)
Increase in creditors	2,242	1,606
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	(117,639)	18,897
Cash flows from investing activities		
Interest from investments	4,050	1,327
Payments to acquire fixed assets	(24,919)	(4,652)
Net cash used in investing activities	(20,869)	(3,325)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	(138,508)	15,572
Cash and cash equivalents at the start of the year	522,568	506,997
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	384,059	522,568

The notes on pages 29 to 41 form part of these financial statements.

1 Accounting policies

1.1 Statutory information

The Staffordshire Pathway Project is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom (England and Wales). The registered office address and operational address is The Hope Centre, 3 Quonians Lane, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 7LB. The principal activity of the charitable company is given in the Trustees' report.

1.2 Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance and fully complies with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

1.3 Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.4 Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

1.5 Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1.6 Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

1.7 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

1.8 Fund Accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees, in furtherance of the general objectives of the charitable company, and which have not been designated for other purposes. Designated funds are unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for a specific, but not legally binding, purpose.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donors within the objects of the charity. Expenditure that meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

1.9 Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Governance costs are those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charitable company and include audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charitable company.

Direct charitable expenditure is allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However support and governance costs, so the cost of the overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the basis of staff time attributable to each activity.

1.11 Operating Leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

1.12 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

1.13 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Assets which cost in excess of £500 are initially capitalised at cost. Depreciation is provided at annual rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Children's play equipment	20%, reducing balance basis
Fixtures and fittings	20%, reducing balance basis
Office equipment	25%, reducing balance basis

1.14 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due and prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

1.15 Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1.16 Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

1.17 Pension costs

The charity has a defined contribution pension scheme to offer all employees in order to comply with the requirements of auto-enrolment. The charity is contributing a minimum employer contribution into the scheme as set by the Pension Regulator.

2 Donations

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Alrewas All Saints Church PCC	2,100	-	2,100	2,000	-	2,000
Anonymous	5,052	39,952	45,004	5,339	37,613	42,952
Barton under Needwood WI	2,165	-	2,165	-	-	-
Beacon Park Village	1,120	-	1,120	-	-	-
Cannock Chase Churches Housing Co	-	-	-	20,000	-	20,000
Clarionis	1,471	-	1,471	-	-	-
Gentleshaw Church PCC	-	-	-	1,148	-	1,148
Keon Homes	2,500	-	2,500	-	-	-
Lichfield Mayor & Sherriff's Charity	5,001	-	5,001	-	-	-
Longman Legacy Fund	-	30,000	30,000	-	-	-
Pathway Patrons	3,000	2,010	5,010	2,500	1,898	4,398
St Johns Community Church	1,997	-	1,997	1,980	-	1,980
Sweeney Foundation	13,500	10,000	23,500	-	-	-
Waitrose, Lichfield	-	-	-	1,000	-	1,000
Gift aid income tax recovered	13,614	-	13,614	12,231	-	12,231
Donations of £1,000 and under	33,032	800	33,832	26,254	650	26,904
Sub-total for donations	84,552	82,762	167,314	72,452	40,161	112,613

2. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023
Domestic violence prevention	£	£	£	£	£	£
Barratt Homes	-	1,500	1,500	-	-	-
Lichfield DC	-	8,800	8,800	-	19,572	19,572
National Lottery Community Fund	-	135,637	135,637	-	86,974	86,974
Smallwood Trust	-	45,000	45,000	7,000	25,300	32,300
Staffordshire Women's Aid	-	66,136	66,136	-	60,437	60,437
Staffs County Council – MHCLG	-	48,531	48,531	-	-	-
Grants £1,000 and under	-	500	500	-	-	-
Sub-total for domestic violence prevention	-	306,104	306,104	7,000	192,283	199,283
Refuge						
Accommodation charges	271,943	-	271,943	284,061	-	284,061
B & Q Foundation	-	-	-	5,000	-	5,000
HSBC Supporting our Community	-	-	-	21,687	-	21,687
Screwfix Foundation	-	-	-	5,000	-	5,000
Stafford & Cannock League of Hospital	-	-	-	1,794	-	1,794
Staffs County Council – MHCLG	165,452	13,976	179,428	91,736	63,300	155,036
Talisman Charitable Trust	2,599	-	2,599	-	-	-
Tamworth Borough Council	7,350	-	7,350	32,000	-	32,000
Grants £1,000 and under	2,759	1,000	3,759	5,800	-	5,800
Sub-total for Refuge	450,103	14,976	465,079	447,078	63,300	510,378
Refuge based activities						
Staffordshire PCC	-	57,649	57,649	5,007	63,910	68,917
Staffs County Council – MHCLG	-	14,503	14,503	-	-	-
Sub-total for Refuge based activities	-	72,152	72,152	5,007	63,910	68,917
Children's projects						
Staffs County Council – MHCLG	-	37,195	37,195	-	20,575	20,575
Sub-total for children's projects	-	37,195	37,195	-	70,615	70,615
Total income from charitable activities	450,103	430,427	880,530	459,085	390,108	849,193

4 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fundraising - Events	14,226	60	14,286	21,697	-	21,697
Fundraising – Item sales	1,859	-	1,859	223	-	223
Training and services income	2,000	-	2,000	75	-	75
Sundry	1,251	340	1,591	50	933	983
	19,336	400	19,736	22,045	933	22,978

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Bank interest receivable	4,050	-	4,050	1,327	-	1,327

6a Analysis of expenditure 2024

	Raising funds £	Domestic violence prevention £	Refuge £	Children's projects £	Refuge based activities £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	Totals 2024 £
Staff costs	1,337	190,935	228,838	35,554	17,888	131,060	520	606,132
Refuge costs	-	-	181,077	-	-	-	-	181,077
Management	-	11,793	10,690	-	17,600	-	-	40,083
Finance	-	-	16,257	-	-	-	-	16,257
Information technology	-	5,593	4,260	779	96	-	-	10,728
Office costs	-	13,214	17,981	2,361	578	-	994	35,128
Audit fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,800	10,800
Professional fees	-	-	-	-	43,785	-	97	43,882
Other sundry expenses	3,208	50,621	69,867	18,750	28,308	-	-	170,754
	4,545	272,156	528,970	57,444	108,255	131,060	12,411	1,114,841
Support costs	3,892	79,220	11,987	33,772	2,189	(131,060)	-	-
Governance costs	-	7,731	1,170	3,296	214	-	(12,411)	-
Total 2024	8,437	359,107	542,126	94,512	110,658	-	-	1,114,841

Support and governance costs are allocated according to the time spent by the relevant staff on each activity.

6b Analysis of expenditure 2023

	Raising funds £	Domestic violence prevention £	Refuge £	Children's projects £	Refuge based activities £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	Totals 2023 £
Staff costs	796	197,408	223,063	33,317	52,081	87,182	174	594,021
Refuge costs	-	-	160,376	-	-	-	-	160,376
Management	-	6,415	10,690	2,348	13,700	-	-	33,153
Finance	-	-	21,129	-	-	-	-	21,129
Information technology	-	4,546	4,360	692	113	-	-	9,712
Office costs	-	12,390	17,157	1,071	849	-	351	31,819
Audit fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,900	9,900
Professional fees	-	-	-	-	38,784	-	103	38,887
Other sundry expenses	2,738	24,986	12,473	5,363	1,099	-	-	46,659
	3,534	245,746	449,248	42,791	106,626	87,182	10,529	945,656
Support costs	826	57,291	17,177	10,384	1,504	(87,182)	-	-
Governance costs	-	7,741	1,141	1,439	208	-	(10,529)	-
Total 2023	4,360	310,778	467,566	54,614	108,338	-	-	945,656

Support and governance costs are allocated according to the time spent by the relevant staff on each activity.

7 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

Net income / (expenditure) is stated after charging the following items:	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT)	9,000	8,250
Operating lease rentals	32,147	32,147
Depreciation	3,360	1,618

8 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses and the cost of key management personnel

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Wages and salaries	537,015	536,158
Social security costs	47,458	39,118
Employer contributions to defined contribution pension schemes	21,659	18,745
	606,132	594,021

The average number of employees during the year based on a headcount basis was 33 (2023: 32).

No employee earned in excess of £60,000 per annum (2023: none).

The total employee benefits (including employer's pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £179,321 (2023: £172,602). During the year, discretionary termination payments were made totalling £7,824.

No trustee received any remuneration or benefits during the year ended 31 March 2024, nor in the year ended 31 March 2023.

No trustees received expenses during the year ended 31 March 2024 (2023:none).

9 Related party transactions

During the year, a payment of £436 was made to Shaun Baxter, a husband of a member of Key Management Personnel, for services provided to the Charity. No amounts were outstanding at the balance sheet date. (2023: none).

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Children's play equipment £	Fixtures and fittings £	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 April 2023	12,179	20,361	2,945	35,485
Additions	10,000	14,389	530	24,919
At 31 March 2024	22,179	34,750	3,475	60,404
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2023	11,750	9,682	2,932	24,365
Charge for the year	86	3,271	3	3,360
At 31 March 2024	11,836	12,953	2,935	27,725
Net book value				
At 31 March 2024	10,343	21,797	540	32,679
At 31 March 2023	429	10,679	12	11,120

11 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Accounts receivable	102,009	31,627
Rent receivable	3,812	1,653
Prepayments and accrued income	26,046	22,607
	131,867	55,887

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Operating creditors	13,704	5,199
Accruals and deferred income	26,872	33,135
	40,576	38,334

13 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Within 1 year	32,147	32,147
Between 2 and 5 years	124,849	126,275
Over 5 years	73,591	81,845
	230,587	240,267

14a Analysis of net assets between funds 2024

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Fixed assets	16,417	16,262	32,679
Debtors	85,578	46,290	131,868
Cash	302,549	81,510	384,059
Creditors	(28,042)	(12,534)	(40,576)
Net assets as at 31 March 2024	376,502	131,528	508,030

14b Analysis of net assets between funds 2023

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Fixed assets	10,691	429	11,120
Debtors	32,695	23,192	55,887
Cash	434,844	87,724	522,568
Creditors	(19,226)	(19,108)	(38,334)
Net assets as at 31 March 2023	459,004	92,237	551,241

15a Movement in funds 2024

	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	459,004	558,041	(550,564)	(89,979)	376,502
Restricted funds					
Children's Projects: Children in Need	17,710	-	(21,390)	3,679	-
Children's Projects: Other	25,992	71,483	(36,054)	-	61,420
Central costs	-	8,836	(95,135)	86,299	-
Domestic violence prevention: Big Lottery Funding	5,000	-	-	-	5,000
Domestic violence prevention: Other	23,464	295,530	(292,201)	-	27,793
Refuge	15,123	91,741	(80,443)	-	26,421
Smallwood Trust	4,947	45,000	(39,054)	-	10,894
	92,237	513,589	(564,277)	89,979	131,528
Total funds	551,241	1,071,630	(1,114,841)	-	508,030

15b Movement in funds 2023

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	431,673	554,909	(471,926)	(55,653)	459,004
Restricted funds					
Children's Projects: Children in Need	1,529	51,990	(35,809)	-	17,710
Children's Projects: Other	11,225	21,748	(6,982)	-	25,992
Central costs	-	13,103	(68,756)	55,653	-
Domestic violence prevention: Big Lottery Funding	5,000	-	-	-	5,000
Domestic violence prevention: Other	32,607	245,990	(255,133)	-	23,464
Refuge	19,881	73,070	(77,829)	-	15,123
Smallwood Trust	8,868	25,300	(29,221)	-	4,947
	79,112	431,202	(473,730)	55,653	92,237
Total funds	510,785	986,111	(945,656)	-	551,241

Transfers between funds
Transfers between unrestricted and restricted funds were to cover any deficit of funds spent on restricted projects compared with grant income received, together with the transfer of agreed management costs.

Purposes of restricted funds:

Children's projects: funding received for the provision of support to children in the refuges who are suffering as a result of living in a home with domestic violence. The funding received is provided to work with children both in the refuge and as an outreach to service users through a children's worker, a parenting support carer and a sessional crèche worker, together with additional costs such as outings and equipment.

Central costs: funding received towards the central costs of the refuge centres including the Head of Operations.

Domestic violence prevention and advice fund: funding received for the provision of support to women who have suffered as a result of domestic violence. The funding is provided to work with women both in the refuges and as an outreach to service users through the provision of an early intervention worker, an independent domestic violence adviser and a 24-hour helpline operated by the project.

Refuge: funding received for the provision of support to service users whilst resident with the project. Such funding is provided to work with women in the refuge through a specialist support worker, a counselling service and activities to promote a healthier life style.

Smallwood Trust: funding received from the trust is used to make financial grants to vulnerable female service users, in order to help them better manage their financial circumstances, or support activities that will help improve their mental health. Service users make applications for particular activities/needs through their Support Worker, providing proof of their financial circumstances and grants are then allocated out. During the funding, grants have included purchasing carpets and white goods, paying for driving lessons and bus passes, paying for divorces and purchasing new identification documents.

16 **Pension commitments**
The charitable company operates a defined contributions pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the charitable company to the fund and amounted to £21,659 (2023 - £18,745). Contributions totalling £Nil (2023 - £Nil) were payable to the fund at the balance sheet date.

Staffordshire Pathway Project

England & Wales - Charity number 1005976

Accounts

pathway project

Charity No: 1005976
Company No: 02635912

The Staffordshire Pathway Project

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended
31 March 2023

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service
The MBE for volunteer groups

LOTTERY FUNDED

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Our Vision

To build a future where adults and children affected by domestic and sexual abuse live in safety and free from fear.

Our Mission

To ensure that every adult and child who comes to us seeking support for domestic and sexual abuse is given an opportunity to engage in services that can help them to make the journey from victim to survivor.

Our Values

To put people at the heart of what we do:

At Pathway we believe in being service user led. Nobody knows what services and support are needed, more than the people who access them. We are always here with an open mind and open heart to ensure that we shape futures together.

To be the best we can be:

No two people are the same. Whether you are a service user, volunteer or member of staff, we are all different. At Pathway we don't believe in a one size fits all approach. Instead we want to celebrate our differences, value opinions and learn from each other, so that we can provide the best services, in the best way, with the best people.

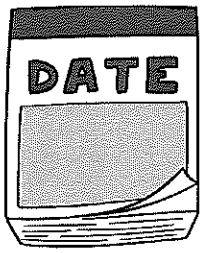
To share our experiences:

Good, bad or funny. We want our service users to feel that they can share their experiences and know that they will be listened to and will contribute towards our development. We want our staff to know that in good and bad times, our door is always open and that our shared experience is what drives the strength of the team. At Pathway, we want to share our experiences and collaborate with other specialist organisations, to provide solutions and services that meet the needs of the people we are committed to.

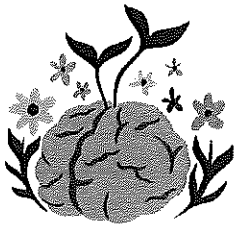
To be open:

We understand that everyone's journey begins at a different point and at a different time. At Pathway we won't put restrictions on the number of times you can access a service, or on the amount of time that has passed before you felt that you could ask for support. We also understand that your needs may not always meet a threshold, but that doesn't make them any less important to you. That's why our helpline is open access to all, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Whether you need a friendly voice, to know more about our services or help getting support elsewhere, we will be there.

IN 22/23 OUR SERVICE USERS TOLD US:



THAT THE AVERAGE AMOUNT OF TIME THEY WERE IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP BEFORE THEY SOUGHT HELP TO LEAVE WAS 95 MONTHS, OR JUST UNDER EIGHT YEARS



THAT 63% HAD MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS AND THAT 50% HAD FELT SO DEPRESSED THEY HAD CONSIDERED SUICIDE

THAT 24% OF THEM HAD A REGISTERED DISABILITY AND IN MANY CASES THEIR ABUSER WAS ALSO THEIR CARER





THAT 32% HAD ALREADY BEEN IN AT LEAST ONE OTHER ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP BEFORE SEEKING OUR HELP



THAT 26% HAD WITNESSED ABUSE IN THEIR HOME AS A CHILD



THAT IN SERVICE USERS DEALING WITH CURRENT, OR RECENT RELATIONSHIPS, EMOTIONAL ABUSE WAS THE BIGGEST FACTOR WITH 90% DETAILING AS PART OF THEIR CASE , WHILE ISSUES WITH STALKING AND HARASSMENT HAD DOUBLED IN A YEAR TO 30%

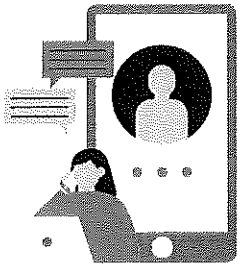
IN HISTORIC CASES OF DOMESTIC ABUSE, 90% OF SERVICE USERS WANTED SUPPORT WITH SEXUAL ABUSE INCLUDING ASSUALT, RAPE, CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION.

IN 22/23 WE HAVE:



AWARDED 82 GRANTS, TOTALLING £22,621 TO SERVICE USERS TO HELP IMPROVE THEIR FINANCIAL SITUATION AND SUPPORT THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

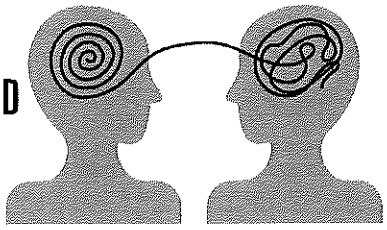
RESPONDED TO 3871 REQUESTS FOR ADVICE AND SUPPORT THROUGH OUR PHONE, EMAIL AND SOCIAL MEDIA HELPLINES

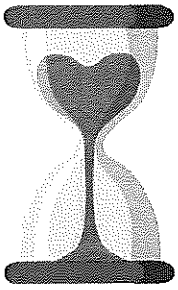




SUPPORTED 796 ADULTS, YOUNG PEOPLE AND CHILDREN TO ACCESS OUR SERVICES

PROVIDED 165 ADULTS WITH SPECIALIST DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE COUNSELLING





DELIVERED 2911 HOURS OF GROUP WORK, WITH 444 SERVICE USERS ATTENDING AT LEAST ONE SESSION, OR PROGRAMME

Reference and administrative details
For the year ended 31 March 2023

Company number	2635912	**Country of incorporation**	United Kingdom
Charity number	1005976	**Country of registration**	England and Wales

Registered office and operational address

The Hope Centre
3 Quonian Lane
Lichfield
Staffordshire
WS13 7LB

Pathway Project is the trading name of The Staffordshire Pathway Project (formerly The Burntwood Pathway Project)

Trustees

Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Trustee names redacted. SB 15/5/25

[redacted] — Chair: appointed November 2022
[redacted] — Vice Chair
[redacted] — Treasurer
[redacted] — Resigned as Chair November 2022

Key Management Personnel	Hayley Baxter	Chief Executive
	Wendy Dee	Head of Operations
	Amanda Barnard	Finance Manager
	Jackie Hughes	Refuge Manager
	Lynn Laughton	Volunteer & Training Manager

Bankers

NatWest Bank plc
47 Market Street
Lichfield
WS13 6LE

Solicitors

Moseley's
Compton House
18 Bore Street
Lichfield
WS13 6LL

Auditors

Dains Audit Limited
15 Colmore Row
Birmingham
B3 2BH

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The reference and administrative information set out on page 5 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102. The trustees' annual report also contains a directors' report as required by company law.

Objectives and activities

The charity's objective is to relieve the physical, mental, emotional, social, financial and sexual distress among adults of all ages and/or their children, who have been maltreated or controlled by their partners, family members or persons with whom they were living or having a relationship with, or had made acquaintance of, specialising in gender-based abuse against women and girls.

a) Through our services we aim to provide adults and children with safety and support, whilst they make decisions about their future, and take the opportunity to change their lives in order to live a future in safety and free from fear.

b) Our main objectives for the year have been as follows:

- To work with Staffordshire County Council towards the effective commissioning of safe accommodation services.
- To be aware of the ongoing economic situation of the country and the additional strain and risks that this may put on service users, our staff, and the service as a whole.
- To try and combat the ongoing effects of increasing costs on the organisation by reviewing and managing contracts and services.
- To collaboratively work with Staffordshire Women's Aid to deliver the county sexual violence service.
- To support providers across the county by continuing to deliver a specialist County Counselling provision with the support of our Counselling Lead.
- To continue to increase our community fundraising and awareness through public events, building local relationships and micro bids, led by our Community Engagement Worker.
- To continue to focus on applications for funding opportunities both from Government/Councils and other funders.
- To improve and develop services, and to work towards renewing our Women's Aid National Quality Standards kite mark.
- To continue providing services and to find alternative funding streams that will support us to deliver a full service.
- To develop specialist support for those people presenting with complex needs.
- To develop new services that best meet the needs of our service users and our local communities.
- To ensure that staff maintain their skills and knowledge through a programme of training and support.

- To continue to develop our programme of specialist domestic abuse services across Tamworth and Lichfield.
- To maintain the high level of service we provide through our refuge accommodation.
- To work in partnership wherever possible so that service users get the best and most holistic service possible.
- To undertake preventative work and support early intervention opportunities.
- To support children and young people to recover from abuse and to understand healthy relationships.
- To provide services offering legal advice to those unable to claim legal aid.
- To continuously work to improve our services.
- To work together with partners, increasing capacity and improving opportunities and learning.
- To continue to deliver holistic services which work on meeting needs and supporting people in full long-term recovery after domestic abuse.
- To continue developing and improving our groups and activities.
- To continue developing our volunteering opportunities.

Public Benefit

Pathway Project works to provide services which benefit adults and children who have been made vulnerable due to domestic and/or sexual abuse, either within the home, or in their own personal or family relationships. Pathway Project recognises that domestic abuse is a primarily gendered issue and is a specialist women and girls organisation. Pathway Project also recognises that abuse can affect any person and offers a small range of male victim services in line with our funding arrangements. Each service that we offer is charitable, open to adults and children suffering abuse, and is free to the user, except in the case of refuge provision where rent and service charges are made. The greater proportion of this is paid by the local authority in the form of Housing Benefit, for women whose income is below the threshold.

Our beneficiaries have a charitable need which we aim to address in the many and varied services that we offer, and we are constantly developing our services to ensure that we provide a holistic and inclusive service.

The charitable purposes that we meet are:

a) The prevention or relief of poverty

b) The advancement of health or the saving of lives

c) The relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantages

The trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of the charity each year. This report looks at what the charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period.

The trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the trustees ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remained focused on its stated purposes.

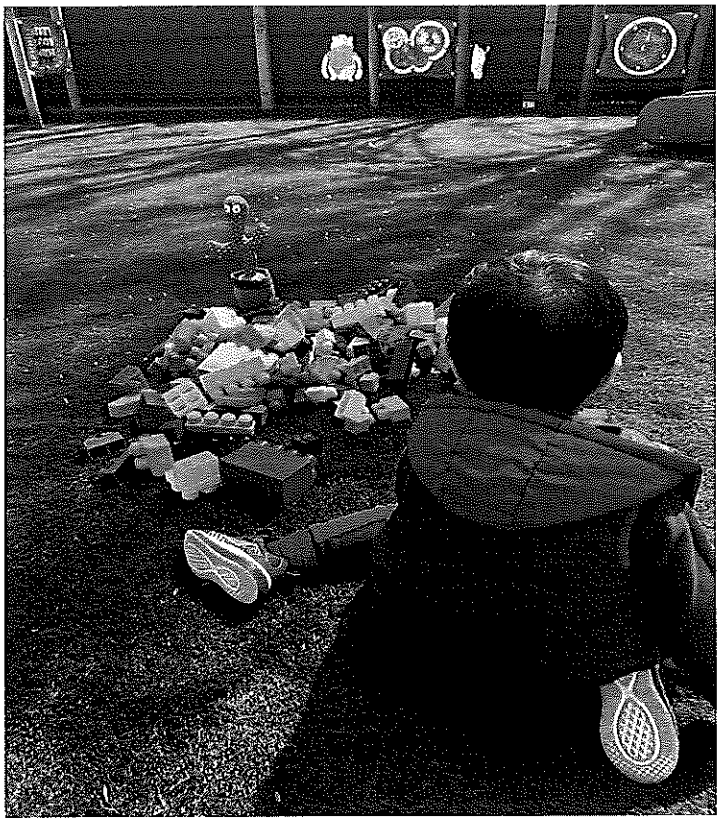
The trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

Significant activities

After the ongoing challenges of COVID, we had hoped that 22/23 would see the organisation in a period of relative calm for a while. However, this wasn't to be, as we then started a period of challenges to our workforce and our core costs through the cost of living and energy crisis. As an organisation, we have had to consider any ways that we could make savings, help to cover increased costs and support our staff. We watched as many organisations lost long standing staff members to other sectors, or to council run in house domestic abuse services, which could afford to pay more. We also watched organisations, including ours, struggle to recruit new staff in an environment where people needed to maximise income, but where there was also a drive to not take on any jobs with levels of stress, or challenging working hours – within which our services definitely sit.

Refuge Accommodation

We received 649 enquiries and referrals for refuge space 2022/23; this was down 23% on last year but still an increase from pre COVID. We were able to house 89 families but had to turn away, refer on or signpost 560 families, meaning we had to turn away over 86% of our referrals. This year we saw a marked increase in the number of referrals with extremely high levels of complex needs around mental health and drugs and alcohol, while 10% of the women we took had drug/alcohol issues, 25% had a mental health disability, and 50% had mental health needs, being unable to offer refuge space due to both of those reasons did increase. This year also saw us accommodate four families with no recourse to public funding, those families stay with us for longer than average while they wait for their immigration status to be changed to indefinite leave to remain, normally for 12 months or more, but are often the most vulnerable due to the lack of services prepared to work with them due to funding.

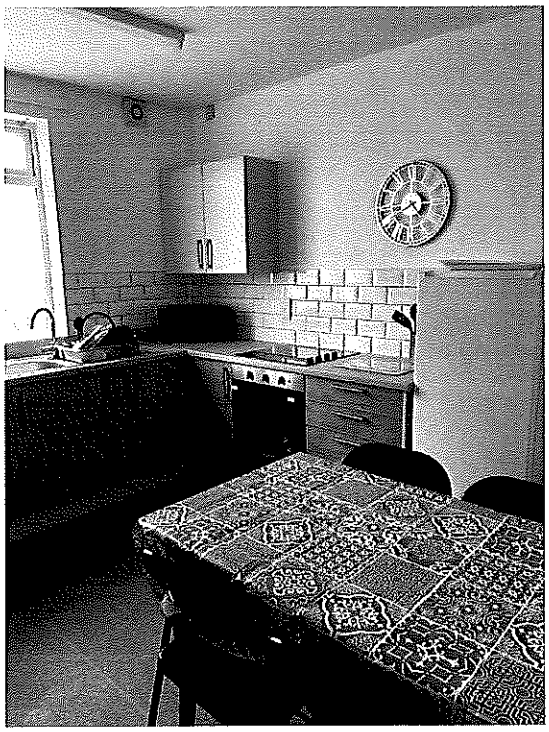


Refuge accommodation still remains a vital and much needed service for Pathway Project. As more and more women entering emergency accommodation present with complex needs, refuges have become more than just somewhere to stay and are instead intensive services helping women and families with

debt management, tenancy sustainment, life skills, budgeting, literacy and numeracy. Alongside our general support workers, we continue to offer a Financial Abuse Specialist, who works with everyone who comes into refuge to do an initial financial assessment that then means a package of support can be tailored around their individual needs, and a Resettlement Worker who follows our residents out into their new homes within the community to ensure that they have the best start to independent living that they can. Financial support remains a key support service with us as people have become further impacted by the cost-of-living crisis.

This year we were very thankful to have been awarded a further three years funding from the Smallwood Trust, which allows us to make grants to women that help them better their financial position and their mental health. Facilitated by our Financial Abuse Specialist this has helped women in refuge to pay off housing arrears, clear debts with utility companies purchase beds etc. for their new homes and pay for transport to medical appointments. It has also been hugely beneficial in enabling us to support service users who have no recourse to public funding while they wait for their DV concessions to come through - in some cases without this fund we may not have been able to take these families at a time when they needed us the most.

Again, we have been hugely thankful for the support we have received from Tamworth Borough Council (TBC) in enabling us to begin to extend our services at Tamworth Refuge. The management post has allowed us to offer refuge accommodation to more intensive cases and allowed us to better recognise and meet the needs of the families who are accessing this support. The additional hours that we were also awarded by TBC, began in September last year and have so far been a huge success. They have really highlighted the benefits that the service users have felt from having staff available at the weekends, and in the evenings, which is often when feelings of isolation and worry are at their highest. Some of the hours have been used to simply have staff in the building offering general support, but others have been used to organise and deliver activities and sessions with the families; this year those have included a 'Great Refuge Bake Off', cooking a refuge Sunday lunch, gardening, and even a trip to the local park with a picnic. The feedback from service users has been how much more they have felt supported with staff being able to be around more, and this has been great to hear.



As always Pathway Project prides itself on the children's services that it is able to offer both to Mums learning how to parent their children independently, and to children and young people directly to enable them to be heard, understood and move forward with their lives. In 2022/23, 53% of the children entering into refuge had involvement from Children's Services and 57% of them had both endured domestic abuse directly and witnessed it happening to someone else in their family. This year we also saw more children and young people sharing concerns about their mental health with 40% having mental health needs. We also saw record numbers of children in refuge at one time this year, 15 in Lichfield and 8 in Tamworth, meaning we took on an additional part time children's worker to help meet needs.

This year we were hugely fortunate to be asked to put in a proposal for some funding from HSBC Bank. We

worked with our local branch and their area lead to put in a bid for a brand new kitchen at Tamworth Refuge, and for AstroTurf for our mud locked garden at Lichfield Refuge. We were so excited to be awarded the full amount we had applied and as you can see from the photos, both of these projects have already been completed and are being used to their fullest by all of our families. While working with HSBC on our two largest projects we also realised this may be a good time to focus on upgrading our Tamworth Refuge which hadn't had any work done on it for some time. We were lucky enough to be awarded a grant from Screwfix which allowed us to upgrade all of our lighting to LED's and have a brand new CCTV system fitted, and a further grant from B&Q for a full redecoration of all the rooms and communal spaces. This work has all been undertaken and it has been lovely for everyone to see the change in our refuge spaces. Our project for 23/24 is to now try and do the same for all of our rooms at Lichfield Refuge.

During 22/23 we have been working alongside Staffordshire County Council to complete the consultation and needs assessment around safe accommodation and the most effective way to commission services moving forward. During this time period we were issued with a further six month extension of our current contract to allow further time for commissioning to take place, taking us to October 2023. We are pleased to say that we have recently been informed that Staffordshire County Council will be direct commissioning the refuge contracts with the current providers, from the start of October 2023 for a period of 2.5yrs, with the option of a further 1yr extension. Since this announcement we have been working on budgets with the commissioners, taking into account the amount of money they have to put into services, and what services rally need to deliver to a high level, and we will be finalising award amounts and signing contracts in September this year.

We would like to take this opportunity to offer our sincere thanks to all of our refuge staff for their commitment and support, especially during a time when our contract for the service has been yearly. It is a challenging job, with lone working and anti-social hours, as well as dealing with a difficult and emotional subject matter every day and we hugely appreciate everything they do that allows us to continue delivering services.

24 Hour Helpline

Pathway Project's 24hr helpline continues to be our first point of contact for service users and agencies, providing a combination of advice, guidance, support and urgent help in a crisis. It is also our central point of contact for all of our referrals.

This year we had 3871 contacts through all of our available mediums (phone, email, live chat, messenger) which is a decline of 6.5% on the year before. Whilst this is still an increase on pre COVID figures, in all providers across the county, and in supporting services, there is clearly a slow return to those pre 2019 figures. Our helpline can still be accessed through phone support, email and messenger on social media, with all mediums being used.

Through the year we have taken 1448 referrals for adults and children's services, this is down 15% on last year, reflecting the drop in the number of referrals made into refuge, most likely down to the decrease in the number of spaces available due to long stay service users. Most people referring themselves in took up more than one service provision, showing the importance of holistic, wrap around support. The service also provided ongoing support to 8 people, that was people who were not ready to engage within a formal support service but called the helpline on a regular basis for emotional support for a period of time. As always, we also take a number of calls from people who require support other than that for domestic abuse and make appropriate on ward referrals to other local organisations, we also take calls that are classified as high risk and make onward referrals to the commissioned service as appropriate.

Our two biggest issues this year have been dealing with service users with very high mental health needs and unsuitable referrals, mainly for people with very high-level drug needs, who are still using. We have worked hard with the local mental health teams to get them to be able to work with their service users so that they understand that this is a helpline with a lot of calls coming through and that we can't spend hours on the phone with them, or answer multiple calls from them one after the other. We have also worked with one of the local mental hospitals who had an inpatient that was continuously calling us to ensure that we had assessed that there was no immediate need and to put processes in place for them to reduce the calls being made. With regards to unsuitable referrals, we have begun working with supported housing providers who offer housing with live in support for people with severe mental health and drug and alcohol issues so that where we know they have vacancies, we can signpost referring agencies to them to seek support. This relationship also really compliments our ethos that even if we are not the right service provider for them, that person still deserves a service that can help make their lives better.

What we have been told that people really like about our helpline service, from service users and from other agencies is that:

- That they simply appreciate the phone being answered and that they are able to speak to a real human being, without having to leave a voicemail and wait for someone to get back to them, or listening to five minutes of someone reading their data policy before they can speak to anyone, especially if they are upset or in an emergency.
- That as a professional they are allowed to call the helpline and ask for advice and support, as other providers have asked that professionals don't call and speak to them.
- That is answered by a person 24/7 and doesn't resort to an automated call, or a large national call team with no DA expertise.
- That we will still speak to them and offer advice and support, and signpost them on when the matter is out of our scope or remit.
- That people value a continuity of service and staff e.g., N who had been a vulnerable, high risk service user many years ago had the confidence to refer herself back into us for counselling, we remembered who she was, the situation she had been in, her children and her vulnerabilities without her having to begin from the start.
- That we offer victim focused, person centred support from the outset, regardless of whether that person will be with us in the long term.

Early this year we had an ex-service user call us as she wanted to donate some items, and Jan answered when she rang the helpline. That same day we received this email from her, which captures the essence of why our helpline, and the way we run it, is so important:

Hi Jan,

I knew your voice the second you answered the phone. It felt straight away like my safe place again.

I've circulated a message to my family, friends and work colleagues, you should receive deliveries over the next week or so from the wish list from amazon, I've had a lot of support.

Again, I can't thank you enough and nearly 10 years on you still have that impact to make me feel safe. Thank you for everything from me to you and all the team.

I'm not a victim I'm a survivor

We have got this!

J and S xxxx

The Hope Centre

The Hope Centre continues to be a busy hub for both our staff and our service users. We have a full programme of group work that runs throughout the day and in the evening, covering everything from domestic abuse education and wellbeing to craft sessions and chat and chill. As well as being the base for our staff, volunteers and group work, the centre is also the home of our County Counselling Service, which thanks to additional volunteer support know utilises most available space across the centre on a weekly basis.

As an organisation we are still really keen to see how we can utilise the downstairs space, both to provide additional room for clinics, groups and counselling but also to potentially develop a social enterprise that allows us to generate some income, give volunteering and work experience opportunities to our service users and support the local community. We are currently working on a business plan around this particular project with the landlord and some potentially interested funders.

Outreach

Pathway Project has continued to work on the service provision offered from our outreach team. Our Risk Reduction Worker is still the base of our team, taking referrals from anyone who feels they need support around domestic abuse. We were able to secure funding to maintain our Mental Health and Domestic Abuse Worker for 22/23, and our now trying to find some longer-term grant funding to move the post forward. Thanks to the National Lottery, Lichfield District Council and private funders we have been able to also retain our Young Women and Girls Worker, Housing Support, Family Support, Risk Assessment Worker and our Economic Abuse Specialist. All of these posts provide a combination of emotional and practical support to service users who are at any point in their journey, whether that is historical, they are with their partner, or that have just split up.



Our services work together to offer the most holistic support to people that they can, reflected in some feedback we had at Christmas:
Thank you to you and Lesley getting me that grant. I've managed to see an X display cooker on marketplace and he said he'll deliver too me on Saturday. It's a big relief to know I'll be able to cook a dinner at Christmas for me and my boys instead of stuff out the fridge...I really can't thank you all enough.... especially you Debs. I owe you so much and for keep being positive towards me and giving me the strength to carry on. You gave me my life back and I'll never forget that xx

This year we have been relaunching our drop-in services, which were temporarily withdrawn due to COVID. This has included some work in Cannock and Rugeley after we were approached by some of the Children's Centres there who needed additional support, and we do offer follow on sessions to anyone that we meet during these drop ins. We are also offering drop-ins at Tamworth in the church/community cafe as they have a number of residents who use their facilities; it is also allowing us

to reach those who cannot travel to Lichfield due to the cost of living (petrol, parking) or lack of transport. On top of this we are also offering regular drop-ins at Spark in Burntwood, this is an established charity that supports the community – alongside the drop ins we have done talks on domestic abuse awareness, menopause, red flags and healthy relationships. We have established a good relationship with all of these and the support continues past the drop in as appropriate. This year we also did an Easter drop In at Spark and the Children's Centres for moms and children, and it was so well received we are going to do the same again during the Summer and Christmas holidays.

Our two newest areas of work are our Family Support Practitioner and our Risk Assessment Worker. So far, seven families have engaged with our Family Support Practitioner and received support around dealing with the aftermath of their children being involved in abusive relationships, helping them to better understand domestic abuse and how to support people in the best way possible. As well as direct one to one support, we also have a support group that runs alongside it on a monthly basis.

Our Risk Assessment Worker completes any initial risk assessments that haven't been completed by the helpline, for instance if the person wasn't able to complete it at that time, or they needed to do it on a specific day. This service also completes additional interim risk assessments after people have been in service for a short while to ensure that nothing has changed, there is no escalation needed, or additional services. Where people are with us for longer periods a follow up risk assessment will be completed every two months, while all staff assess risk in an ongoing way during one to ones, we wanted to make sure that this was also formally recorded.

While we keep waiting lists to the minimum, on any occasion when someone has to wait then this role is responsible for making weekly contact with them to ensure, again, that the level of risk has not increased and that they don't have additional needs that we need to take into account. This post also now completes wellbeing calls with service users when their direct worker is on annual leave, or is off ill. This allows us to ensure that we are meeting all that service user's needs, and gives them reassurance that we have not forgotten about them, or they haven't been missed. This role has also allowed us to pick up some time critical pieces of work, when service users have decided they don't want to bother us, but when we have rung them when their worker is off, there are letters that need to be written in a short time scale.

During 2023/24 we will be looking to continue developing our specialist workers. We will be using the data we have available to ensure that we are focusing on the key areas that best meet the needs of our service users.
Again, Pathway Project is hugely appreciative of all the hard work and commitment that staff bring to our organisation, without them we would not be able to make such a huge difference to so many people's lives and we remain grateful for that passion and drive.

Sexual Violence Services

We have continued to deliver Survive (Sexual Violence Services) in conjunction with Staffordshire Women's Aid, and have been delighted with the positive response from service users and commissioners. We have recently received the very positive news that this service will have a further six-month extension, to April 2024, and will retain the same hours and delivery for the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor and the Children's Independent Sexual Violence Advisor. The commissioning process for the service starting in 2024, will begin in September 2023, and we hope to still be working in our successful partnership through this process. Again, we thank Staffordshire Women's Aid for allowing us to be a key delivery partner for such an important service.

Children's Services

We have continued to deliver our Children's Services, both in refuge and the community. This year has seen a marked increase in the number of children with higher level needs coming into our refuge provision and therefore this area has taken more focus this year. Recognising the changing needs of children and young people coming into service, we took on an additional part time children's worker post to enable us to provide appropriate support across both refuges at all times.

As well as working directly with children and young people we also continue to deliver preventative work to other voluntary agencies, statutory agencies and schools, though their carousel and drop-down days. This service continues to be well utilised by the local community and agencies who understand the specialist nature of the work.

For 23/24 we will be further extending our children's services in order to meet demand and support the more complex levels of need that we are seeing. Our refuge contract will see us move to two full time posts for supporting children and young people across our refuge provision. We will also be working with a private funder to take on a full-time outreach children's worker, this post will work closely with our Young Women and Girls worker to offer wrap around support, and also with our Children's Sexual Violence Advisor, to offer appropriate domestic abuse support where needed.



As always, Pathway Project is hugely appreciative of the Children's Team and the hard work it does in supporting some of our most vulnerable service users.

County Counselling Service

Pathway Project has always been passionate about counselling and the life changing work it can do to support people dealing with trauma and we were delighted to be able to continue to offer our County Counselling Service through 22/23, thanks to a new contract of 2 years of funding from the Ministry of Justic (MoJ), through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. This service has continued to work with all the domestic and sexual abuse service providers across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent, ensuring access to counselling for all service users who need it.

This support is offered in whatever way is best suited to the service user, whether that is face to face or through Zoom or WhatsApp, and all service users are assessed by our Counselling Lead before moving fully into the counselling programme. Our service now has 2 paid counsellors leading on delivery with a team of volunteer counsellors supporting them. During 2022/23 we supported a total of 165 service users in our counselling service, and a further 40 through our linked anxiety sessions.

This year we had this lovely feedback from one of our service users:

I am writing to you today regarding the counselling I have received from a lovely lady called Maria. I started the sessions back in September last year I think. When I started I was full of self-hatred, self-loathing, scared of being out and about without my partner and feeling so ashamed of myself. I was blaming myself for the abuse I had suffered from my stepdad as a child & for the abuse I had suffered as an adult from my own father. Maria helped me tune in to my inner child which I desperately needed to, without knowing it before. She needed a hug, care and compassion. She now has it!! She helped me to see that the things that had happened to me throughout my whole life had all stemmed from that 8 year old neglected child that was not loved or cared for and was sexually abused. I had no boundaries and could only trust in myself but just craved to be loved. I blamed myself for letting my own father sexually abuse me for over 20 years throughout my adulthood. Maria helped me to stop this blame and understand why these things had happened. It was not my fault. I can see that now. I am now, thanks to the wonderful work with Maria, strong, confident, and most certainly looking forward to the future. I am now not afraid. I know I will never get answers to the questions. I don't even need them now. I also know that if I see him in the street I would not be afraid. I would look at him, with my head held high, knowing that I am a million times a better person than he could ever wish to be. My brain thinks in a much better way now. This is all thanks to Maria helping me to gain this knowledge and strength. I cannot thank Maria or the Pathway Project enough.
Many, many thanks.

Volunteers

This year we have had 18 volunteers working with us and 4 people in our peer mentor programme. Within our peer mentors we hold volunteers with specialisms in LGBTQI, money management, mental health and drug and alcohol. Our Peer Mentors have enabled us to provide support to women and girls who don't require the intense support of one of our workers, but need low level practical and emotional interventions to continue moving on with our lives. Our peer mentors have neen especially helpful in supporting us to manage the increase we have seen in the number of people needing low level support around budgeting and managing their money. Service users accessing this support has also bought to our attention the number of people who have issues dealing with numbers, and we are working with local education agencies to provide some understanding numbers workshops.

Some of our key volunteer successes this year have been:

- One of our volunteers moving into paid employment within our organisation, as our 2 day Helpline Coordinator.
- One of our most long standing volunteers and male peer mentor, securing a paid support worker post with a local drug and alcohol service, something he attributes solely to them bing impressed with the skills he had learnt through volunteering with us. He will be remaining to help lead our male survivors group.
- One of our ex service users, who has completed rehab, celebrating 12 months of sobriety and becoming an out of hours volunteer at our Tamworth Refuge, helping to lead on some of informal activities such as bingo nights and picnics with the service users there.
- Developing a new drop in with our ex CEO at a church in Burntwood, allowing people to stop by for advice and support, and a referral into the service if needed.

- Following a training session Higgs Solicitors have now joined our volunteer legal clinic rosta, providing both legal one to ones with service users, but also training sessions for our staff including things such as divorce proceedings and financial orders.
- Further developed our fundraising group to help support our growing range of fundrasing and events.
- Developed a new volunteer at a local shop, who encourages his customers to put all their spare change in his fundraising tin, which he fills every month with between £20-30.

This year our general volunteers have contributed 1880 hours to our organisation, this has included a variety of things such as manging and uploading our data, supporting our archiving, meeting with other agencies, supporting to write training and attending our training sessions as support for our women. Our volunteers have also become very active in supporting our fundraising, helping at events and even doing sponsored activities themselves. As many of our staff also volunteer on top of their working hours we also have collected a team of 'unofficial' family member volunteers who contributed an additional 32hrs of volunteer support this year by helping out at fundraising events by doing things such as shaking collection buckets, or running drinks stands at the bingo. This year we would also like to give a special thank you to a three of our refuge staff who did a sponsored skydive for Pathway Project and raised over £1200!



This year we have also seen an increase in our volunteer counsellors. This has been down to the funding that we received from the Ministry of Justice that allowed us to employ a counselling lead and a part time counsellor to oversee and deliver and the service. As this service covers the entirety of the county there has been a lot of demand for it, and we have had a whole team of volunteers to help support its delivery. We have had 11 volunteer counsellors this year and they have delivered over 700 hours of counselling support to service users. Our counselling service and counselling volunteers are overseen by the BACP and it is run within their guidelines.

Group Work and Training

Our group work delivery has continued to expand and change, and we are now at a stage where there are multiple groups running each week, and in some cases, we have something on every day. This year we have delivered 95 group programmes, totalling 234 sessions, with some being one offs, all the way to six-week courses. 444 adults attended at least one group, and 110 attended more than one. In total service users accessed 2911 hours of group work, delivered primarily by our Volunteer and Training Manager, with support from the rest of the team.

Reaching Out

Our Self Help Group has now changed its name to Reaching Out and remains our key piece of group work. It is currently running six times a year across our refuges, Hope Centre and a community venue. It is a therapeutic group which looks at the dynamics and impact of abuse, the signs of an abusive relationship, safety planning and keeping safe in future relationships. This group has a huge impact and people start to identify the level of abuse that took place in their relationship and the impact it has had in their own and their children's lives. It also enables people to see how controlling and abusive behaviour can manifest and develop through a relationship.

Moving On

Moving On is our new group, delivered by our ex-CEO who is now a volunteer with us. This is still in its trial period and has so far been run at one of our refuges and in the Tesco Community Room. This group looks at putting together your life after an abusive relationship and also incorporates the Japanese repair technique of Kintsugi, so over the process of the group the service users repair a broken plate with gold glue to restore it to something new.

Chat and Chill

Chat and Chill runs monthly in the evening and our manager is supported to deliver this by one of most long-standing peer mentors. Essentially it is exactly what is says, an opportunity to have a coffee and sit and chat about anything you want to, with people who have had the same experiences that you have.

Wellbeing Group

The Wellbeing Group the group is designed to focus on how you can manage your mental health, self-care and the impact domestic abuse can have on both of them. It is a combination of educational work alongside a fun group activity, with the intention being that it is a good starting group for those people who are struggling to complete larger pieces of work.

Menopause Cafe

A member of our staff started our Domestic Abuse and The Menopause Group, after completing research into the fact that the side effects of the menopause were being used to further abuse women, for instance using brain fog to taunt them into thinking they were stupid or convince them they had done things that they hadn't. This group has a lot of guest speakers to cover things such as therapy techniques for dealing with stress, answer concerns about things that may happen in the menopause and also feel-good sessions such as a group walk and coffee, or hand massages and sound baths.



Family Support

Our same worker also began a Family Support Group so that can offer support to family members who are trying to deal with their own thoughts and feelings about having close family members in abusive relationships. This group also educated people on the best way they can support someone who is in that situation, as well as giving people the opportunity to chat with others who are in the same position.

Men's Group

Our Men's Group is still relatively new, and has met on two occasions so far. As expected, the attendance has been fairly low, so we will be reviewing this in 23/24, to see if there are changes we can make to it to make it more effective, or if we need to go back to the drawing board. This group is overseen by our manager, but is run on the night by our male survivor peer mentor and our male counsellor.

Journey to Self-Discovery and Anti-Anxiety

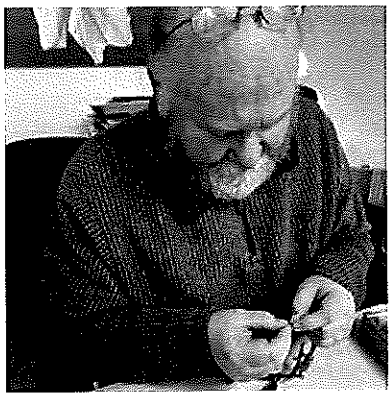
We have two groups which are overseen by our Lead Counsellor, Journey to Self-Discovery and our brand new, Anxiety Workshop. Journey to Self-Discovery is designed to encourage people to really discover who they are as an individual, to embrace their strengths and weaknesses and build for the future. As it uses CBT techniques the group has to be led by a trained professional and we are very grateful that Ann volunteers her time to deliver this particular course.
Our Anxiety Workshop began last year as an offshoot of our Ministry of Justice funded County Counselling Service, and was put together by our Lead Counsellor, who noticed a huge amount of people being referred into counselling were struggling with general anxiety as well as dealing with domestic abuse. This course runs alongside the counselling and allows people to explore anxiety and how to deal with it in a peer setting.

Crafternoon



Crafternoon has been one of our biggest successes over the past year and is always incredibly well attended. It meets monthly during term times and every session focuses on a different craft. While people are completing their activity there is also the opportunity for chatting, laughing and eating some biscuits. Some of the crafts people have been doing include stain glass art, decorating tote bags, pom pom animals, decorating stones, building bird boxes and making plant pots.

This year we have also done a number of one-off sessions which have been really popular. These have included a local jeweller coming into show service users how to make necklaces and bracelets and two of our ex-service users led a creative writing workshop. We are currently scheduling in more of these sessions for after the summer holidays.
We have also begun to deliver some more external training sessions to local organisations and their service users. This included a Healthy Relationships course which looked at challenging beliefs and opinions and getting people to question what is love and was delivered at the local Children's Centres. We also ran DA awareness Training MHA Communities at Burntwood Mining College, a central point for older Burntwood residents. The training was carried out with staff and volunteers as they support/befriend older vulnerable residents. We have also delivered some training about Pathway Project and domestic abuse to local family law teams, one of who is now involved in our volunteering.



Community cafe in Tamworth have asked us to deliver training to staff and volunteers, they are very aware that domestic abuse is happening in their community and that people are not reaching out. They would like to know more about what to look out for, how to support people and what to do next and this is booked in for this year. This has also been offered to Rugeley Community Centre, who are keen to deliver this.

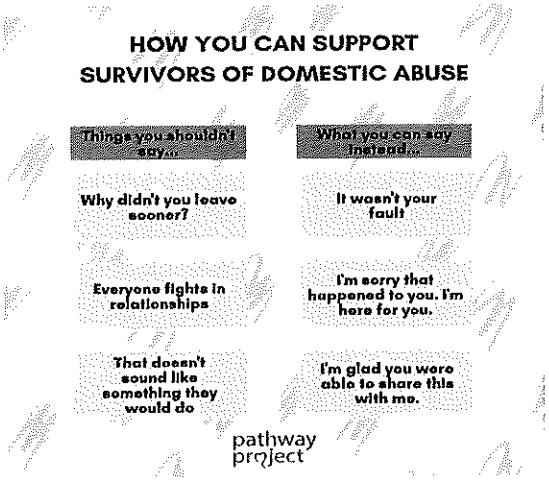
Legal Clinics

Our legal clinics have continued to be well attended and we have been able to further increase our capacity due to a second solicitor volunteering their time, having heard about Pathway Project through one of our training sessions.

Community Engagement and Social Media

Thanks to funding from the National Lottery, and our general fundraising, we are very fortunate to have two staff members who work on both of these projects for us. This has worked exceptionally well for us, giving us key points of contact for people who want to support us and enhancing both services. We now have a full calendar of awareness and fundraising events through the year that is managed, down to finding people to volunteer for them, by that member of staff, as well as enhancing our local profile which is increasing the number of people that are approaching us to offer support or fundraising opportunities. Our social media continues to outperform all of the other DA providers across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. Again, we have also had individuals approach us wanting to donate items, fundraise and work with us through our social media.

With regards to our social media, all of our campaigns and highlights ran across both Facebook and Instagram. We have taken an approach that mixing up our content gets the best engagement so we have used these mediums to promote awareness around domestic abuse, thank fundraisers and share our fundraising stories, update people on things that are happening at Pathway and share public stories from across national media, which have included legal threats to sexual abuse survivors, issues within family courts, women's rights and concerns over abuse within the police force. Some of our main posts and key campaigns have been:
The emergency alert and keeping phones safe (impressions (number of people engaging with the post) 2546:112 shares)
New refuge kitchen (4626:672)
Astroturf at refuge (6367:552)
Coercive control and what that looks like (707:57)
Toxic behaviour (999:39)
The national cost of living crisis and saving women's services campaign
How to access food banks (611:23)
Love bombing and what it looks like (2167:101)
Are you ok? Let's talk.... (801:26)
International Women's Day women killed by men in 2022 (3447:549)
#NOMORE week national campaign
Results of the Stephen Bear case (1281:161)
What people think DA is (903:75)
Valentines you are worthy of love campaign
Daily Mail victim blaming in a family annihilation case (2230:353)
Sexual abuse and sexual violence awareness week
Grooming
You can so no to sex even if.....
Time to talk mental health day
Hearts of Hope campaign (2714:171)
He said he'll change.... (1115:55)

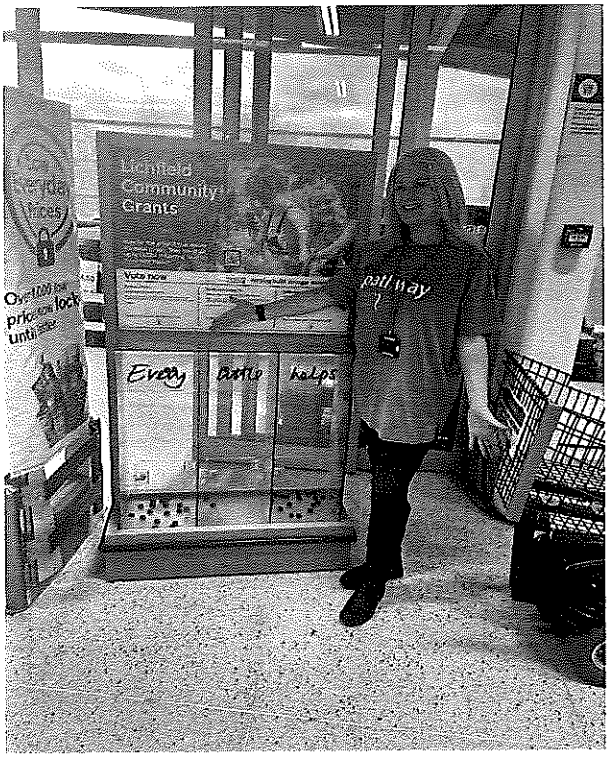


Male domestic abuse sessions (1169:59)
What is misogyny? (2132:312)
Clare's Law (2208:173)

Our community engagement and fundraising has been going from strength to strength and includes a variety of events across Lichfield, Burntwood and Tamworth, as well as a full calendar booked for 2023/24.

We have built a really strong relationship with the Community Champion at Tesco's Lichfield, Charlotte, who is hugely supportive of Pathway and has regular meetings with us so that she is aware of our needs. Over the past year Tesco have supported us with:

- Use of Tesco Community Room for Awareness events, Fundraising Meetings and allowed us to deliver group work for service users from there.



- Tesco's Book Stall, where we raised a total of £584 during August.
- Tesco Community Fund - Charlotte supported and nominated Pathway as the Store Charity to ensure we had a better chance of being chosen for the community voting stage, where we had a chance of receiving £500, £1000 or £1500. We have just found out that we came in second place and will be receiving £1000 to be used for updating the Children's play area at Lichfield Refuge.
- Tesco's regularly donates raffle prizes such as toiletries, home items alongside items for refuge such as cleaning product and nappies.
- Charlotte has also given us some great leads for further fundraising in the community for example we are one of the nominated charities for the Royal Sutton fun run on the 4th June 2023.
- Charlotte also supported our Bingo Night in October and Quiz Night in February by attending our event and selling raffle tickets on both nights.

We have also developed a similar relationship with Tracey, the Community Champion at the Co-op. Again, we meet with her on a regular basis to discuss how they can help support us, so far this has included:

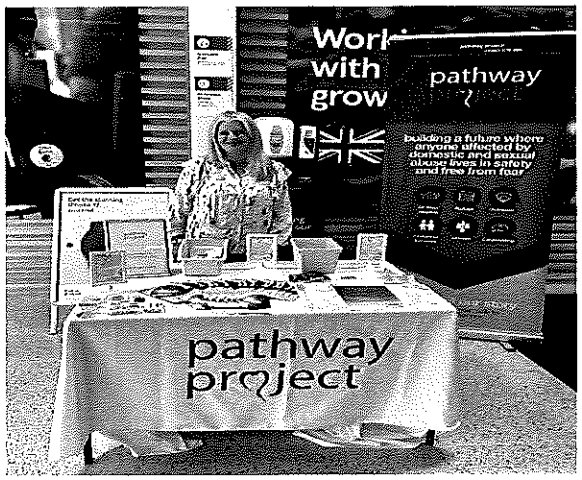
- Collecting toys within store at Christmas
- Donating Chocolate and Biscuits (a huge amount!) at Christmas
- Supporting us to set up with their instore food waste donations through Caboodle. Tracey has gone a step further and now delivers the food to Lichfield refuge 5 days a week, helping us support low-income service users with fresh food.
- Support with applying for Co-op Community Fund Donations. So far, we have received £150 from Kings Bromley Co-op for pots and pans for Tamworth Refuge's new kitchen and £450 for a picnic bench for Lichfield Refuge. We are already planning other applications for practical items for refuge.
- Bulk Tea, Coffee and biscuit donation for support groups.

- Donation of Children's activity packs and crayons.
- Instore Food and Toiletries collection.
- Staff are also planning to go to refuge to plant some pots for the summer.



This role has also developed relationships with a number of our local supermarkets who have allowed us to do pop up stalls and awareness raising stands in their stores, these include:

- Morrison's Tamworth
- Morrison's Lichfield
- Asda Tamworth
- Co-op Boley park and Fradley
- Waitrose Lichfield
- Dunelm Cannock
- Tesco Lichfield



Trustees' annual report
For the year ended 31 March 2023



Our worker has arranged four large fundraising events for us this year:

Bingo Night - 28th Oct 2022 - raised £1,395

Art Event: this was a selection of paintings completed by our service users during art groups that were their interpretations of 'Enough', as well as donations from two local artists and was run at a local art gallery. We were also fortunate enough to have a volunteer auctioneer who has been on many episodes of Bargain Hunt - 17th Nov 2022 - raised £2997

Quiz Night - 24th Feb 2023 - raised £700

Elvis Night - 27th April 2023 - raised £562.10

We have been working closely with Burntwood Town Council to raise awareness and fundraise. We have taken part in the following initiatives:

Burntwood producers Market - 9th Oct 2022 - raised £350
Burntwood Christmas Market - 26th Nov 2022 - raised £404
Better Burntwood Grant - April 2023 - £500 for delivering group work

We plan to support Plays in the Park and will repeat Burntwood Producers Market and Christmas Market this year as they were so successful.

In addition to fundraising our worker has spent a huge amount of time making contacts in the local community to raise awareness. Here are some examples:

W.I. Wharton - Presentation - £100 donated
W.I. Barton under Needwood - Presentation
A Plan Insurance – Networking and they had a stall in their window for us.
We Love Lichfield - Networking
Mayor and Sheriff - We are the chosen Charity and will receive a donation imminently.
BAC O-Connor Restart Academy - Awareness Stand
Lichfield Rotary Club - £300 donated
Armitage Methodist Church - Presentation £400 donated
Beacon Park Village - Presentation £400 donated
The Hub St Mary's
Lichfield Library - Awareness events planned
Probus Charity - Will donate to Mayor and Sheriff Charities
VCSE Market Place Forum - Awareness stand planned
St Michaels Church Lichfield



We have also cultivated contacts who donate raffle prizes and have undertaken fundraising efforts on our behalf. Some examples of these are:

Faro Lounge - £500 raised and Vouchers given for raffle Prize
Jono from Citylife Magazine and Jono Tourism - £160 raised
McKenzie's in the city - Raffle Prize
White Company - Raffle Prize
Waterstones - raffle prizes
Fortescue's - Raffle prize
The Belfry - Raffle Prize
Arthur Price - Raffle Prizes



This year we have also begun the launch of our Hearts for Pathway Campaign, where kind supporters have knitted us hearts which we have left around the local community for residents to find.

We are also extremely lucky to have Love Biz choosing us as their charity for the year for the second year in a row and to have been made one of the Mayor and Sherriff of Lichfield's Charities of the Year.

The strategy that drives the activities.....

As always, the main focus for Pathway Project remains the needs of our service user. As an organisation we have always strongly believed that the best people to tell us what they need to make that journey from victim to survivor, are our service user themselves. This means that as well as using county and local authority strategies, national data and information from the police to shape our delivery, Pathway Project also spends a lot of time identifying specific needs within our local community, through the people we work with. We do this through a combination of analysing the data we are able to collect through our case and data management system, Oasis, key trends spotted by staff, service user's direct request/comments and our own consultations that we run through our service user group consultations and our Survivor to Thrivor group.

As always Pathway Project is also very proud to be affiliated with National Women's Aid who continues to provide support in a number of different ways, including the national framework for domestic and sexual abuse services. Due to it being such a huge piece of work, we had to unfortunately put our re-accreditation on hold to focus on our front-line delivery, we began work on this again in January 2023 and hope to have completed this process by the end of 23/24.

Pathway Project continues to work closely with our partner domestic abuse agencies across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. We have supported New Era, Glow and Staffordshire Women's Aid with our County Counselling services and we are subcontracting with Staffordshire Women's Aid to help deliver Survive, the County sexual violence service. As always, Pathway Project continues to work closely with a number of agencies both statutory and voluntary, including Tamworth Borough (TBC) and Lichfield District Councils (LDC), Housing and Community Safety Partnerships, Children's Services, Citizens Advice Bureau

and Bromford Housing. This work takes place across both formal strategic and operational meetings, and through joint working, such as our new Housing Clinic with LDC for residents in refuge.

During 23/24 we will be focusing on securing funding for those services whose current contracts come to end including our County Counselling and Economic Abuse Specialist roles, and those who don't have secure long-term funding such as the Mental Health and Domestic Abuse Specialist. Alongside this we will be continuing to work with funders and our landlord on our potential plans for the utilisation of the downstairs of our building, as mentioned previously.

Our online data and case management system, Oasis, remains a fantastic tool in allowing us to respond to funding applications and to meaningfully contribute to the local and national agenda on domestic and sexual abuse trends and issues. Not only does the system streamline the data into easy searches it also puts it into easy to read report formats, reducing what has previously been time consuming work. We are also happy to be able to share anonymous data with Women's Aid to allow them to help build a national picture of what survivors want and need.

As an organisation we are really excited to be building our community fundraising with our Community Engagement Worker. We have attended a number of community events over the past year, both those that have been arranged on a larger scale such as the producers' markets and individual awareness sessions that we have run ourselves alongside the supermarkets. We also delivered a number of own fundraising events, as mentioned previously including our bingo nights and art auction and we have lots planned for 23/24. We have continued to use social media and online resources to drive our fundraising and we were involved in the Christmas Big Give online campaign again at the end of 2022 and we have already applied to be part of their Women and Girls Week in October this year. We are continuing to look at how new technologies and online options can drive our fundraising, we have installed Enthuse on our website to allow people to directly donate straight to us online, and this also gives people the option to set up monthly giving if they want to. We have also set up our website to allow us to sell tickets for our events directly to people, and this has been really useful in allowing us to both encourage sales but also plan and monitor events.

Achievements and Performance

For Pathway Project, and many other charities the focus of 22/23 has been about managing the added pressures of the cost-of-living crisis, for the organisation, service users and staff. The priority for us has been around retaining services and staff, through the ongoing challenges that have arisen, and most importantly continuing to deliver the services that are needed the most by the families that work with us. This year Pathway Project has seen:

- An initial six-month extension and then confirmation of the direct award of our commissioned refuge services, formally starting in October 2023.
- The development of our community engagement and fundraising work, really driving the reach of knowledge of our work.
- A further three-year award from the Smallwood Trust to allow us to make grants to service users.
- Funding from HSBC, Scewfix and B&Q to do much needed refurbishment work at Tamworth and Lichfield Refuges.
- A further six months extension for our subcontract work on the Survive project, with Staffordshire Women's Aid.
- Setting up our own merchandise range for sale on our website, or at our fundraising events.
- A grant award from the Smallwood Trust to purchase vouchers for staff to help combat the cost-of-living crisis.

- The completion of our benchmarking project, culminating in a 10% pay rise for all directly employed frontline staff, and benchmarked rises for all other staff.
- Further development of the out of hours provision for Tamworth Refuge.
- Securing some additional uplift funding from the Ministry of Justice to cover additional staff hours and the cost of producing new marketing products.
- Successful Christmas and Easter campaigns.
- Our continuing contribution to the local community and county domestic abuse strategies.
- Continue to develop our drop-in services across Lichfield and Tamworth, and in areas where we have been directly approached.

One of the greatest assets that Pathway Project has is our wonderful team. The work that we do as an organisation is demanding in many ways, but our staff never falter in making sure that they do their best for the service users who need us and Pathway Project would like to say a huge thank you to every one of our staff for the commitment and love that they have shown our organisation, no matter what the challenges.

Beneficiaries of our services

The complex needs of our beneficiaries have been recognised in our strategy focusing on specialist support, as very rarely do service users present with domestic/sexual abuse, and no other additional support needs. We feel that the more support that can be offered from one central point, with one trusted worker in a place that enables someone to feel safe, the better engagement we will receive and the greater opportunity for success for our service users. Pathway Project continues to take on feedback, both negative and positive, and use this to drive forward our services and make effective changes

Financial Review

Fundraising remains a key priority for Pathway Project; this is through all mediums including community fundraising, grants, trust and large funding streams. This is also across all areas including restricted funding for set projects or costs, unrestricted funding to help cover general costs, and capital funding to fund projects such as the refurbishment of Tamworth Refuge.

As always, the successful delivery of a professional organisation means that it is necessary to have management oversight and buildings to operate from, including their operating costs, and all of these contribute to the front-line services at the heart of Pathway Project. Our Hope Centre is a vital part of our service delivery, allowing for space for staff to work safely and access peer support, as well as providing a much-needed venue for our counselling and group work. Our management team ensure that we provide a safe and secure service provision, as well as overseeing the vital strategic and operational strategy for the organisation, that allows us to remain viable. Funding both of these areas remains a constant struggle for charities, where there is a continued focus by funders on direct delivery, and not their associated costs. Despite this Pathway Project continues to work hard to source any funding that may support this, including working with private individual funders.

Thanks to the funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), which is dispersed to Staffordshire County Council to allow them to commission safe accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse, our refuge provision is now safe. We have been issued with interim funding from April 1st 2023 until September 20th 2023, and on the 1st October 2023 new 2.5yr contract, with the option of a further year extension will begin. The specification around this has been agreed between providers and the Council, with the final funding amount agreed in August, and the contract being signed in September.

Fundraising for the organisation is now overseen by the CEO, Head of Operations and the Community and Engagement Worker. As well as overseeing organised fundraising events, our Community Engagement Worker is now leading on micro bids, as mentioned previously these have been around the £500-£1000 mark and have focused on capital projects we need supporting. The Head of Operations is leading on small bids and funding opportunities as well as having the general oversight of the fundraising. On top of this they are also leading on the work with the landlord and private funder around the opportunities for the downstairs space. All of this allows the CEO to focus on larger funding opportunities and developing the fundraising strategy.

During 22/23 the CEO led on a large benchmarking project which compared all job roles within the organisation to our immediate, local providers and to organisations nationwide who were comparative in size, location and service delivery. This has allowed us to clearly map out the correct pay scales for everyone within the organisation and start to implement the pay changes that will be needed to meet these. In April 2023, everyone within the organisation who was a directly employed front line member of staff received a 10% pay rise, everyone else, including those people employed through our sub contract with Staffordshire Women's Aid had that salary increased to the correct benchmarked pay scale. The commitment to cover these increases was made through our reserves while also acknowledging that all future bids would include the update salaries and we would continue to combat the use of reserves through general fundraising. The trustees have also made the commitment for pay scale reviews to be on the agenda for each annual Trustee Away Day.

As an organisation we have had to accept that fundamentally we cannot change the situation with the energy crisis. While we have worked with service users around switching off lights etc., we have to understand that 20 families will be using huge amounts of electricity and gas. We have worked hard with our local housing teams to mitigate the cost to us with housing benefit payments, which thankfully they have agreed to, alongside working with a free contractor who has supported us to change to cheaper alternative tariffs when the opportunities have arisen. At our outreach centre we had a severe delay in the billing due to everything going to the landlord as the building has shared gas and electric. Whilst we had put money aside in our budget, this did exceed our planned expenditure; however, our landlord has now set up the monthly payments for us and has also agreed to us paying the initial bill back to him monthly over the tenure of the lease, which has allowed us to better manage our core costs. Core costs remain a key part of our fundraising as does managing and monitoring cost of living for our staff in the coming year, while we all wait to see what the economic downturn, or upturn, of the UK will be.

During this year our total income increased to £986,111 (2022: £832,862). We expected this increase due to the award we received for our Reaching Out project through the National Lottery Reaching Communities funding pot. We were also able to negotiate funding for refuge that included the salary increase for staff and an increase to cover costs through Staffordshire County Council and DLUHC. As well as this we also took on a two-year contract for to continue delivering the County Counselling Service, secured some uplift funding to cover staff hours and marketing material from the Ministry of Justice, secured a significant amount of funding for refurbishment work at Tamworth and Lichfield refuge and had our funding for management and additional hours at Tamworth refuge extended. On top of this it was out first year with our Community Engagement Worker driving our community fundraising. Expenditure has been tightly managed but still increased to £945,656 (2022: £860,619). Again, this was expected as costs that have dramatically increased for utilities and general costs overall. We also agreed a 5% pay increase for all staff at the beginning of 2022, and took on additional staff through the lottery contract, counselling contract and Tamworth Refuge posts. We also spent funding received for the work we did on refurbishing Tamworth and the AstroTurf at Lichfield.

Thank you to the Patrons and Friends of Pathway Project for their on-going commitment. It is a huge encouragement to us that people remain so passionate about the work we do.

Principal funding sources

Our refuge 'bricks and mortar' costs are funded through the housing benefit which is paid to us on behalf of residents, we review this yearly with our District and Borough Councils and we are thankful the campaigning that has secured government support for retaining housing benefit payments for refuges, as this remains our only consistent source of funding. The money from Staffordshire County Council, through DLUHC has been instrumental in funding the staffing of our refuges, which are critical to successful refuge provision. We are also very grateful to Staffordshire County Council for recognising increases in costs to organisations and increasing the refuge funding to help accommodate this. We are also hugely grateful for Staffordshire County Council and their decision to direct award the refuge commissioning contracts, and for their commitment to doing this for a longer contract period. We are very much looking forward to working more closely with them in the coming years.

We were extremely privileged to have been awarded another funding stream by the National Lottery Reaching Communities in May 2022, after our successful Empowering Women and Girls project that ended in July 2021. We know that the decision to award further five-year contracts are quite rare, and we thank the lottery for their belief in our project and our organisation, and for allowing us this opportunity to deliver this piece of work.

The Ministry of Justice, through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), has continued to support our County Counselling project, by awarding us a further two-year contract in April 2023. Due to us providing fully qualified and registered counsellors, the support costs for this are high, but the number of people seen and the current outcomes are excellent. As well as this the OPCC also awarded us just under £10,000 of uplift money at the end of 2022, which allowed us to pay for some additional staff hours as well as produce a new range of marketing materials, and tools for service users.

The Smallwood Trust has also continued to support us to be able to offer our grant making service to any women working us who are struggling with financial hardship. The fund provides a small amount to help cover the work that needs to be done by our Finance Manager to administer the payments, and the remainder of the money is paid out to service users to support them with things such as housing arrears, new furniture etc. We were extremely pleased to be offered a further three years funding to continue this service in March 2023. As well as this the Smallwood Trust worked with us to provide a grant that allowed us to buy a £200 voucher for every member of staff to help them with the cost-of-living crisis.

Children in Need have also been a key funder in supporting the work that we do with children and young people, and have continued their funding until November 2023.

HSBC, B&Q, Screwfix grants have allowed us to complete much needed work at Tamworth which has included a new kitchen, CCTV, LED lights and full decoration, as well as new AstroTurf at Lichfield Refuge.

We are very grateful to our District and Borough Councils for their support around our Economic Abuse Worker and our Refuge Manager and additional hours at Tamworth.

We also have a number of other grants and gifts from trust funds, foundations and through private individuals, as well as in individuals in our Patron's scheme.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Board of Trustees is very aware of on-going risks and regularly reviews the work done to mitigate these. We have both a business plan and an income generation plan that we work towards and review. We have a Risk Management Policy and regularly review the principal risks identified, which are financial, operational and reputational.

Financial – Income generation still remains a key focus and priority for Pathway Project, both around securing contributions to core costs, raising funds for capital projects and for ensuring the continuity of current services and the development of new ones. Work will constantly be done on fundraising throughout the year, with the main focus being on unfunded posts, posts with imminently ending contracts, and core costs. As an organisation we recognise that the cost-of-living crisis is still very much continuing with no indication of when, or if, things will become more stable and we are remaining aware of this when considering things such as entering into new service contracts. We believe that our commitment to pay increases for staff has mitigated the immediate concern around staff retention, and this will remain on our agenda.

Our biggest concern had been around the potential commissioning of refuge services, and how this may negatively affect our organisation if we failed to secure a further contract. The direct award of this contract for 2.5years with the option to extend for a further one from October of 2023, has now mitigated this risk for the immediate future.

Operational – Our biggest operational risk remains the Hope Centre, this is in terms of the potential impact of increasing costs and how we manage the building operationally, to help manage those, as it is key to our delivery package.

In 2022/23 it became clear that there was a clear operational concern around long term staff leaving in order to find more highly paid work, and in turn, the issues that would then arise around recruitment. All providers across Staffordshire were reporting the same ongoing issues around loosing staff and then struggling to be able to recruit on the same pay scales. We have now completed our benchmarking, awarded pay rises, retained staff and in the last round of recruitment had 8 applications, to only one previously. Pay scales will remain on the agenda moving forward.

We continue to work with people with complex needs, chaotic lives, and who are often at serious risk. Having done all that we can to minimise the risks, we also have insurance against many possible risks and losses.

Reputational – Once again the main issue is that we work with vulnerable service users with complex needs and we need to prioritise safeguarding all of the people who we work with. Where we need to ensure our staff's safety, they work jointly in pairs or do joint visits with other agencies. We only visit service users having undertaken a thorough risk assessment. All of our working practices are aimed at supporting both staff and service users. We attend regular professionals meetings in order to maintain awareness of risk to or from vulnerable service users, and we deal promptly with any issues which arise. We monitor out media presence so that we can take action wherever appropriate.

Reserves Policy and Going Concern

The trustees have examined the charity's requirements in light of the main risks of the organisation and aim to build up our reserves to give us some financial stability if problems arise. We are susceptible to shortfalls in funding where particular activities are funded by varied and unpredictable income streams.

Our policy and target level of free reserves is to hold a minimum of 6 months and a maximum of 12 months' operating expenditure. As a result, we estimate that we currently require between approximately £450,000 and £900,000 to meet this target. Our actual free reserves at the year-end were £448,326 (2022: £429,323) an increase on last year but just short of the lower end of our target range. We will have significant challenges ahead to continue to build our reserves within our target range, especially with the current external economic challenges.

Restricted funds as at 31 March 2023 are £92,374 (2022: £79,112) and these funds will all be spent on the charitable activity to which they apply in the next financial year.

Despite the target to build unrestricted reserves, the free reserves of the organization are primarily supported by cash resources. We have demonstrated in the past our ability to be agile in how we have reacted to significant changes in our overall business model, including losing key sources of funding, and have demonstrated a tight control over our cost base. These practices will continue, along with the regular monitoring of the income pipeline to ensure that Pathway Project can continue to deliver its key services in an external environment presenting continued uncertainty. As a result of regularly monitoring both reserves levels and cash flow, the trustees are satisfied to approve these financial statements on a going concern basis.

Plans for the future

- To continue to secure funding for those posts whose contracts will be ending in 23/24, or just after.
- To continue to work on the potential plans for downstairs at the Hope Centre.
- To implement a redecoration plan for all of the rooms at our Lichfield Refuge.
- We would like to run a workshop within Lichfield and Burntwood - venue sought - for businesses i.e., hairdressers etc. to be 'victim champions' - this will be delivering domestic abuse awareness, signs to look for, challenges someone will face, why she stays or returns, what to and not to say and providing them with a point of contact for next steps.
- We are considering developing and recording an online training session that can be distributed for a cost, or for free depending on the target audience receiving it, which will cover a similar content to that discussed above, and could be show in team meetings, internal training etc. for agencies and companies. There would also be the option to have additional support for the team alongside this.
- We are just in the fact-finding stage of putting together a podcast, which we would issue on our website every quarter. We envisage this being a combination of talking to staff about their work, DA awareness, service users sharing their stories and guest speakers.
- We are currently looking for funding to allow us to implement a new system on our website which would allow us to make it more accessible for people with disabilities, or those who speak a different language. We are planning to use the same one as Staffordshire Women's Aid and that translates the website into any language, enlarges the font, reads it out loud, changes the colour of the background etc. We have been really impressed with the system and hope to be able to fundraise and have it in place by the end of the year.
- We hope to be able to expand our legal clinic delivery by engaging another set of legal aid solicitors from Tamworth, one of our key areas.
- We will be looking to take on more volunteers, particularly those who are able to attend fundraising and awareness raising sessions on the weekends and evenings, to make sure that everything is not falling onto staff.
- We want to continue to grow our small range of Pathway merchandise that we sell on our

website and at our stalls.

- We want to have a day putting posters in the local community- shops, libraries etc. to raise awareness of who we are and who we support.
- During awareness days we have been asked about 'safe spaces' to talk to someone, we would like to do an awareness around Lichfield/Tamworth boots, Superdrug, pubs and speak to the public to see what response they get if they ask for Ani or Angela. This will help us to establish if local businesses know what it means/what to do - or do they need more awareness.
- Further develop our Hearts of Hope Campaign, which involved us placing knitted hearts and words of hope around Lichfield for people to find and tag us on social media.

As always Pathway Project will continue to proactively develop models of working which best meet the needs of survivors as well as seeking opportunities for funding and collaborative working. We will also continue to work on raising awareness in both the local and wider community, to ensure that domestic and sexual violence and the work needed to be done to end it is truly understood.

Fundraising

As a charity we are working hard to broaden the base of our funding streams so that there is less reliance on any single source. We have continued to plan our applications to grant funders, both national and local. We have also taken a more pro-active approach to raising funds from the community, and particularly unrestricted funds.

We believe that our fundraising should be ethical, and in line with the Fundraising Regulator Code of Practice. Pathway Project operates a policy around the protection of vulnerable adults, and this includes ensuring vulnerable people are not negatively impacted by our fundraising. We have a Fundraising Group who plan and oversee community events. One trustee from the charity is part of this group and ensures that best practice is always followed. Our Community Engagement Worker is overseen by our Head of Operations and all fundraising has to be signed off by Senior Management.

We have a robust insurance policy which protects us for running events and we follow a risk assessment process when planning our events. The Head of Operations feeds back on the Fundraising Group in the next trustee meeting following it. For our large public event in 23/24 we have utilised the skills of an events management group who will be overseeing the work

We are happy for the public, including our supporters, to complain if they are unhappy with our fundraising. We received no complaints during 2022/23. Complaints and comments are welcome and we aim to use feedback, whether positive or negative, to help us to improve our service.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 7 August 1991 (in England and Wales) and registered as a charity on 14 November 1991.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. This was revised and accepted by the Charity Commission and Companies House in October of 2021.

All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. No expenses are reclaimed from the charity as disclosed in note 8 to the accounts.

Code of Governance

As part of our work with Pilotlight and as part of our own internal review procedures, the Trustees have considered best practice set out within the Charity Governance Code and use this to form the basis of their work.

Appointment of trustees

A process is in place following best practice guidelines, to recruit and appoint new trustees in a similar process to that used to appoint staff members. The charity plans strategically to have a board of trustees who are able to bring a range of expertise and skills to the board meetings.

Trustee induction and training

Trustees are inducted and trained through a formal training system, which includes having a Mentor who is a more experienced board member. Part of the annual Trustee Away Day is sometimes a particular briefing session to inform and build knowledge. All trustees are welcome to attend training / briefing sessions that are being held for staff.

Policy for employment of disabled persons

Pathway Project believes in providing equality of opportunity for disabled persons. All jobs are advertised with a person specification outlining the particular aptitudes and abilities required in the role. The job is given to the person who best fulfils the requirements of the role. If necessary adjustments are required then we will seek to accommodate the adaptations.

Should a member of staff become disabled during their employment we will work with them to facilitate a return to work when possible, and will seek to accommodate their needs for adaptations or assistance.

Opportunities for training and career development will be equally open to disabled persons and they will not be disadvantaged in possible promotion opportunities.

Employee information and remuneration policy for key management personnel

The CEO and Head of Operations have delegated authority for managing the day to day operation of the organisation.

Employees are the foundation of our organisation and as such we seek to keep them informed and consulted about any changes that are being made in the organisation. This is done through regular team meetings and email memos.

When changes are being considered, which will impact on the working conditions of staff, they are fully consulted and offered opportunities to have an input into decisions being made.

The remuneration of the key management personnel is set by the Board. The Chair conducts the annual appraisal of the Chief Executive Officer and the board agrees her salary. Comparable salaries for executive roles in other similar sized organisations in the health and social care sector are used as a benchmark for setting the salary.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of Pathway Project for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report including the strategic report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware
- The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The trustee's annual report has been approved by the trustees on 4 December 2023 and signed on their behalf.

[redacted]

Independent Auditors' Report to The Staffordshire Pathway Project

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Staffordshire Pathway Project (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023, which comprise the Statement of financial activities, the Balance sheet, the Statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of the charitable company's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of director's remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Report and from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement set out on page 24, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditors' Report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the senior statutory auditor ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company through discussions with Trustees and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the charity sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the charitable company, including the financial reporting legislation, Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation, anti-bribery, employment, and environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC, relevant regulators and the charitable company's legal advisors.

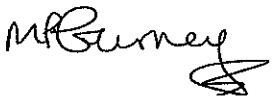
Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events

and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Auditors' Report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Mark Gurney FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of
Dains Audit Limited

Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants

Birmingham
Date: 4 December 2023

Statement of financial activities
For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Income from							
Donations	2	72,452	40,161	112,613	51,984	42,400	94,384
Charitable activities							
Domestic violence prevention	3	7,000	192,283	199,283	73	177,974	178,047
Refuge	3	447,078	63,300	510,378	398,238	69,567	467,805
Refuge based activities	3	5,007	63,910	68,917	-	42,750	42,750
Children's projects	3	-	70,615	70,615	-	32,976	32,976
Other trading activities	4	22,045	933	22,978	16,758	113	16,871
Investments	5	1,327	-	1,327	30	-	30
Total income		554,909	431,202	986,111	467,082	365,780	832,862
Expenditure on							
Raising funds	6	4,360	-	4,360	3,330	-	3,330
Charitable activities							
Domestic violence prevention	6	-	310,778	310,778	-	263,030	263,030
Refuge	6	467,566	-	467,566	418,541	-	418,541
Children's projects	6	-	54,614	54,614	-	69,034	69,034
Refuge based activities	6	-	108,338	108,338	-	106,684	106,684
Total expenditure	6	471,926	473,730	945,656	421,871	438,748	860,619
Net income / (expenditure) before transfers		82,984	(42,528)	40,656	45,211	(72,968)	(27,757)
Transfers between funds	15	(55,653)	55,653	-	(41,081)	41,081	-
Net movement in funds		27,331	13,125	40,656	4,130	(31,887)	(27,757)
Reconciliation of funds							
Fund balances brought forward		431,673	79,112	510,785	427,543	110,999	538,542
Fund balances carried forward		459,004	92,237	551,241	431,673	79,112	510,785

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. All gains and losses recognised in the year are included above.

(registered company number 02635912)

Balance sheet
As at 31 March 2023

	Notes	2023	2022
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	10	11,120	8,086
Current assets			
Debtors	11	55,887	32,431
Cash at bank and in hand		522,568	506,997
		578,455	539,427
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(38,334)	(36,728)
Net current assets		540,121	502,699
Total assets less current liabilities		551,241	510,785
Total net assets		551,241	510,785
Funds			
Restricted	15	92,237	79,112
Unrestricted	15	459,004	431,673
Total funds		551,241	510,785

Approved by the Board on 4 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

[redacted]

Statement of cash flows
As at 31 March 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period	40,656	(27,757)
Depreciation charges	1,618	2,868
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	-	3,264
Interest from investments	(1,327)	(30)
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	(23,456)	(9,339)
(Decrease) / increase in creditors	1,606	(21,876)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	18,897	(52,871)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Interest from investments	1,327	30
Payments to acquire fixed assets	(4,652)	(3,750)
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	(3,325)	(3,720)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	15,572	(56,591)
Cash and cash equivalents at the start of the year	506,997	563,586
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	522,568	506,997

The notes on pages 39 to 52 form part of these financial statements.

1 Accounting policies

1.1 Statutory information

The Staffordshire Pathway Project is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom (England and Wales). The registered office address and operational address is The Hope Centre, 3 Quonians Lane, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 7LB. The principal activity of the charitable company is given in the Trustees' report.

1.2 Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance and fully complies with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

1.3 Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.4 Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

1.5 Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1.6 Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

1.7 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

1.8 Fund Accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees, in furtherance of the general objectives of the charitable company, and which have not been designated for other purposes. Designated funds are unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for a specific, but not legally binding, purpose.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donors within the objects of the charity. Expenditure that meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

1.9 Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Governance costs are those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charitable company and include audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charitable company.

Direct charitable expenditure is allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However support and governance costs, so the cost of the overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the basis of staff time attributable to each activity.

1.11 Operating Leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

1.12 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

1.13 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Assets which cost in excess of £500 are initially capitalised at cost. Depreciation is provided at annual rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected

useful life, as follows:

Children's play equipment	20%, reducing balance basis
Fixtures and fittings	20%, reducing balance basis
Office equipment	25%, reducing balance basis

1.14 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due and prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

1.15 Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1.16 Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

1.17 Pension costs

The charity has a defined contribution pension scheme to offer all employees in order to comply with the requirements of auto-enrolment. The charity is contributing a minimum employer contribution into the scheme as set by the Pension Regulator.

2 Donations

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Alrewas All Saints Church PCC	2,000	-	2,000	-	-	-
Anonymous	5,339	37,613	42,952	3,000	39,952	42,952
Cannock Chase Churches Housing Co	20,000	-	20,000	-	-	-
Friel Homes Ltd	-	-	-	10,000	-	10,000
Gentleshaw Church PCC	1,148	-	1,148	-	-	-
HS1	-	-	-	2,250	-	2,250
Lichfield Denerry & Mother's Union	-	-	-	1,125	-	1,125
Pathway Patrons'	2,500	1,898	4,398	3,000	2,448	5,448
St Johns Community Church	1,980	-	1,980	-	-	-
Thompson Family Charitable Trust	-	-	-	5,000	-	5,000
Waitrose, Lichfield	1,000	-	1,000	-	-	-
Gift aid income tax recovered	12,231	-	12,231	1,817	-	1,817
Donations of £1,000 and under	26,254	650	26,904	25,792	-	25,792
Sub-total for donations	72,452	40,161	112,613	51,984	42,400	94,384

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022
Domestic violence prevention	£	£	£	£	£	£
Big Lottery Funding	-	-	-	-	27,500	27,500
Nationwide Community	-	-	-	-	17,972	17,972
Smallwood Trust	7,000	25,300	32,300	-	32,500	32,500
Staffordshire Women's Aid	-	60,437	60,437	-	73,324	73,324
Lichfield DC	-	19,572	19,572	-	14,628	14,628
National Lottery Community Fund	-	86,974	86,974	-	9,550	9,550
Community Foundation	-	-	-	-	2,500	2,500
Grants £1,000 and under	-	-	-	73	-	73
Sub-total for domestic violence prevention	7,000	192,283	199,283	73	177,974	178,047

Income from charitable activities (continued)

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022
Refuge	£	£	£	£	£	£
Accommodation charges	284,061	-	284,061	275,433	-	275,433
B & Q Foundation	5,000	-	5,000	-	-	-
HSBC Supporting our Community	21,687	-	21,687	-	-	-
Screwfix Foundation	5,000	-	5,000	-	-	-
Stafford & Cannock League of Hospital	1,794	-	1,794	-	-	-
Staffs County Council – MHCLG	91,736	63,300	155,036	93,705	69,567	163,272
Tamworth Borough Council	32,000	-	32,000	25,000	-	25,000
Grants £1,000 and under	5,800	-	5,800	4,100	-	4,100
Sub-total for Refuge	447,078	63,300	510,378	398,238	69,567	467,805
Refuge based activities						
Staffordshire PCC	5,007	63,910	68,917	-	42,750	42,750
Sub-total for Refuge based activities	5,007	63,910	68,917	-	42,750	42,750
Children's projects						
Children in Need	-	50,040	50,040	-	32,976	32,976
Staffs County Council – MHCLG	-	20,575	20,575	-	-	-
Sub-total for children's projects	-	70,615	70,615	-	32,976	32,976
Total income from charitable activities	459,085	390,108	849,193	398,311	323,267	721,578

4 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fundraising - Events	21,697	-	21,697	16,531	113	16,644
Fundraising – Item sales	223	-	223	-	-	-
Training and services income	75	-	75	215	-	215
Memberships	-	-	-	12	-	12
Sundry	50	933	983	-	-	-
	22,045	933	22,978	16,758	113	16,871

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Bank interest receivable	1,327	-	1,327	30	-	30

6a Analysis of expenditure 2023

	Raising funds £	Domestic violence prevention £	Refuge £	Children's projects £	Refuge based activities £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	Totals 2023 £
Staff costs	796	197,408	223,063	33,317	52,081	87,182	174	594,021
Refuge costs	-	-	160,376	-	-	-	-	160,376
Management	-	6,415	10,690	2,348	13,700	-	-	33,153
Finance	-	-	21,129	-	-	-	-	21,129
Information technology	-	4,546	4,360	692	113	-	-	9,712
Office costs	-	12,390	17,157	1,071	849	-	351	31,819
Audit fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,900	9,900
Professional fees	-	-	-	-	38,784	-	103	38,887
Other sundry expenses	2,738	24,986	12,473	5,363	1,099	-	-	46,659
	3,534	245,746	449,248	42,791	106,626	87,182	10,529	945,656
Support costs	826	57,291	17,177	10,384	1,504	(87,182)	-	-
Governance costs	-	7,741	1,141	1,439	208	-	(10,529)	-
Total 2023	4,360	310,778	467,566	54,614	108,338	-	-	945,656

Support and governance costs are allocated according to the time spent by the relevant staff on each activity.

6b Analysis of expenditure 2022

	Raising funds £	Domestic violence prevention £	Refuge £	Children's projects £	Refuge based activities £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	Totals 2022 £
Staff costs	83	174,701	193,495	52,188	46,011	55,728	807	523,013
Refuge costs	-	-	131,667	-	-	-	-	131,667
Management	-	7,661	19,662	-	18,100	-	-	45,423
Finance	-	1,930	30,842	-	-	-	-	32,772
Information technology	-	3,971	4,359	997	69	-	-	9,396
Office costs	-	12,986	14,764	1,608	874	-	330	30,562
Audit fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,900	9,900
Professional fees	-	-	-	-	39,492	-	535	40,027
Other sundry expenses	1,672	19,860	12,478	2,686	1,163	-	-	37,859
	1,755	221,109	407,267	59,513	105,709	55,728	11,572	860,619
Support costs	1,575	34,368	9,289	9,521	975	(55,728)	-	-
Governance costs	-	7,553	1,985	2,034	-	-	(11,572)	-
Total 2022	3,330	263,030	418,541	69,034	106,684	-	-	860,619

Support and governance costs are allocated according to the time spent by the relevant staff on each activity.

7 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

Net income / (expenditure) is stated after charging the following items:	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT)	8,250	8,250
Operating lease rentals	32,147	20,738
Depreciation	1,618	2,868

8 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses and the cost of key management personnel

	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Wages and salaries	536,158	494,458
Social security costs	39,118	30,964
Employer contributions to defined contribution pension schemes	18,745	12,138
	594,021	537,560

The average number of employees during the year based on a headcount basis was 32 (2022: 27).

No employee earned in excess of £60,000 per annum (2022: none).

The total employee benefits (including employer's pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £172,602 (2022: £146,717).

No trustee received any remuneration or benefits during the year ended 31 March 2023, nor in the year ended 31 March 2022.

No trustees received expenses during the year ended 31 March 2023 (2022:none).

9 Related party transactions

There are no related party transactions to disclose for 2023 (2022: none).

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Children's play equipment £	Fixtures and fittings £	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 April 2022	12,179	15,709	2,945	30,833
Additions	-	4,652	-	4,652
At 31 March 2023	12,179	20,361	2,945	35,485
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2022	11,643	8,175	2,928	22,747
Charge for the year	107	1,507	4	1,618
At 31 March 2023	11,750	9,682	2,932	24,365
Net book value				
At 31 March 2023	429	10,679	12	11,120
At 31 March 2022	536	7,534	17	8,086

11 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Accounts receivable	31,627	20,994
Rent receivable	1,653	1,340
Prepayments and accrued income	22,607	10,096
	55,887	32,431

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Operating creditors	5,199	3,548
Accruals	33,135	33,180
	38,334	36,728

13 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Within 1 year	32,147	20,738
Between 2 and 5 years	126,275	121,731
Over 5 years	81,845	72,000
	240,267	214,469

14a Analysis of net assets between funds 2023

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Fixed assets	10,691	429	11,120
Debtors	32,695	23,192	55,887
Cash	434,844	87,724	522,568
Creditors	(19,226)	(19,108)	(38,334)
Net assets as at 31 March 2023	459,004	92,237	551,241

14b Analysis of net assets between funds 2022

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Fixed assets	7,550	536	8,086
Debtors	7,276	25,154	32,431
Cash	432,538	74,459	506,997
Creditors	(15,691)	(21,037)	(36,728)
Net assets as at 31 March 2022	431,673	79,112	510,785

15a Movement in funds

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	431,673	554,909	(471,926)	(55,653)	459,004
Restricted funds					
Children's Projects: Children in Need	1,529	51,990	(35,809)	-	17,710
Children's Projects: Other	11,225	21,748	(6,982)	-	25,992
Central costs	-	13,103	(68,756)	55,653	-
Domestic violence prevention: Big Lottery Funding	5,000	-	-	-	5,000
Domestic violence prevention: Other	32,607	245,990	(255,133)	-	23,464
Refuge	19,881	73,070	(77,829)	-	15,123
Smallwood Trust	8,868	25,300	(29,221)	-	4,947
	79,112	431,202	(473,730)	55,653	92,237
Total funds	510,785	986,111	(945,656)	-	551,241

15b Movement in funds 2022

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2022 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	427,543	467,082	(421,871)	(41,081)	431,673
Restricted funds					
Children's Projects: Children in Need	665	32,976	(32,111)	-	1,529
Children's Projects: Other	14,092	25,329	(28,196)	-	11,225
Central costs	7,748	-	(43,961)	36,213	-
Domestic violence prevention: Big Lottery Funding	5,000	27,500	(32,368)	4,868	5,000
Domestic violence prevention: Other	39,617	189,385	(196,394)	-	32,607
Refuge	33,164	58,091	(71,374)	-	19,881
Smallwood Trust	10,713	32,500	(34,345)	-	8,868
	110,999	365,780	(438,748)	41,081	79,112
Total funds	538,542	832862	(860,619)	-	510,785

Transfers between funds
Transfers between unrestricted and restricted funds were to cover any deficit of funds spent on restricted projects compared with grant income received, together with the transfer of agreed management costs.

Purposes of restricted funds:

Children's projects: funding, including grants from **Children in Need**, received for the provision of support to children in the refuges who are suffering as a result of living in a home with domestic violence. The funding received is provided to work with children both in the refuge and as an outreach to service users through a children's worker, a parenting support carer and a sessional crèche worker, together with additional costs such as outings and equipment.

Central costs: funding received towards the central costs of the refuge centres including the Head of Operations.

Domestic violence prevention and advice fund: funding received for the provision of support to women who have suffered as a result of domestic violence. The funding is provided to work with women both in the refuges and as an outreach to service users through the provision of an early intervention worker, an independent domestic violence adviser and a 24-hour helpline operated by the project.

Refuge: funding received for the provision of support to service users whilst resident with the project. Such funding is provided to work with women in the refuge through a specialist support worker, a counselling service and activities to promote a healthier life style.

Smallwood Trust: funding received from the trust is used to make financial grants to vulnerable female service users, in order to help them better manage their financial circumstances, or support activities that will help improve their mental health. Service users make applications for particular activities/needs through their Support Worker, providing proof of their financial circumstances and grants are then allocated out. During the funding, grants have included purchasing carpets and white goods, paying for driving lessons and bus passes, paying for divorces and purchasing new identification documents.

16 **Pension commitments**
The charitable company operates a defined contributions pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the charitable company to the fund and amounted to £13,248 (2022 - £12,138). Contributions totalling £Nil (2022 - £Nil) were payable to the fund at the balance sheet date.

Staffordshire Pathway Project

England & Wales - Charity number 1005976

Accounts

Charity No: 1005976
Company No: 02635912

The Staffordshire Pathway Project

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended
31 March 2022

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service
The MBE for volunteer groups

LOTTERY FUNDED

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Our Vision

To build a future where adults and children affected by domestic and sexual abuse live in safety and free from fear.

Our Mission

To ensure that every adult and child who comes to us seeking support for domestic and sexual abuse is given an opportunity to engage in services that can help them to make the journey from victim to survivor.

Our Values

To put people at the heart of what we do:

At Pathway we believe in being service user led. Nobody knows what services and support are needed, more than the people who access them. We are always here with an open mind and open heart to ensure that we shape futures together.

To be the best we can be:

No two people are the same. Whether you are a service user, volunteer or member of staff, we are all different. At Pathway we don't believe in a one size fits all approach. Instead we want to celebrate our differences, value opinions and learn from each other, so that we can provide the best services, in the best way, with the best people.

To share our experiences:

Good, bad or funny. We want our service users to feel that they can share their experiences and know that they will be listened to and will contribute towards our development. We want our staff to know that in good and bad times, our door is always open and that our shared experience is what drives the strength of the team. At Pathway, we want to share our experiences and collaborate with other specialist organisations, to provide solutions and services that meet the needs of the people we are committed to.

To be open:

We understand that everyone's journey begins at a different point and at a different time. At Pathway we won't put restrictions on the number of times you can access a service, or on the amount of time that has passed before you felt that you could ask for support. We also understand that your needs may not always meet a threshold, but that doesn't make them any less important to you. That's why our helpline is open access to all, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Whether you need a friendly voice, to know more about our services or help getting support elsewhere, we will be there.

PATHWAY PROJECT 2021/22



received **840** referrals for refuge space, we were able to house **76** families, but had to turn away **764** - meaning we had to turn away **90%** of referrals last year

Answered 4142 helpline calls and taken 1707 service referrals, working with 803 adults, children and young people





439 out of the 646 adults we worked with had mental health problems, that's 68% of service users

301 felt depressed and had suffered from suicidal thoughts, an increase of **7%** on the year before, **50** had used self harm as a way of coping

60 service users had threats to kill made against them

52 service users had suffered attempted strangulation /suffocation

58 service users had been subject to harassment online or through social media

98% of adult service users needed support for emotional abuse

96% needed support for coercive control

79% asked for support around physical abuse

61% asked for support around financial abuse

46% needed support for stalking/ harrassment

100% used more than one service

we provided 6824hrs of support to adults, children and young people, including 7100 contacts face to face and by phone, text, email and video link, and 1369 liaisons with other professionals





55% of children and young people had directly witnessed domestic abuse, and **56%** had indirectly witnessed it.

47% of children and young people we worked with were on a Child Protection Plan

35% of children and young people had suffered direct emotional abuse, with **32%** dealing with direct coercive control

23% had suffered direct physical abuse

30% felt they needed support for their mental health and **25%** said that they needed coping strategies to deal with the abuse

The Staffordshire Pathway Project
Reference and administrative details
For the year ended 31 March 2022

Company number	2635912	**Country of incorporation**	United Kingdom
Charity number	1005976	**Country of registration**	England and Wales

Registered office and operational address

The Hope Centre
3 Quonian Lane
Lichfield
Staffordshire
WS13 7LB

Pathway Project is the trading name of The Staffordshire Pathway Project (formerly The Burntwood Pathway Project)

Trustees

Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

[redacted] — Chair
Vice Chair
Treasurer
Company Secretary (Resigned 26 November 2021)

(Resigned 26 November 2021)

Key Management Personnel	Hayley Baxter	Chief Executive
	Wendy Dee	Head of Operations
	Amanda Barnard	Finance Manager
	Jackie Hughes	Refuge Manager
	Lynn Laughton	Volunteer & Training Manager

Bankers

NatWest Bank plc
47 Market Street
Lichfield
WS13 6LE

Solicitors

Moseley's
Compton House
18 Bore Street
Lichfield
WS13 6LL

Auditors

Dains Audit Limited
5 Colmore Row
Birmingham
B3 2BH

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102. The trustees' annual report also contains a directors' report as required by company law.

Objectives and activities

The charity's objective is to relieve the physical, mental, emotional, social, financial and sexual distress among adults of all ages and/or their children, who have been maltreated or controlled by their partners, family members or persons with whom they were living or having a relationship with, or had made acquaintance of, specialising in gender-based abuse against women and girls.

a) Through our services we aim to provide adults and children with safety and support, whilst they make decisions about their future, and take the opportunity to change their lives in order to live a future in safety and free from fear.

b) Our main objectives for the year have been as follows:

- To continue to effectively plan and manage services so that the minimum amount of disruption was caused to service users by COVID and pandemic regulations, until such a time as those regulations were removed.
- To have an effective system for remote working and virtual support for service users that can be implemented whenever it is required.
- To provide a programme of group work and support that can be offered virtually, where face to face working is not allowed so that service users can continue to benefit from training opportunities, whenever it is required.
- To adept and respond to any additional health concerns as raised by national Government that may impact our services and their delivery.
- To be aware of the ongoing economic situation of the country and the additional strain and risks that this may put on service users, and the service as a whole.
- To safely work towards re-instating our programs of one to one and group face to face work, where appropriate.
- To collaboratively work with Staffordshire Women's Aid to deliver the county sexual violence service.
- To support providers across the county by continuing to deliver a specialist County Counselling provision with the support of our Counselling Lead.
- To continue to develop the Community Engagement Role to increase our community fundraising through post COVID events, including developing new fundraising opportunities and considering new fundraising techniques.
- To continue to focus on applications for funding opportunities both from Government/Councils and other funders.

- To improve and develop services, and to work towards renewing our Women's Aid National Quality Standards kite mark. Our accreditation was extended to five years and there was a temporary closure of the process during COVID, so we are now working to the new timescale.
- To continue providing services and to find alternative funding streams that will support us to deliver a full service.
- To develop specialist support for those people presenting with complex needs.
- To develop new services that best meet the needs of our service users and our local communities.
- To ensure that staff maintain their skills and knowledge through a programme of training and support.
- To continue to develop our programme of specialist domestic abuse services across Tamworth and Lichfield.
- To maintain the high level of service we provide through our refuge accommodation.
- To work in partnership wherever possible so that service users get the best and most holistic service possible.
- To undertake preventative work and support early intervention opportunities.
- To support children and young people to recover from abuse and to understand healthy relationships.
- To provide services offering legal advice to those unable to claim legal aid.
- To continuously work to improve our services.
- To work together with partners, increasing capacity and improving opportunities and learning.
- To continue to deliver holistic services which work on meeting needs and supporting people in full long-term recovery after domestic abuse.
- To continue developing and improving our groups and activities.
- To continue developing our volunteering opportunities.

Public Benefit

Pathway Project works to provide services which benefit adults and children who have been made vulnerable due to domestic and/or sexual abuse, either within the home, or in their own personal or family relationships. Pathway Project recognises that domestic abuse is a primarily gendered issue and is a specialist women and girls organisation. Pathway Project also recognises that abuse can affect any person and offers a small range of male victim services in line with our funding arrangements. Each service that we offer is charitable, open to adults and children suffering abuse, and is free to the user, except in the case of refuge provision where rent and service charges are made. The greater proportion of this is paid by the local authority in the form of Housing Benefit, for women whose income is below the threshold.

Our beneficiaries have a charitable need which we aim to address in the many and varied services that we offer, and we are constantly developing our services to ensure that we provide a holistic and inclusive service.

The charitable purposes that we meet are:

a) The prevention or relief of poverty

b) The advancement of health or the saving of lives

c) The relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantages

The trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of the charity each year. This report looks at what the charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period.

The trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the trustees ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remained focused on its stated purposes.

The trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

Significant activities

Refuge Accommodation

We received 840 enquiries and referrals for refuge space 2021/22; this was down 6.6% on last year but still up 112% from pre COVID. We were able to house 76 families but had to turn away, refer on or signpost 764 families, meaning we had to turn away over 90% of our referrals. Again, we saw another increase in the number of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women, looking to access refuge; this went up to 39% from 32% in 2020/21. Alongside this increase we have also seen BME women needing to stay with us for longer periods of time while we work through immigration issues, on average this is seeing women and their families staying with us for an average of 12mths before they are being given indefinite leave to remain and can begin to bid for housing.



Refuge accommodation still remains a vital and much needed service for Pathway Project. As more and more women entering emergency accommodation present with complex needs, refuges have become more than just somewhere to stay and are instead intensive services helping women and families with debt management, tenancy sustainment, life skills,

budgeting, literacy and numeracy. Supporting women through financial difficulty remains a key part of our work in refuge and our Financial Abuse Specialists work with everyone who comes into refuge to do an initial financial assessment that then means a package of support can be tailored around their individual needs. 65% of the service users in refuge had a financial need that ranged from destitution to being able to access benefits, with one of the biggest issues being housing arrears that had built up while they were with their abuser. It has been a huge help to us that our allocation of funding from the Smallwood Trust enables us to support women in financial difficulties by awarding them a grant, this service has allowed us to empower service users to pay off their arrears and begin their journey to a new home.

With the support of refuge funding we have also been able to launch a resettlement service. Whilst we have always had follow up phone calls, and referrals to outreach where domestic abuse work is still needed, this service allows us to do more to support families in the practicalities of moving into independent living, such as furnishing a new property or setting up utilities. It also provides much needed emotional support for those women who find it challenging to go from an environment with other service users and full support staff to living by themselves. This service is offered to everyone leaving our refuges.

Thanks to support from Tamworth Borough Council (TBC) and funding they have received from Government for safe accommodation we have also been able to re-instate management back into Tamworth Refuge after many years. The removal of an onsite manager occurred when we suffered a number of funding cuts that meant that a dual site refuge manager was the only way that we could support staffing across both sites. We have always felt that Tamworth needed its own manager, and we were aware that the growing complexities of running 24hr refuges took up increasing amounts of management time. We are delighted to have someone in post that is already driving the refuge forward, and thanks to some additional funding from TBC, from September onwards we will also be able to provide some additional hours for social activities with the women out of hours.

We have seen a fairly consistent level in the amount of women presenting with mental health issues, and the significant rise we saw during COVID, doesn't appear to have dropped in anyway, with similar figures around people presenting with depression and suicidal thoughts, alongside self-harm. We believe that this shows the ongoing impact of COVID, alongside the increase in anxiety and stress around the cost of living and being able to pay bills. We expect to see both the number of people presenting with financial abuse and mental health issues increasing again as we move into the winter months and costs continue to spiral.

As always Pathway Project prides itself on the children's services that it is able to offer both to Mum's learning how to parent their children independently, and to children and young people directly to enable them to be heard, understood and move forward with their lives. In 2021/22, 62% of the children entering into refuge had involvement from Children's Services and 55% of them had both endured domestic abuse directly and witnessed it happening to someone else in their family.

Since April 2021 funding for refuges has been devolved from national Government to local County Councils to commission services. Staffordshire County Council made the decision to continue with funding arrangements for 2021/22 while they information gathered for their commissioning process, and then made the decision to further extend their current funding arrangements from April 2022 to April 2023 as they still feel that they need to better understand refuge services. We would anticipate that tenders for refuge service will now be out in the new year.

As always we are extremely grateful to our refuge staff for their commitment to their work. It is a challenging job, with lone working and anti-social hours, as well as dealing with a difficult and emotional

subject matter every day and we hugely appreciate everything they do that allows us to continue delivering services.

24 Hour Helpline

Pathway Project's 24hr helpline continues to be our first point of contact for service users and agencies, providing a combination of advice, guidance, support and urgent help in a crisis. It is also our central point of contact for all of our referrals.

After the impact of the first year of COVID and lockdown we have seen a slight drop in our helpline calls from 4454 (2020/21) contacts through all of our available mediums (phone, email, live chat, messenger) to 4142 calls in 2021/22. Whilst this is a decline of 7% on the previous year, it is still an increase of 18% on the year before COVID began, showing that there is still an ongoing effect from the pandemic, and we have yet to see what the true effect of the cost of living crisis will be on victims. Due to the effectiveness of opening up different channels of communication with messenger and live chat through COVID, we have made the decision to maintain these moving forward, allowing people as many options as possible to reach out for support.

Through the year we have taken 1707 referrals for adults and children's services, up 3% on last year, showing that there is still increasing demand for services. Most people referring themselves in took up more than one service provision, showing the importance of holistic, wrap around support. Our helpline continues to not just allocate the caller to the service they need, but also offers emotional support, advice and guidance, refers and signposts them on to other services, and helps source other accommodation when our refuge facilities are full. Our team of dedicated Helpline Coordinators, volunteers and support workers who help to cover out of hours, are absolutely crucial to the work we do, enabling us to not just support those who need it but to manage our referrals and ensure people can access the correct services.

The Hope Centre

Our first year in the new Hope Centre has shown that we have made the right choice to keep a central building for staff and service users, as everywhere is now in full use. The office area very much remains a safe space for staff to not only do their work, but to also access peer support, as well as allowing volunteers to feel that they are very much part of the team. We have allocated dedicated space to one to ones, which is also used as our main counselling spaces, and we have extended that to cover two rooms in order to meet demand. We also now have a full programme of group work that runs both throughout the day and the evening covering everything from self-help, to anxiety workshops to domestic abuse menopause cafes. We have also started our male group out of hours, and also had our first male counsellor start with us.

We have lots of great plans for service delivery with the new building, and it has really helped us to drive our counselling and group work. We are also working closely with the landlord to examine any opportunities that may present themselves through space in the building that is still vacant and will be up for rent within the next 12 months.

Outreach

Pathway Project has continued to work on the service provision offered from our outreach team. Our Risk Reduction Worker is still the base of our team, taking referrals from anyone who feels they need support around domestic abuse. We were lucky enough to be able to retain funding for our Mental Health

and Domestic Abuse Worker (Wellbeing Worker) in 2021/22 and we are still continuing to look for new sources of funding to ensure that the post continues from October this year. It is a much utilised service that offers support to an increasingly vulnerable section of our service users, and we have seen a significant improvement in the attendance of women to one to ones and group work, who have previously been classed as difficult to engage with by agencies. We also retained our Young Women and Girls Worker and provided a further 7.5hrs of funding to meet demand.

This year we were also incredibly grateful to have been awarded five years of funding from the National Lottery Reaching Communities Community Fund. This funding allowed us to retain our Risk Reduction Worker, and develop new posts around risk assessment, family work and housing, as well as funding other key roles. We felt extremely proud to receive such positive feedback about our previous Women and Girls Funding and achievements, as well as having support from such a large funder in our vision for Pathway Project moving forwards.

We were also fortunate to receive funding from Lichfield District Council for a new Economic Abuse Worker. This post looks at the larger picture around financial/economic abuse including issues such as stopping people accessing education, training or work, preventing them from learning skills (e.g. language) that would support their economic achievements and the control of things that money can buy such as clothes, transport or food. We are really excited to have this post, especially at a time when we know economic abuse is likely to be increasing, and finances as a whole are going to be challenging.

While we will still be looking for ways to build the levels of support we can offer around domestic abuse and housing, this year did see the final year of funding from Nationwide for the specialist post. Sadly, Nationwide are not supporting any projects in Staffordshire this year, but will continue to focus on this as a key area of work, especially with the concerns around costs of housing in the current economic climate.

During 2022/23 we will be looking to continue developing our specialist workers, and the new opportunities we have with our lottery funding. We will be using the data we have available to ensure that we are focusing on the key areas that best meet the needs of our service users, with key issues appearing to be supporting people with disabilities.

Again, Pathway Project is hugely appreciative of all the hard work and commitment that staff bring to our organisation, without them we would not be able to make such a huge difference to so many people's lives and we remain grateful for that passion and drive.

Recently, we had this wonderful feedback:

"I felt like I was losing my mind when I first contacted Pathway and you've really helped validate that I wasn't crazy and that I can have a happy future.

I also feel like everything that has happened over the last few weeks and this last weekend would have been completely different had I not reached out. I know for a fact I wouldn't have been able to handle it in the way I have because I was struggling so bad beforehand and I know I definitely wouldn't have had the courage to contact the police. I feel supported and I know I'm not alone.

I feel so emotional writing this because in a time I should feel so sad, all I feel is hope and gratitude.

I really do appreciate you. My life could have been so different now had I not had support and I will forever be grateful for that."

Sexual Violence Services

We have continued to deliver Survive (Sexual Violence Services) in conjunction with Staffordshire Women's Aid, and have been delighted with the positive response from service users and commissioners. We have recently received the very positive news that this service will be commissioned for a further year from October 2022 and will retain the same hours and delivery for the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor and the Children's Independent Sexual Violence Advisor. This year did see the end of the pilot for the Family and Significant Others Practitioner, further funding was given for a more reduced service to match need, and this is now being delivered in house by Staffordshire Women's Aid, and we are able to access this through the Survive helpline. Again, we thank Staffordshire Women's Aid for allowing us to be a key delivery partner for such an important service.

Children's Services

We have continued to deliver our Children's Services, both in refuge and the community. We have been really pleased to be welcomed back into schools after the difficulties of the pandemic, and have also been able to utilise space at the Hope Centre to deliver one to ones. Our numbers have remained fairly similar to last year, with only a 6% increase, meaning that we have still not returned to pre COVID levels. We are aware that it is very challenging times for agencies working with children, with ongoing issues around recruitment for front line staff alongside and rising concerns for mental health. As an organisation we anticipate that we will continue to see worries around the engagement of specialist services for young people for the immediate future.



As well as working directly with children and young people we also continue to deliver preventative work to other voluntary agencies, statutory agencies and schools, though their carousel and drop down days. This service continues to be well utilised by the local community and agencies who understand the specialist nature of the work.

This year we have also been very lucky to be able to apply for and receive an additional years funding from Children In Need, on top of our normal grant that would have ended in November. This was offered out to organisations with a positive track record to allow Children In Need to temporarily close down and reformat their grant making process for most of this year.

As always, Pathway Project is hugely appreciative of the Children's Team and the hard work it does in supporting some of our most vulnerable service users.

Community Engagement Worker

We first began our community engagement role during COVID, as a new way to drive fundraising and to continue to drive awareness raising for domestic abuse and the organisation as a whole. We continued this role through our fundraising and are pleased to say that we have now guaranteed its ongoing continuation through our new lottery funding.

This year we did make the decision to split the role down further, meaning we now have two members of staff, one focusing on overseeing and driving our social media and the website and the other focusing on community engagement and fundraising. This has enabled both members of staff to really focus on their own pieces of work and we are looking forward to seeing what we can achieve with our community focused work over the next year.

County Counselling Service

Pathway Project has always been passionate about counselling and the life changing work it can do to support people dealing with trauma and we were delighted to be able to offer a County Counselling Service throughout COVID and 2021/22, thanks to funding from the Ministry of Justic (MoJ) through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. This service has continued to work with all the domestic and sexual abuse service providers across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent, ensuring access to counselling for all service users who need it.

As with during COVID, this support is offered in whatever way is best suited to the service user, whether that is face to face or through Zoom or WhatsApp and all service users are assessed by our Counselling Lead before moving fully into the counselling programme. Being able to take on a second counsellor has been a huge support to the service, helping us to see more service users and better manage demand. As well as taking on a second paid counsellor we have also continued to develop our volunteer counsellors, who offer additional support to the service. During 2021/22 we supported a total of 212 service users, and increase of 26% on the year before. We also saw an increase in referrals from Mental Health and started taking referrals from Savannah (Stoke in Trent) during this period.

We are extremely pleased to say that we have also been successful in our application to the MoJ for further continuation money for the service. Again, this is being issued through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and will continue until the end of 2023/24.

We had this lovely feedback from one of our service users:

"I am writing to you as M's line manager to advise what a professional and excellent counsellor she is.
I have had 9 sessions with M and hope to have my final appointment soon. She has helped me turn my life around by helping me to see how I need to consider myself more and gave me some strategies for keeping myself safe. In June I was suicidal I am far from this now and am much more self-aware and can appreciate what is going on around me. I can now assert myself without overwhelming guilt I no longer have to prove my decisions or justify them and I am much more me centred.
I am 65yrs old and cannot wait to live my next chapter and thanks to M I know I can"

As well as service users we have also received positive feedback from Universities about the counselling placement opportunities we have been able to offer students, especially around the experience they have been able to develop and the supervision that they have been able to receive. This year we have also extended the number of educational establishments that we take placements from, which is working well.

Volunteering and Peer Mentoring

2021/22 has been very much about re-engaging with our volunteers after the difficulties of COVID, which saw us having to stop volunteering during the Governments work from home directive and then reduce our volunteers to minimum levels in order to ensure social distancing when we came back into the office. We made sure to still communicate with volunteers during this difficult time, with the Volunteer and Training Manager ensuring that there were regular phone and zoom catch ups. Not only did this allow us to retain our volunteers, but also meant we were able to ensure that they were not struggling with isolation and managing their self-care throughout this period.

We currently have 15 volunteers supporting us, with plans for a further recruitment day particularly looking for volunteers to help support with groups and fundraising. We have had an additional three volunteers taken on as paid staff for Pathway Project, and a further 3 volunteers transition into paid employment elsewhere, which has been amazing for us to see. We also have a volunteer at Tamworth Refuge who will be joining us as a paid worker in November, to help support our new out of hours offering for the refuge.

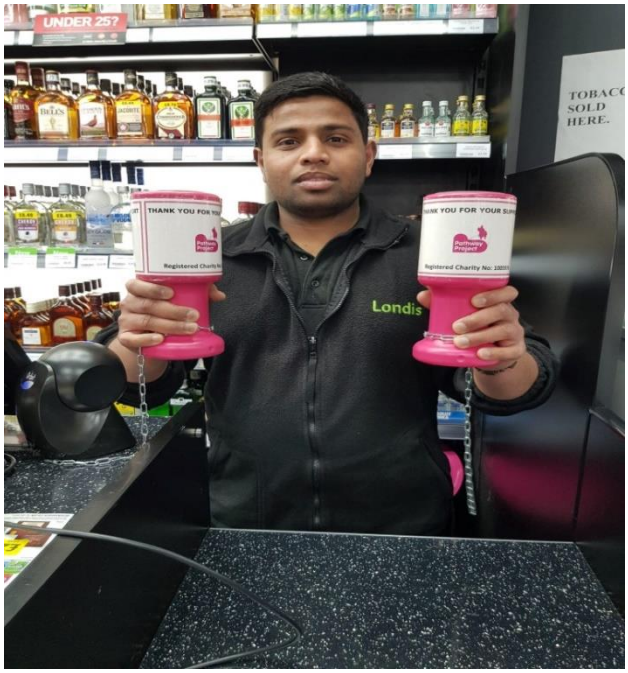
This year has seen us take on a second male volunteer in our counselling programme. Feedback with regards to this has been very positive with female service users happy to work with him. On the back of this success he is now going to be supporting us to deliver our new male victim group from September, and also support our Counselling Lead to deliver our mens anxiety group. Our other male volunteer continues to offer peer support to service users, as well as general support to the team.

In September we will also be welcoming back our first placement student since pre-COVID, they will be based at Lichfield Refuge for 12 months while they complete their social sciences course.

As normal our Volunteer and Training Manager has also supported our Counselling Lead in supervising and retaining all of our volunteer counsellors.

As an organisation we want to thank all of the volunteers for not just supporting us in all the work we do but also for their patience and kindness with us while we navigated the pandemic. We would also like to thank all the family members, friends and people in the community who have volunteered to help us with our fundraising and never turn us away when we ask!





Groups

This year has seen a real focus on the continued development of our group work, to ensure we are offering as much support as we can in the key areas that affect service users the most. This year our group work has consisted of:

Reaching Out

A 6-week group aimed at raising awareness of domestic abuse, the affect it can have on individuals and other people in their lives. We also look at the blame culture, the legal implications of some actions and the support available. Some of the feedback we have had includes:

"The film used is powerful. Promotes, poignant discussion"
"Well organised, everyone was heard"
"Helped me to understand what abuse has done to me. I feel less alone and less at fault"
"Gained more understanding of domestic abuse through the group sharing experiences"

Journey to Self-Discovery

A 6-week programme run by our Counselling Lead looking at how to move on from domestic abuse, we also teach service users coping methods that use therapeutic techniques including self-care and mindfulness. This group tends to follow on from Reaching Out, to encourage service user to continue moving forward with their lives. This is a very popular group and some of the feedback has included:

"Learning about self-compassion, listening to my inner voice and recognising how to look after myself, and be the best version of me"
"Enjoyed all of it! Talked a lot, may have held up the course a little because of it! Took a lot out of this course

Anxiety Programme



This is 3 weekly sessions, currently for women, and from September we will be providing this to men also. This group looks into the science behind anxiety, helping to understand how it affects the brain, and how we can manage it with therapies and medical intervention. This group was developed to react to the increasing number of people who were coming to Pathway Project with not just anxiety caused by domestic abuse, in increased generalized anxiety in reaction to COVID and cost of living pressures.

Menopause Café

This group looks at women's health and well-being issues, also including guest speakers and peer support in the sessions. This is a safe environment for women who have suffered domestic abuse and our now dealing with the menopause to share their worries, and support each other with things that are related to them as individuals.

Male Support

These are monthly sessions aimed at giving men a voice in their own right. Overseen by our Volunteer and Training Manager, but with our male volunteer who has researched issues around support for males, and our male counsellor, running the sessions. From September the sessions will be done in the centre.

Wellbeing sessions

6 Sessions run by our wellbeing worker, looking at supporting women experiencing low level mental health issues and opening the discussion up around domestic abuse. Using talking, peer support and creative tasks to encourage shared experiences and support in a safe and confidential place.

Crafternoon

Run monthly by our Young Women and Girls worker, this group is one we have a lot of interest in, with around 12 women attending each session. The woman who attend have the chance to bring out their creative skills with a full range of crafts including decorating tote bags, building bird tables and designing plant pots. The focus of this group is around building social skills and friends, as well as increasing confidence in a safe environment. One service user told us:

"I walked through Lichfield on my own after the group, I didn't let my anxiety beat me, I did it, that's a big deal for me and it means I can do it again. I feel like I am bursting with confidence, thank you so much for letting me join the group"

Family Support

This is facilitated by our family support worker. This group aims to support family members of those who are experiencing domestic abuse, giving them a place to air their worries and have an understanding of how they can best support their family and friends, but also recognising they need to look after

themselves as well.

Chat and Chill

This group runs twice a month, in daytime and evening sessions. This was set up as we find that women who have met in the different groups, do form friendships and feel safe to talk to each other without judgement, and often asked us if they could meet again in other groups. It's a relaxed, friendly group which changes as people join and leave it, but it's never dull!

One off group sessions

These vary over the months, as we utilise a lot of funded sessions, or things that have been gifted to us. In the next few months we have cinema trips, belly dancing, cyber safety/scams sessions, and art sessions all coming up.

Legal Clinics

After closing our legal clinics during 20/21 due to COVID, the furloughing of a lot of local law firms and the backlog across courts, we are pleased to say that clinics were re-instated during 2021/22.

Constitution and Memorandum of Articles

This year we updated our Constitution and Memorandum of Articles to better reflect the organisation as it is now, update the language used and ensure we had clear direction around the Board with regards to the number of trustees we should hold and our AGM process. This was agreed by both Companies House and the Charity Commission and formally changed in October 2021.

The strategy that drives the activities…….

As always, the main focus for Pathway Project remains the needs of our service user. As an organisation we have always strongly believed that the best people to tell us what they need to make that journey from victim to survivor, are our service user themselves. This means that as well as using county and local authority strategies, national data and information from the police to shape our delivery, Pathway Project also spends a lot of time identifying specific needs within our local community, through the people we work with. We do this through a combination of analysing the data we are able to collect through our case and data management system, Oasis, key trends spotted by staff, service user's direct request/comments and our own consultations that we run through our service user group consultations and our Survivor to Thrivor group.

As always Pathway Project is also very proud to be affiliated with National Women's Aid who continues to provide support in a number of different ways, including the national framework for domestic and sexual abuse services. Accreditation for the standards was extended to five years, up to 2021, and with the standards put on hold by Women's Aid during COVID; we are currently just working through our evidence for our re-accreditation, and hope to have this in place by the end of 2022.

Pathway Project continues to work closely with our partner domestic abuse agencies across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. We have supported New Era, Glow and Staffordshire Women's Aid with our County Counselling services and we are subcontracting with Staffordshire Women's Aid to help deliver Survive,

the County sexual violence service. This year we have also begun supporting Savannah, a sexual violence service in Stoke on Trent, with any referrals that are coming to them for domestic abuse counselling. As always, Pathway Project continues to work closely with a number of agencies both statutory and voluntary, including Tamworth Borough and Lichfield District Councils, Housing and Community Safety Partnerships, Children's Services, Citizens Advice Bureau and Bromford Housing.

We are also continuing with our focus on specialist workers, supported by our Risk Reduction Worker. We have funding for our Mental Health and Domestic Abuse Specialist through Lichfield District Council until October 2022 and we are currently working on finding further funding to keep that post going due to the level of demand. While the main funding for our Domestic Abuse and Housing Specialist ended, we are now looking at other funding opportunities to reinstate this post to full time in the future. Our Resettlement Worker and Financial Abuse Worker are both in place at refuge, and we believe that this enhances the holistic package of support we can provide women to support them on their journey forward. As we mentioned in last year's report, this year we wanted to focus on funding an Economic Abuse Specialist, which we have been successful in doing, and we are continuing to build evidence for a Substance Misuse Worker. In the upcoming year we will also be looking at putting together a business plan that will allow us to consider ways of generating sustainable income as well as volunteer and training opportunities for our service users and the local community.

Our online data and case management system, Oasis, remains a fantastic tool in allowing us to respond to funding applications and to meaningfully contribute to the local and national agenda on domestic and sexual abuse trends and issues. Not only does the system streamline the data into easy searches it also puts it into easy to read report formats, reducing what has previously been time consuming work. We are also happy to be able to share anonymous data with Women's Aid to allow them to help build a national picture of what survivors want and need.



As an organisation we are really excited to be building our community fundraising again, after having to cancel all our planned events with COVID. 2021/22 saw us attend the few community events that ran, although with still so much uncertainty over COVID, this was less than we had anticipated, however we already have a full schedule of our own, and others, events for 2022/23, including our pop up shop, pride events and awareness sessions. We have continued to use social media and online resources to drive our fundraising, including collaborations with a jeweler, participation in the Big Give an online draw for a John Lewis voucher alongside set fundraisers and birthday giving. We are continuing to look at how new technologies and online options can drive our fundraising, we have installed Enthuse on our website to allow people to directly donate straight to us online, and this also gives people the option to set up monthly giving if they want to. Enthuse can also be used by people to set up their own fundraising pages for us, meaning we can cut the costs of additional payments to Just Giving. We have also noticed that people have been asking us about making cash free donations when we have been out awareness raising, so we are now looking at different portable systems that may make this possible.

Achievements and Performance

While 2020/21 was about surviving COVID, 2021/22 has been about navigating the aftermath of the pandemic, alongside challenging world issues, including rising costs, the war in Ukraine and the political landscape and this will be continuing into 2022/23, with the added pressures of cost of living increases. For many charities this whole period of time has been about retaining services, managing finances and supporting staff and service users, and this has been no different for Pathway Project. At the heart of everything has been ensuring that we continue to deliver much needed services to those people who are most vulnerable and in need. This year Pathway Project has seen:

- Expansion of our group work to include male victims, a menopause café, family and significant others work, as well as craft and informal social sessions.
- Development of our Economic Abuse Specialist role.
- Recruitment of the resettlement worker role in refuge.
- The National Lottery awarding us with five years of funding through their Reaching Communities programme.
- Advent for Change and their team choosing us to be one of their charities for the fourth year running, this year will be on both the premium Advent Calendar and the Advent Candle again.
- Funding secured to put management support back into Tamworth Refuge, and into providing additional out of hours sessions there for the women and children.
- The continuation and development of our Community Engagement Worker role and our Social Media role
- Our refuges secure a further year of funding through Staffs County Council.
- Our County Counselling Service having their contract extended for a further two years.
- An additional one year's funding from Children in Need.
- Staffordshire Women's Aid continuing to sub contract us to support delivery of the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent sexual violence Survive Service.
- Smallwood Trust awarding us additional capital to disperse out to women in need.
- Our first successful Big Give online match funding campaign



- Our first post COVID networking with Love Biz Women's Networking.
- Successful Christmas and Easter campaigns.
- Our continuing contribution to the local community and county domestic abuse strategies.

One of the greatest assets that Pathway Project has is our wonderful team. The work that we do as an organisation is demanding in many ways, but our staff never falter in making sure that they do their best for the service users who need us and Pathway Project would like to say a huge thank you to every one of our staff for the commitment and love that they have shown our organisation, no matter what the challenges.

Beneficiaries of our services

The complex needs of our beneficiaries have been recognised in our strategy focusing on specialist support, as very rarely do service users present with domestic/sexual abuse, and no other additional support needs. We feel that the more support that can be offered from one central point, with one trusted worker in a place that enables someone to feel safe, the better engagement we will receive and the greater opportunity for success for our service users. Pathway Project continues to take on feedback, both negative and positive, and use this to drive forward our services and make effective changes

Financial Review

Fundraising remains a key priority for Pathway Project; this is through all mediums including community fundraising, grants, trust and large funding streams. This is also across all areas including restricted funding for set projects or costs, unrestricted funding to help cover general costs, and capital funding to fund projects such as new phone and IT systems.

As always, the successful delivery of a professional organisation means that it is necessary to have management oversight and buildings to operate from, including their operating costs, and all of these contribute to the front-line services at the heart of Pathway Project. The importance of having a building has been re-enforced this year with the number of people coming in to receive counselling and attend group work. Funding both of these areas remains a constant struggle for charities, and will become more so with the increases in utility costs, where there is a continued focus by funders on direct delivery, and not their associated costs. Despite this Pathway Project continues to work hard to source any funding that may support this.

Nationwide, with the continued funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities being dispersed to County Councils (DLUHC), our refuges remain safe until April 2023. At the moment we have no indication from Staffordshire County Council with regards to when the commissioning process for refuge is likely to be going out for procurement, although we do know that there is funding available to continue commissioning current services past April 2023, if the commissioning process is not ready.

Our Head of Operations is now working an additional day a week, this allows for her to work closely with both the Social Media and Community Engagement Workers, and help to drive our general fundraising. It is also allowing her additional time to start working on some of the smaller bids to support the CEO, and allow her to concentrate on larger funding opportunities. Both roles are also supporting the Community Engagement Worker to build her skill set so that she can also support funding applications.

In February 2022, we also made the decision to award a 5% pay increase to all of our staff, to recognise both their hard work during COVID and the ongoing issues around the cost of living. This was put in place in April 2022.

During this year our total income decreased to £832,862 (2021: £903,409). We expected this decline due to a large proportion of additional funding that we accessed through COVID no longer being available and also due to the fact that our National Lottery Empowering Women and Girls Funding, which funded a number of core posts, came to a close in July 2021, alongside our Nationwide funding. Expenditure has been tightly managed but still increased to £860,619 (2021: £780,287). Again, this was expected as costs that had dramatically reduced during lockdown such as rent, utilities and staff expenses, were re-instated during this period, and we had some new larger services in place, such as the county counselling service. We were also expecting to retain a deficit for 2021/22, due to the loss of the large National Lottery funding, for job roles within services that couldn't be closed, such as the helpline and Volunteer and Training Manager, while we sourced other funding.

Thank you to the Patrons and Friends of Pathway Project for their on-going commitment. It is a huge encouragement to us that people remain so passionate about the work we do.

Principal funding sources

Our refuge 'bricks and mortar' costs are funded through the housing benefit which is paid to us on behalf of residents, we review this yearly with our District and Borough Councils and we are thankful the campaigning that has secured government support for retaining housing benefit payments for refuges, as this remains our only consistent source of funding. The money from Staffordshire County Council, through DLUHC has been instrumental in funding the staffing of our refuges, which are critical to successful refuge provision. We are also very grateful to Staffordshire County Council for recognising increases in costs to organisations and increasing the refuge funding to help accommodate this.

The National Lottery Empowering Women and Girls Initiative completed its final year in July 2021, after five years of funding. This project was a huge support for our organisation, allowing us to secure funding for staple services within our organisation, as well as allowing us to trial new services. After a long application process we are delighted to say that we were awarded National Lottery Reaching Communities funding in April 2022, starting in May 2022. Again this has allowed us to give our staff job security for five years as well as securing vital services, and allowing us to continue some of our new work.

The Ministry of Justice, through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, has supported our County Counselling project. Due to us providing fully qualified and registered counsellors, the support costs for this are high, but the number of people seen and the current outcomes are excellent.

The Smallwood Trust has supported us to be able to offer our first grant making service to any women working us who are struggling with financial hardship. The fund provides a small amount to help cover the work that needs to be done by our Finance Manager to administer the payments, and the remainder of the money is paid out to service users to support them with things such as housing arrears, new furniture etc. We were also fortunate to receive some core cost funding from the Smallwood Trust during COVID.

Children in Need have also been a key funder in supporting the work that we do with children and young people, and have continued their funding into next year.

We are very grateful to our District and Borough Councils for their support around our Mental Health and Domestic Abuse Specialist, our Economic Abuse Worker and our new Refuge Manager at Tamworth.

We also have a number of other grants and gifts from trust funds, foundations and through individuals in our Patron's scheme.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Board of Trustees is very aware of on-going risks and regularly reviews the work done to mitigate these. We have both a business plan and an income generation plan that we work towards and review. We have a Risk Management Policy and regularly review the principal risks identified, which are financial, operational and reputational.

Financial – Income generation still remains a key focus and priority for Pathway Project, both around securing contributions to core costs, raising funds for capital projects and for ensuring the continuity of current services and the development of new ones. Work will constantly be done on fundraising throughout the year, our main current priority is funding for the continuation of our Mental Health and DA Specialist. Our biggest uncertainties at the moment remain the potential commissioning, and timescales for this, for refuge provision alongside the dramatic increases in the cost of living and how this will impact on staff retention and recruitment, and the general costs of the organisation. We are currently working on a benchmarking exercise in relation to staff salaries.

Operational – Our biggest operational risk remains the Hope Centre, this is in terms of the potential impact of increasing costs and how we manage the building operationally, to help manage those, as it is key to our delivery package. We continue to work with people with complex needs, chaotic lives, and who are often at serious risk. Having done all that we can to minimise the risks, we also have insurance against many possible risks and losses.

Reputational – Once again the main issue is that we work with vulnerable service users with complex needs and we need to prioritise safeguarding all of the people who we work with. Where we need to ensure our staff's safety, they work jointly in pairs or do joint visits with other agencies. We only visit service users having undertaken a thorough risk assessment. All of our working practices are aimed at supporting both staff and service users. We attend regular professionals meetings in order to maintain awareness of risk to or from vulnerable service users, and we deal promptly with any issues which arise. We monitor out media presence so that we can take action wherever appropriate. We also remain aware of the professional and reputational challenges that can come into place with regards to the commissioning process that is likely to be taking place within the next 18 months.

Reserves Policy and Going Concern

The trustees have examined the charity's requirements in light of the main risks of the organisation and aim to build up our reserves to give us some financial stability if problems arise. We are susceptible to shortfalls in funding where particular activities are funded by varied and unpredictable income streams. Our policy and target level of free reserves is to hold a minimum of 12 months' operating expenditure. As a result, we estimate that we currently require approximately £700,000 to meet this target. Our actual free reserves at the year-end were £431,637 (2021: £420,867) an increase on last year, although we will have a significant challenge ahead to continue to build our reserves until we meet this target level, especially with current economic challenges.

Restricted funds as at 31 March 2022 are £79,112 (2021: £110,999) and these funds will all be spent on the charitable activity to which they apply in the next financial year.

Despite the target to build unrestricted reserves, the free reserves of the organization are primarily supported by cash resources. We have demonstrated in the past our ability to be agile in how we have reacted to significant changes in our overall business model, including losing key sources of funding, and have demonstrated a tight control over our cost base. These practices will continue, along with the regular monitoring of the income pipeline to ensure that Pathway Project can continue to deliver its key services in an external environment presenting continued uncertainty. As a result of regularly monitoring both reserves levels and cash flow, the trustees are satisfied to approve these financial statements on a going concern basis.

Plans for the future

- To secure funding for our Mental Health and DA Specialist and continue to develop our programme of specialist roles, based on the needs of our service users.
- To continue to develop our group programme offering to ensure a holistic programme of additional education and support, alongside one to one work.
- To continue to enhance our provision for service users at the Hope Centre.
- To continue to grow our community fundraising opportunities.
- To put together a business plan for a project based on sustainable income, volunteering and training for service users and the local community.
- To implement a programme of redecoration for Tamworth, as well as upgrading some older facilities such as the security camera system, and changing the lights to LED.
- To prepare for commissioning opportunities that will be coming out in the upcoming 18 months.

As always Pathway Project will continue to proactively develop models of working which best meet the needs of survivors as well as seeking opportunities for funding and collaborative working. We will also continue to work on raising awareness in both the local and wider community, to ensure that domestic and sexual violence and the work needed to be done to end it is truly understood.

Fundraising

As a charity we are working hard to broaden the base of our funding streams so that there is less reliance on any single source. We have continued to plan our applications to grant funders, both national and local. We have also taken a more pro-active approach to raising funds from the community, and particularly unrestricted funds.

We believe that our fundraising should be ethical, and in line with the Fundraising Regulator Code of Practice. Pathway Project operates a policy around the protection of vulnerable adults, and this includes ensuring vulnerable people are not negatively impacted by our fundraising. We have a Fundraising Group who plan and oversee community events. One trustee from the charity is part of this group and ensures

that best practice is always followed. Our Community Engagement Worker is overseen by our Head of Operations and all fundraising has to be signed off by Senior Management.

We have a robust insurance policy which protects us for running events and we follow a risk assessment process when planning our events. The Head of Operations feeds back on the Fundraising Group in the next trustee meeting following it.

We are happy for the public, including our supporters, to complain if they are unhappy with our fundraising. We received no complaints during 2021/22. Complaints and comments are welcome and we aim to use feedback, whether positive or negative, to help us to improve our service.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 7 August 1991 (in England and Wales) and registered as a charity on 14 November 1991.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. This was revised and accepted by the Charity Commission and Companies House in October of 2021.

All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. No expenses are reclaimed from the charity as disclosed in note 8 to the accounts.

Code of Governance

As part of our work with Pilotlight and as part of our own internal review procedures, the Trustees have considered best practice set out within the Charity Governance Code and use this to form the basis of their work.

Appointment of trustees

A process is in place following best practice guidelines, to recruit and appoint new trustees in a similar process to that used to appoint staff members. The charity plans strategically to have a board of trustees who are able to bring a range of expertise and skills to the board meetings.

Trustee induction and training

Trustees are inducted and trained through a formal training system, which includes having a Mentor who is a more experienced board member. Part of the annual Trustee Away Day is sometimes a particular briefing session to inform and build knowledge. All trustees are welcome to attend training / briefing sessions that are being held for staff.

Policy for employment of disabled persons

Pathway Project believes in providing equality of opportunity for disabled persons. All jobs are advertised with a person specification outlining the particular aptitudes and abilities required in the role. The job is given to the person who best fulfils the requirements of the role. If necessary adjustments are required then we will seek to accommodate the adaptations.

Should a member of staff become disabled during their employment we will work with them to facilitate a return to work when possible, and will seek to accommodate their needs for adaptations or assistance.

Opportunities for training and career development will be equally open to disabled persons and they will not be disadvantaged in possible promotion opportunities.

Employee information and remuneration policy for key management personnel

The CEO and Head of Operations have delegated authority for managing the day to day operation of the organisation.

Employees are the foundation of our organisation and as such we seek to keep them informed and consulted about any changes that are being made in the organisation. This is done through regular team meetings and email memos.

When changes are being considered, which will impact on the working conditions of staff, they are fully consulted and offered opportunities to have an input into decisions being made.

The remuneration of the key management personnel is set by the Board. The Chair conducts the annual appraisal of the Chief Executive Officer and the board agrees her salary. Comparable salaries for executive roles in other similar sized organisations in the health and social care sector are used as a benchmark for setting the salary.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of Pathway Project for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report including the strategic report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent

- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements

- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware

- The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The trustee's annual report has been approved by the trustees on 24 November 2022 and signed on their behalf.



Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Staffordshire Pathway Project (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2022, which comprise the Statement of financial activities, the Balance sheet, the Statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of the charitable company's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our Auditors' Report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies

or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of director's remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' Report and from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement set out on page 24, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditors' Report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the senior statutory auditor ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charitable company through discussions with Trustees and other management, and from our commercial knowledge and experience of the charity sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the charitable company, including the financial reporting legislation, Companies Act 2006, taxation legislation, anti-bribery, employment, and environmental and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence; and
- identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC, relevant regulators and the charitable company's legal advisors.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Auditors' Report.

Other matters

The financial statements of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2021 were audited by Haines Watts who expressed an unmodified opinion on these financial statements on 26 November 2021.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Mark Gurney FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of
Dains Audit Limited

Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants

Birmingham
24 November 2022

The Staffordshire Pathway Project
Statement of financial activities
For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £
Income from							
Donations	2	51,984	42,400	94,384	59,995	3,666	63,661
Charitable activities							
Domestic violence prevention	3	73	177,974	178,047	18,121	264,034	282,155
Refuge	3	398,238	69,567	467,805	374,593	51,649	426,242
Refuge based activities	3	-	42,750	42,750	-	47,896	47,896
Children's projects	3	-	32,976	32,976	2,508	53,256	55,764
Other trading activities	4	16,758	113	16,871	26,818	750	27,568
Investments	5	30	-	30	123	-	123
Total income		467,082	365,780	832,862	482,158	421,251	903,409
Expenditure on							
Raising funds	6	3,330	-	3,330	2,303	-	2,303
Charitable activities							
Domestic violence prevention	6	-	263,030	263,030	-	255,472	255,472
Refuge	6	418,541	-	418,541	402,780	-	402,780
Children's projects	6	-	69,034	69,034	-	64,904	64,904
Refuge based activities	6	-	106,684	106,684	-	54,828	54,828
Total expenditure	6	421,871	438,748	860,619	405,083	375,204	780,287
Net income / (expenditure) before transfers		45,211	(72,968)	(27,757)	77,075	46,047	123,122
Transfers between funds	15	(41,081)	41,081	-	(9,446)	9,446	-
Net movement in funds		4,130	(31,887)	(27,757)	67,629	55,493	123,122
Reconciliation of funds							
Fund balances brought forward		427,543	110,999	538,542	359,914	55,506	415,420
Fund balances carried forward		431,673	79,112	510,785	427,543	110,999	538,542

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. All gains and losses recognised in the year are included above.

The Staffordshire Pathway Project
(registered company number 02635912)

Balance sheet
As at 31 March 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	10	8,086	10,468
Current assets			
Debtors	11	32,431	23,092
Cash at bank and in hand		506,997	563,586
		539,427	586,678
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(36,728)	(58,604)
Net current assets		502,699	528,074
Total assets less current liabilities		510,785	538,542
Total net assets		510,785	538,542
Funds			
Restricted	15	79,112	110,999
Unrestricted	15	431,673	427,543
Total funds		510,785	538,542

Approved by the Board on 24 November 2022 and signed on its behalf by:

[redacted]

The Staffordshire Pathway Project
Statement of cash flows
As at 31 March 2022

	2022 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period	(27,757)	123,122
Depreciation charges	2,868	2, 653
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	3,264	-
Interest from investments	(30)	(123)
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	(9,339)	8,834
(Decrease) / increase in creditors	(21,876)	5,609
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	(52,871)	140,095
Cash flows from investing activities		
Interest from investments	30	123
Payments to acquire fixed assets	(3,750)	-
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	(3,720)	123
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	(56,591)	140,218
Cash and cash equivalents at the start of the year	563,586	423,368
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	506,997	563,586

The notes on pages 33 to 45 form part of these financial statements.

1 Accounting policies

1.1 Statutory information

The Staffordshire Pathway Project is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom (England and Wales). The registered office address and operational address is The Hope Centre, 3 Quonians Lane, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 7LB. The principal activity of the charitable company is given in the Trustees' report.

1.2 Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance and fully complies with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

1.3 Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.4 Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

1.5 Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1.6 Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

1.7 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

1.8 Fund Accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees, in furtherance of the general objectives of the charitable company, and which have not been designated for other purposes. Designated funds are unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for a specific, but not legally binding, purpose.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donors within the objects of the charity. Expenditure that meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

1.9 Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Governance costs are those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charitable company and include audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charitable company.

Direct charitable expenditure is allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However support and governance costs, so the cost of the overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the basis of staff time attributable to each activity.

1.11 Operating Leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

1.12 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

1.13 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Assets which cost in excess of £500 are initially capitalised at cost. Depreciation is provided at annual

rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Children's play equipment	20%, reducing balance basis
Fixtures and fittings	20%, reducing balance basis
Office equipment	25%, reducing balance basis

1.14 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due and prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

1.15 Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1.16 Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

1.17 Pension costs

The charity has a defined contribution pension scheme to offer all employees in order to comply with the requirements of auto-enrolment. The charity is contributing a minimum employer contribution into the scheme as set by the Pension Regulator.

2 Donations

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Anonymous	3,000	39,952	42,952	13,000	-	13,000
Friel Homes Ltd	10,000	-	10,000	-	-	-
HS1	2,250	-	2,250	2,000	-	2,000
Lichfield Conduit Lands Trust	-	-	-	2,500	-	2,500
Lichfield Denerry & Mother's Union	1,125	-	1,125	-	-	-
Pathway Patrons'	3,000	2,448	5,448	2,849	2,666	5,515
Thompson Family Charitable Trust	5,000	-	5,000	-	-	-
Waitrose Ltd – John Lewis	-	-	-	3,000	-	3,000
Gift aid income tax recovered	1,817	-	1,817	4,387	-	4,387
Donations of £1,000 and under	25,792	-	25,792	32,259	1,000	33,259
	51,984	42,400	94,384	59,995	3,666	63,661

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021
Domestic violence prevention	£	£	£	£	£	£
Big Lottery Funding	-	27,500	27,500	-	110,000	110,000
Tamworth BC	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nationwide Community	-	17,972	17,972	-	6,604	6,604
Smallwood Trust	-	32,500	32,500	5,047	47,084	52,131
Staffordshire Women's Aid	-	73,324	73,324	-	44,993	44,993
Lichfield DC	-	14,628	14,628	-	15,000	15,000
National Lottery Awards	-	-	-	10,224	34,437	44,661
National Lottery Community Fund	-	9,550	9,550	-	-	-
Western Power	-	-	-	-	4,927	4,927
Community Foundation	-	2,500	2,500	2,850	989	3,839
Grants £1,000 and under	73	-	73	-	-	-
Sub-total for domestic violence prevention	73	177,974	178,047	18,121	264,034	282,155

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021
Refuge						
Accommodation charges	275,433	-	275,433	264,896	-	264,896
Staffs County Council – MHCLG	93,705	69,567	163,272	99,062	51,214	150,276
Tamworth Borough Council	25,000	-	25,000	-	-	-
Clothworkers Foundation	-	-	-	2,765	435	3,200
Staffordshire County Council	-	-	-	3,500	-	3,500
Grants £1,000 and under	4,100	-	4,100	4,370	-	4,370
Sub-total for Refuge	398,238	69,567	467,805	374,593	51,649	426,242

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021
Refuge based activities						
Staffordshire PCC	-	42,750	42,750	-	47,896	47,896
Sub-total for Refuge based activities	-	42,750	42,750	-	47,896	47,896

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Children's projects						
Children in Need	-	32,976	32,976	2,508	31,256	33,764
Lichfield DC – Action Kids	-	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
Eveson Charitable Trust	-	-	-	-	12,000	12,000
Grants £1,000 and under	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sub-total for children's projects	-	32,976	32,976	2,508	53,256	55,764
Total income from charitable activities	398,311	323,267	721,578	395,222	416,835	812,057

4 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fundraising events	16,531	113	16,644	26,720	750	27,470
Training and services income	215	-	215	-	-	-
Memberships	12	-	12	98	-	98

	16,758	113	16,871	26,818	750	27,568

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Bank interest receivable	30	-	30	123	-	123

6a Analysis of expenditure 2022

	Raising funds £	Domestic violence prevention £	Refuge £	Children's projects £	Refuge based activities £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	Totals 2022 £
Staff costs	83	174,701	193,495	52,188	46,011	55,728	807	523,013
Refuge costs	-	-	131,667	-	-	-	-	131,667
Management	-	7,661	19,662	-	18,100	-	-	45,423
Finance	-	1,930	30,842	-	-	-	-	32,772
Information technology	-	3,971	4,359	997	69	-	-	9,396
Office costs	-	12,986	14,764	1,608	874	-	330	30,562
Audit fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,900	9,900
Professional fees	-	-	-	-	39,492	-	535	40,027
Other sundry expenses	1,672	19,860	12,478	2,686	1,163	-	-	37,859
	1,755	221,109	407,267	59,513	105,709	55,728	11,572	860,619
Support costs	1,575	34,368	9,289	9,521	975	(55,728)	-	-
Governance costs	-	7,553	1,985	2,034	-	-	(11,572)	-
Total 2022	3,330	263,030	418,541	69,034	106,684	-	-	860,619

Support and governance costs are allocated according to the time spent by the relevant staff on each activity.

6b Analysis of expenditure 2021

	Raising funds £	Domestic violence prevention £	Refuge £	Children's projects £	Refuge based activities £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	Totals 2021 £
Staff costs	44	157,809	189,891	48,019	104	67,808	28	463,703
Refuge costs	-	-	122,715	-	-	-	-	122,715
Management	-	30,661	10,262	2,348	5,000	-	-	48,271
Finance	-	-	31,124	-	-	-	-	31,124
Information technology	-	7,441	2,412	745	-	-	-	10,598
Office costs	-	11,427	15,497	2,010	1,182	-	284	30,400
Audit fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,880	2,880
Professional fees	-	-	-	-	26,585	-	1,575	28,160
Other sundry expenses	742	20,636	2,200	6,475	12,383	-	-	42,436
	786	227,974	374,101	59,597	45,254	67,808	4,767	780,287
Support costs	1,517	25,529	26,401	4,787	9,574	(67,808)	-	-
Governance costs	-	1,969	2,278	520	-	-	(4,767)	-
Total 2021	2,303	255,472	402,780	64,904	54,828	-	-	780,287

Support and governance costs are allocated according to the time spent by the relevant staff on each activity.

7 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

Net income / (expenditure) is stated after charging the following items:	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT)	8,250	2,400
Operating lease rentals	20,738	1,824
Depreciation	2,868	2,653

8 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses and the cost of key management personnel

	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Wages and salaries	494,458	432,311
Social security costs	30,964	28,452
Employer contributions to defined contribution pension schemes	12,138	15,996
	537,560	476,759

The average number of employees during the year based on a headcount basis was 27 (2021: 29).

No employee earned in excess of £60,000 per annum (2021: none).

The total employee benefits (including employer's pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £146,717 (2021: £145,023).

No trustee received any remuneration or benefits during the year ended 31 March 2022, nor in the year ended 31 March 2021.

No trustees received expenses during the year ended 31 March 2022 (2021:none).

9 Related party transactions

There are no related party transactions to disclose for 2022 (2021: none).

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Children's play equipment £	Fixtures and fittings £	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 April 2021	12,179	63,520	20,813	96,512
Additions	-	3,750	-	3,750
Disposals	-	(51,561)	(17,868)	(69,429)
At 31 March 2022	12,179	15,709	2,945	30,833
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2021	11,509	54,113	20,422	86,044
Charge for the year	134	2,635	99	2,868
Eliminated on disposal	-	(48,573)	(17,593)	(66,166)
At 31 March 2022	11,643	8,175	2,928	22,747
Net book value				
At 31 March 2022	536	7,534	17	8,086
At 31 March 2021	670	9,407	391	10,468

11 Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Accounts receivable	20,994	6,783
Rent receivable	1,340	7,505
Prepayments and accrued income	10,096	8,803
	32,431	23,092

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022 £	2021 £
Operating creditors	3,548	3,916
Social security and other taxes	-	7,328
Accruals and deferred income	33,180	47,361
	36,728	58,604

13 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods:

	2022 £	2021 £
Within 1 year	20,738	20,758
Between 2 and 5 years	121,731	46,469
Over 5 years	72,000	-
	214,469	67,227

14a Analysis of net assets between funds 2022

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	7,550	536	8,086
Debtors	7,276	25,154	32,431
Cash	437,737	69,260	506,997
Creditors	(15,691)	(21,037)	(36,728)
Net assets as at 31 March 2022	436,873	73,913	510,786

14b Analysis of net assets between funds 2021

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	6,676	3,792	10,466
Debtors	15,326	7,766	23,092
Cash	426,481	137,105	563,588
Creditors	(20,940)	(37,664)	(58,604)
Net assets as at 31 March 2021	427,543	110,999	538,542

15a Movement in funds

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2022 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	427,543	467,082	(421,871)	(41,081)	431,673
Restricted funds					
Children's Projects: Children in Need	665	32,976	(32,111)	-	1,529
Children's Projects: Other	14,092	25,329	(28,196)	-	11,225
Central costs	7,748	-	(43,961)	36,213	-
Domestic violence prevention: Big Lottery Funding	5,000	27,500	(32,368)	4,868	5,000
Domestic violence prevention: Other	39,617	189,385	(196,394)	-	32,607
Refuge	33,164	58,091	(71,374)	-	19,881
Smallwood Trust	10,713	32,500	(34,345)	-	8,868
	110,999	365,780	(438,748)	41,081	79,112
Total funds	538,542	832862	(860,619)	-	510,785

15b Movement in funds 2021

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2021 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	359,914	482,158	(405,083)	(9,446)	427,543
Restricted funds					
Children's Projects: Children in Need	3,699	31,257	(34,291)	-	665
Children's Projects: Other	-	44,705	(30,613)	-	14,092
Central costs	-	46,682	(38,934)	-	7,748
Domestic violence prevention: Big Lottery Funding	5,000	110,000	(119,446)	9,446	5,000
Domestic violence prevention: Other	41,691	106,454	(108,528)	-	39,617
Refuge	5,116	57,153	(29,105)	-	33,164
Smallwood Trust	-	25,000	(14,287)	-	10,713
	55,506	421,251	(375,204)	9,446	110,999
Total funds	415,420	903,409	(780,287)	-	538,542

Transfers between funds
Transfers between unrestricted and restricted funds were to cover any deficit of funds spent on restricted projects compared with grant income received, together with the transfer of agreed management costs.

Purposes of restricted funds:

Children's projects: funding, including grants from **Children in Need**, received for the provision of support to children in the refuges who are suffering as a result of living in a home with domestic violence. The funding received is provided to work with children both in the refuge and as an outreach to service users through a children's worker, a parenting support carer and a sessional crèche worker, together with additional costs such as outings and equipment.

Central costs: funding received towards the central costs of the refuge centres including the Head of Operations.

Domestic violence prevention and advice fund: funding received for the provision of support to women who have suffered as a result of domestic violence. The funding is provided to work with women both in the refuges and as an outreach to service users through the provision of an early intervention worker, an independent domestic violence adviser and a 24-hour helpline operated by the project.

Refuge: funding received for the provision of support to service users whilst resident with the project. Such funding is provided to work with women in the refuge through a specialist support worker, a counselling service and activities to promote a healthier life style.

Smallwood Trust: funding received from the trust is used to make financial grants to vulnerable female service users, in order to help them better manage their financial circumstances, or support activities that will help improve their mental health. Service users make applications for particular activities/needs through their Support Worker, providing proof of their financial circumstances and grants are then allocated out. During the funding, grants have included purchasing carpets and white goods, paying for driving lessons and bus passes, paying for divorces and purchasing new identification documents.

Pension commitments
The charitable company operates a defined contributions pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the charitable company to the fund and amounted to £12,138 (2021 - £11,492). Contributions totalling £Nil (2021 - £Nil) were payable to the fund at the balance sheet date.

Staffordshire Pathway Project

England & Wales - Charity number 1005976

Accounts

pathway project

Charity No: 1005976
Company No: 02635912

The Staffordshire Pathway Project

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended
31 March 2021

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

The MBE for volunteer groups

LOTTERY FUNDED

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Our Vision

To build a future where adults and children affected by domestic and sexual abuse live in safety and free from fear.

Our Mission

To ensure that every adult and child who comes to us seeking support for domestic and sexual abuse is given an opportunity to engage in services that can help them to make the journey from victim to survivor.

Our Values

To put people at the heart of what we do:

At Pathway we believe in being service user led. Nobody knows what services and support are needed, more than the people who access them. We are always here with an open mind and open heart to ensure that we shape futures together.

To be the best we can be:

No two people are the same. Whether you are a service user, volunteer or member of staff, we are all different. At Pathway we don't believe in a one size fits all approach. Instead we want to celebrate our differences, value opinions and learn from each other, so that we can provide the best services, in the best way, with the best people.

To share our experiences:

Good, bad or funny. We want our service users to feel that they can share their experiences and know that they will be listened to and will contribute towards our development. We want our staff to know that in good and bad times, our door is always open and that our shared experience is what drives the strength of the team. At Pathway, we want to share our experiences and collaborate with other specialist organisations, to provide solutions and services that meet the needs of the people we are committed to.

To be open:

We understand that everyone's journey begins at a different point and at a different time. At Pathway we won't put restrictions on the number of times you can access a service, or on the amount of time that has passed before you felt that you could ask for support. We also understand that your needs may not always meet a threshold, but that doesn't make them any less important to you. That's why our helpline is open access to all, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Whether you need a friendly voice, to know more about our services or help getting support elsewhere, we will be there.

PATHWAY PROJECT 2020/21



received **900** referrals and enquiries for refuge space, we were able to house **71** families, but had to turn away or signpost on **829** - an increase of **127%** on referrals for last year.

Answered 4454 (+32%) helpline calls and taken 1649 (+28%) service referrals, working with 697 (+ 23%) adults, children and young people

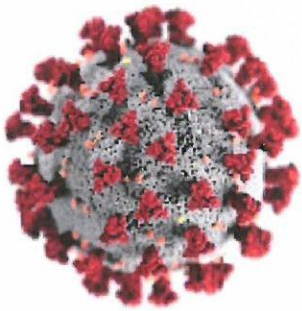


390 out of the 549 adults we worked with had mental health problems, that's 71% of service users



279 people had considered 'ending it all' or had already attempted suicide due to the abuse, an increase of **18%** on the year before

63 service users had threats to kill made against them



During COVID our service users told us that :

53% felt that the emotional and psychological abuse had increased

63% felt more isolated

62% felt triggered by COVID and experienced symptoms of PTSD relating to their abuse

93% of current adult service users needed support for emotional abuse

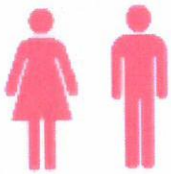
68% needed support for coercive control

54% asked for support around physical abuse

100 % of service users needed support for more than one type of abuse

we provided 6100hrs of support to adults, children and young people, including 6992 contacts face to face and by phone, text, email and video link, and 1350 liaisons with other professionals





65% of children and young people had directly witnessed domestic abuse, and **85%** had indirectly witnessed it.

36% of children and young people had suffered direct emotional abuse, with **25%** dealing with direct coercive control

25% had suffered direct physical abuse

34% felt they needed support for their mental health and **25%** said that they needed coping strategies to deal with the abuse

52% of children and young people we worked with were involved with Children's Services and 47% were on a Child Protection Plan

The Staffordshire Pathway Project
Reference and administrative details
For the year ended 31 March 2021

Company number	2635912	**Country of incorporation**	United Kingdom
Charity number	1005976	**Country of registration**	England and Wales

Registered office and operational address

The Hope Centre
3 Quonian Lane
Lichfield
Staffordshire
WS13 7LB

Pathway Project is the trading name of The Staffordshire Pathway Project (formerly The Burntwood Pathway Project)

Trustees

Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

[redacted]	Chair
	Vice Chair
	Treasurer
	(Appointed 29 May 2020)
	(Appointed 20 May 2020)
	(Resigned 26 June 2020)

Key Management Personnel	
Hayley Baxter	Chief Executive
Wendy Dee	Head of Operations
Amanda Barnard	Finance Manager
Jackie Hughes	Refuge Manager
Lynn Laughton	Volunteer & Training Manager

Bankers

NatWest Bank
47 Market Street
Lichfield
WS13 6LE

Solicitors

Moseleys
Compton House
18 Bore Street
Lichfield
WS13 6LL

Auditors

Haines Watts
Sterling House
97 Lichfield Street
Tamworth
B79 7QF

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102. The trustees' annual report also contains a directors' report as required by company law.

Objectives and activities

The charity's object is to relieve the physical, mental, emotional, social, financial and sexual distress among adults of all ages and/or their children, who have been maltreated or controlled by their partners, family members or persons with whom they were living or having a relationship with, or had made acquaintance of, specialising in gender-based abuse against women and girls.

a) Through our services we aim to provide adults and children with safety and support, whilst they make decisions about their future, and take the opportunity to change their lives in order to live a future in safety and free from fear.

b) Our main objectives for the year have been as follows:

- To effectively plan and manage services so that the minimum amount of disruption is caused to service users by COVID and pandemic regulations.
- To support the county to deliver to service users and cope with increased demand during COVID.
- To have an effective system for remote working and virtual support for service users that can be implemented whenever it is required.
- To provide a programme of group work and support that can be offered virtually, where face to face working is not allowed so that service users can continue to benefit from training opportunities.
- To collaboratively work with Staffordshire Women's Aid to implement and provide a new county sexual violence service.
- To support providers across the county by establishing and delivering a specialist County Counselling provision with the support of our Counselling Lead.
- To develop and implement a Community Engagement Worker to enable us to further improve our reach, content and delivery within the local community and on social media, including linking in with fundraising and joint projects.
- To plan and facilitate a change of premises for the Hope Centre.
- To update and launch our new logo.
- To launch our new website and design and launch a new range of marketing materials.
- To improve and develop services, and to work towards renewing our Women's Aid National Quality Standards kite mark. Our accreditation was extended to five years and there was a temporary closure of the process during COVID, so we are now working to the new timescale.

- To continue providing services and to find alternative funding streams that will support us to deliver a full service.
- To creatively fundraise to support our charitable aims.
- To develop specialist support for those people presenting with complex needs.
- To ensure that staff maintain their skills and knowledge through a programme of training and support.
- To continue to develop our programme of specialist domestic abuse services across Tamworth and Lichfield.
- To maintain the high level of service we provide through our refuge accommodation.
- To work in partnership wherever possible so that service users get the best and most holistic service possible.
- To undertake preventative work and support early intervention opportunities.
- To support children and young people to recover from abuse and to understand healthy relationships.
- To provide services offering legal advice to those unable to claim legal aid.
- To continuously work to improve our services.
- To work together with partners, increasing capacity and improving opportunities and learning.
- To continue to deliver holistic services which work on meeting needs and supporting people in full long term recovery after domestic abuse.
- To continue developing and improving our groups and activities.
- To continue developing our volunteering opportunities

Public Benefit

Pathway Project works to provide services which benefit adults and children who have been made vulnerable due to domestic and/or sexual abuse, either within the home, or in their own personal or family relationships. Pathway Project recognises that domestic abuse is a primarily gendered issue and is a specialist women and girls organisation. Pathway Project also recognises that abuse can affect any person and offers a small range of male victim services in line with our funding arrangements. Each service that we offer is charitable, open to adults and children suffering abuse, and is free to the user, except in the case of refuge provision where rent and service charges are made. The greater proportion of this is paid by the local authority in the form of Housing Benefit, for women whose income is below the threshold.

Our beneficiaries have a charitable need which we aim to address in the many and varied services that we offer, and we are constantly developing our services to ensure that we provide a holistic and inclusive service.

The charitable purposes that we meet are:

a) The prevention or relief of poverty

b) The advancement of health or the saving of lives

c) The relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantages

The trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of the charity each year. This report looks at what the charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period.

The trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the trustees ensure the charity's aims, objectives and activities remained focused on its stated purposes.

The trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

Significant activities

Refuge Accommodation

Enquiries and referrals for refuge space reached our highest peak this year at 900. We were able to house 71 families but had to turn away, refer on or signpost 829, this was up 127% on our previous year. The pandemic also saw an increase in the number of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women looking to access refuge, BME women accounted for 32% of our refuge service users in 2020/21. This year also saw us have our first male victim housed in our move on property. This property provided a safe space for an older gentleman with disabilities who was no longer safe in his family home, and allowed us further time to work with other agencies on sourcing supported accommodation for him to move into.

Refuge accommodation still remains a vital and much needed service for Pathway Project. As more and more women entering emergency accommodation present with complex needs, refuges have become more than just somewhere to stay and are instead intensive services helping women and families with debt management, tenancy sustainment, life skills, budgeting, literacy and numeracy. Pathway Project had previously recognised an increase in women and families presenting with financial problems, especially debts around housing arrears, which were leading to ongoing issues with regards to being able to secure move on accommodation and we implemented our Financial Abuse Specialists at the end of March 2020. This means that everyone coming into refuge now has an assessment around all of their financial needs, which allows us to tailor support to ensure that families are leaving refuge with a much clearer understanding of how to manage their financial independence moving forward.

We have continued to see an increase in the number of women presenting with mental health issues; this was extremely prevalent during the peak of lockdown when we saw a huge increase in the number of referrals being made to us for women who were currently sectioned in hospital. Service users with existing mental health problems struggled considerably with the additional issues raised by lockdown and the general uncertainty and fear that COVID bought, and this placed further pressures on refuge staff in terms of the additional levels of support that needed to be put in place to keep these service users safe. In 2020/21 the percentage of women in refuge who were depressed/had suicidal thought was 52%, up 22% from the previous year, while self-harming as a way to cope was up by 1% to 9%. We also spoke to service users about COVID and how they felt that had impacted them and 61% told us that they felt more isolated from their support networks while 32% felt that it had seriously triggered their mental health or caused them to experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms.

As always Pathway Project prides itself on the children's services that it is able to offer both to Mum's learning how to parent their children independently, and to children and young people directly to

enable them to be heard, understood and move forward with their lives. In 2020/21, 78% of the children who entered into refuge were already involved with Children's Services before their arrival, this was up 9% from the year before.

In April 2021 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government began the proposed changes to how they manage their funding for refuges, and this was dispersed to County Councils. Staffordshire County Council made the decision to continue with current funding arrangements and providers while they prepared needs assessments, and got ready to enter into formal commissioning for refuges. This funding will continue until April 2022, or until the commissioning process has been completed. We anticipate that tenders for refuge service will be out in the new year.

We were hugely grateful to our refuge staff for their commitment to their work throughout the pandemic. We know that it was very challenging, and often frightening, to be in an unknown situation and not have the safety of being able to work from home, and instead to keep coming into work every day and mixing not just with staff, but with multiple families. We also thank everyone who had the additional juggles of managing home schooling alongside making sure that the families in refuge were kept safe and supported. We hugely appreciate everything that you did that enabled us to continue delivering services.

24 Hour Helpline



Pathway Project's 24hr helpline continues to be our first point of contact for service users and agencies, providing a combination of advice, guidance, support and urgent help in a crisis. It is also our central point of contact for all of our referrals.

At the start of COVID and as we entered into the first lockdown, we saw an immediate drop in calls to our helpline, to an all-time low of just 12 contacts in the entire week beginning the 13th April in 2020. As an organisation we recognised the many cause and effects that would be happening in a lockdown where families were effectively trapped with a perpetrator, and we knew that this would be the calm before the storm. We began to look at other mediums that we could put in place to support those people who were in situations where they were not able to make a phone call and quickly implemented opening up our Facebook Messenger to allow support to be given that way alongside setting up an online chat system. These facilities allowed people to contact us and ask for advice and guidance while making it look like they were scrolling through things on their phone. Both of these methods proved to be effective and we were even able to talk one service user through her panic attack about going to court, encouraging her to open the door to the police and feel confident enough to go with them, all using Messenger. We were really pleased when she contacted us back on Messenger the following day to say that he had been found guilty and would be going to prison for his attacks on her.

As anticipated we began to see rises in calls from the beginning of May, and as a county the calls for all providers averaged around a 25% increase on the year before for the entire year. In 2020/21 we received 4454 contacts through all the helpline mediums available, this was up 32% on the year before and we took 1649 referrals for services, up 28% on the year before, with most people accessing more than one service. Our helpline continues to not just allocate the caller to the service they need, but also offers emotional support, advice and guidance, refers and signposts them on to other services, and helps source other accommodation when our refuge facilities are full. Our team of dedicated Helpline

Coordinators, volunteers and support workers who help to cover out of hours, are absolutely crucial to the work we do, enabling us to not just support those who need it but to manage our referrals and ensure people can access the correct services.

The Hope Centre

In line with Government direction we closed the Hope Centre to service users and Staff in March of last year and began to do a phased return back to the office in July, before having to close the office again for further lockdowns in the autumn. During this time we looked at the considerable savings that we could make from no longer operating the centre, but it became clear to us that we would lose so much for the service users, the local community and the staff if we did this. For the staff it was about having a safe space to do what can be very challenging work, as well as being able to access support and advice from peers and really feel like part of a team. For service users we would have lost the space to provide group work, peer mentoring, drop ins, one to ones and counselling and for the community it would have meant losing somewhere that they can come and see the work we do, bring donations or have the opportunity to enter into volunteering. We really felt that these positives outweighed the potential cost savings we could make and that it was important that the centre could continue.

At the same time as this it became clear that when we returned to the centre after the first lockdown that there was a lot of external maintenance on the structure of the building that needed to be completed and with the uncertainty of whether this would be completed by the landlord we took the opportunity to see if anything else had become available due to people leaving buildings during COVID. We were lucky enough to find premises that had just been vacated right in the centre of Lichfield, which offered us the space that we needed and matched the costs of our previous building, so we made the big decision to move in October 2020. We took advantage of the lockdowns to do any work that needed to be done on the building including and to get it ready for staff to come back in at the end of the 2021 lockdowns. We are really excited about the location of the building and the difference it will make for staff and we are really looking forward to being able to start delivering our counselling and group work from there.

Outreach

Pathway Project has continued to work on the service provision offered from our outreach team. Our Risk Reduction Worker is still the base of our team, taking referrals from anyone who feels they need support around domestic abuse. We have been lucky enough to be able to retain funding for our Mental Health and Domestic Abuse Worker (Wellbeing Worker); this continues to be a heavily subscribed service and was in high demand during COVID. At the start of the pandemic our staff member produced a wellbeing and self-care pack that was sent out to all service users who expressed concerns around their mental health, and our online group that we launched combined approaches to wellbeing and self-care with domestic abuse education so that we could encourage everyone to look after their mental health in such a difficult time. We have also completed a full year of our Domestic Abuse and Housing Worker, as well as supporting service users in the community; this role has also been working with some of the women in the refuge around securing their move on housing and their resettlement in the community. This year, our Young Women and Girls Worker also moved back into focusing on domestic abuse, due to a change in staff and the development of the new sexual violence service. This service has seen an increase in the number of young women who are seeking support with extremely complex needs, with many issues around childhood trauma as well as current domestic abuse issues.

The focus of 2020/21 was around maintaining services, meeting service user needs and ensuring staff wellbeing, as well as general fundraising to ensure we could keep on delivering. As we enter into

2021/22 we will be continuing to look at developing our specialist teams, with a specialist in economic abuse being one of our key targets, due to the substantial rise we have seen with women presenting with this need.

Again, Pathway Project is hugely appreciative of everything that our staff did to ensure that we could continue to deliver our services during the pandemic. So many of our staff had to juggle home-schooling children around their work but we all managed to work together so that everyone could continue with their service users throughout the whole situation, and we are grateful for that commitment and passion.

Sexual Violence Services

Pathway Project has delivered the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor Service (ISVA) for Lichfield, Tamworth and Burton in conjunction with Staffordshire Women's Aid for a number of years, on an informal contract with local district and county councils. This year, the decision was made to put the service out to tender on a more formal footing, with the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner managing the commissioning process. We were approached by Staffordshire Women's Aid to see if we would be interested in subcontracting with them to continue to deliver the services in our areas and with the opportunity to expand the team, and we said yes. We were very happy when it was announced that the contract was being awarded to Staffordshire Women's Aid with our support.

We were also delighted that this gave us the opportunity to expand our sexual violence team, something which had been needed for a long time. This means that as well as having an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor we know have a full time Children's Independent Sexual Violence Advisor, working with children and young people aged 5-18, and a Family and Significant Others Practitioner, who works with people that have been indirectly affected by sexual violence happening to a loved one. This service launched in October 2020, staff have already completed their accredited training and the commissioners are already extremely pleased with how the service is going, especially considering that it was launched in the middle of lockdowns.

Children's Services

Children's Services have struggled the most through the pandemic, and this is a county wide issue that is not just particular to us. This has been for a combination of reasons, the primary one being that a huge majority of referrals to all agencies come through school settings, and school closures meant that most of these children were not in contact with members of staff who would have previously seen them every day. There is also the issue that many children in vulnerable homes could not be accessed because there was no obligation by their parents to let agencies in with COVID restrictions. On a more simple level, a lot of children also access appointments through neutral premises like schools to give them the freedom and confidence to talk and with loss of access to these many children took the decision to stop support rather than do it remotely in the home. Referrals into our Children's Services were down 25% on the year before, and across the county for all providers and agencies working with vulnerable children, referrals were down by 36% on the year before.

We continued to take referrals for our Children's Coordinator and work with anyone who felt comfortable and able to throughout the pandemic. We also opened up to allow any parents who were really struggling with home schooling, behavior management or wellbeing caused by children being isolated to speak to our Coordinator, so that they were given the opportunity to offload and hopefully better manage at home. We then focused our remaining efforts on ensuring that children who were affected by the pandemic but also in refuge had as much support as possible in place, and could access as many activities and outlets as possible. Meaning our Children's Worker and Children's Coordinator

worked closely together to deliver things such as in house youth clubs, trips to the park and wellbeing sessions. We were also very fortunate to receive a COVID grant from Children In Need which enabled us to fully develop our 'Secret Garden' which is an educational outdoor play resource that we started in the previous year, so this is now fully stocked with resources.

Pathway Project is very grateful to the Children's Team for continuing to come in and support other people's children at a time when they couldn't even see children within their extended family face to face, and for dealing with the increased concern there was around COVID being passed on by children.

As well as working directly with children and young people we also continue to deliver preventative work to other voluntary agencies, statutory agencies and schools, though their carousel and drop down days. This service continues to be well utilised by the local community and agencies who understand the specialist nature of the work.

Community Engagement Worker

Pathway Project was very lucky to have received some COVID funding during lockdown to implement our Community Engagement Worker post. Having someone constantly overseeing our social media has enabled us to drive the footfall to our pages, increasing followers and views, which has impacted on the number of people interested in making donations to us, working with us or supporting our fundraising. This post also oversees our website and makes sure the content is appropriate and up to date, as well as sourcing new things we can launch on it. They have also overseen the development of our new marketing materials and liaise with people in the community who want to support us in new and innovative ways. When possible, this role will also be the one that links us into face to face community fundraising, and organizing events; as an organisation we are really excited to see where this service can take us as we move forward.

Counselling and County Counselling

Counselling has always been a key part of Pathway Project's service delivery, with the belief that it helps to provide a true wrap around, holistic service. During the initial lockdown we worked with our Counselling Lead and the British Association for Counselling and Psychology to ensure that we could comply with all of the regulations around remote support and ensure that service users did not have that counselling journey stopped at a point that could be crucial to them. We were able to provide options of using Zoom, WhatsApp and phone support in whatever format best supported the service user, and this enabled us to effectively maintain the service.

During the first lockdown we were fortunate to be awarded six months of COVID funding from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, in order to be able to implement a county wide counselling service that would support service users from all three providers. We worked with our counselling lead to be able to quickly put together everything that would be needed to run the service, and ensure we had a set of referring and working protocols for all providers to adhere to. Our Counselling Lead also agreed to step up and deliver the service on our behalf, which reduced the turnaround time and meant that we had a fully qualified counsellor who was responsible for the service. After six months the MoJ awarded a further six months, allowing us to carry on the service. During this time we gave support to service users from across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent, through one to one and group counselling. During 2020/21 we supported a total of 157 service users in our counselling programmes, providing an average of 1256 hours of counselling.

At the end of 2020/21 we were asked to put in our costs for a further year of county counselling through some extended money from the MoJ, this allowed us to also account for taking on another

counsellor in order to meet demand and we are pleased to say that this money was awarded for the year 2021/22.

Volunteering and Peer Mentoring

COVID proved to be a big challenge for our volunteers and mentors. Our outreach team, which is the main base for our volunteers, moved to a work from home model as directed by Government. This meant that our admin volunteers and new volunteers who were just in the infancy of their training were not able to continue, as we were not able to provide either the face to face shadowing that they required, or allow them to take confidential admin work home with them. In order to try and manage refuge provision and reduce anything that could contribute to the spread of the virus, or the enforced isolation of staff, we also had to make the difficult decision to prevent any volunteers going into refuge. This enabled us to more effectively oversee the contact that staff and service users were having with other people. This also meant that we were unable to take on our student volunteers – normally in social work, health or legal practice, which is something that we do every year. Our Volunteer and Training Manager did work really hard with Newman University in Birmingham to arrange a six month placement for a German criminology student who was coming to gain experience of working with families and the legal landscape in Britain. Again, this had to be halted when the student took the difficult decision not to come due to travel restrictions, isolating and uncertainty about future lockdowns. All volunteers had a once a fortnight conversation with our manager, so that we could ensure that they were coping with everything that was going on, and to make sure that they knew that we were still engaged with them.

Despite these difficulties we were able to work with a small team of around four volunteers through COVID. One of these volunteers helped to support our helpline provision by covering hours when staff were unavailable. Our other three continued to support our peer mentoring provision, some additional funding through the county meant that we were able to purchase some additional phones and licenses to allow limited access to our data and case management system, this allowed our peer mentors to continue working remotely with low level service users and then be able to accurately record those on our case management system. In order to support other providers across the county we opened this service up county wide for six months, also supported by the same funding, and we managed to work with 24 service users during this period.

Our Volunteer and Training Manager also supported our Counselling Lead in supervising and retaining all of our volunteer counsellors, who did continue to provide services throughout the pandemic, through remote working and with additional oversight from us and their universities.

We are looking forward to returning to the office and enabling our volunteers and mentors to start working from a team environment again. We also have six volunteers ready to start their training with us when we are able to meet face to face.

Groups

The pandemic and remote working completely changed how we had to approach groups in 2020/21. Over the previous 2 years we had built up a large selection of group work which included Domestic Abuse (DA) education, life coaching, well-being, journey to self-discovery, empowerment, art therapy and a social group, all of which work best delivered in a face to face environment. We had also planned our first evening group pilot which sadly had to be cancelled as it was due to run during the first lockdown. As an organisation we feel that we really understand the merits of people engaging face to face for group work, but we also did not want to have such a long period of time where people could not access that service. Our Volunteer and Training Manager and Mental Health and Domestic Abuse

Specialist worked together to quickly produce a hybrid group programme, that provided DA education alongside skills to manage service users mental health and develop their own self care programme. We managed to run this group, online, 6 times during the last year, with 61 attending for six week of sessions. Alongside that, we also ran introductory drop in sessions before each group ran so that service users could meet each other and the trainers before the group ran, increasing people's confidence. All of these groups were run over Zoom, meaning that service users could access them through their phones if they did not have laptops, and we ensured that everyone could use Wi-Fi before we began.

Some of the feedback that we have had from the groups includes:

"I had been feeling really lonely, like I was the only person this was happening to. I was really scared about talking online but everyone made me feel really comfortable. I have loved doing the group and have even made a friend, something I haven't been able to do for a long time."

"I have really enjoyed learning about self-care, which I hadn't heard of before. I am starting to recognise when I am getting stressed or upset, and have now got some things I can do that help to stop it getting worse"

Due to restrictions this has been the first period of time that we have not been able to run our normal service user Away Day, which is our largest service user consultation event. Despite this our Volunteer and Training Manager has been able to run one of our new service user feedback groups, Survivor to Thriver, this was in order to get feedback from service users about Claire's Law, to then feedback into a larger national project. Our Deputy Police Crime Commissioner also saw our adverts about this on social media and attended the session. We had eleven people attend and all of them are very keen to continue with this in the future. We also supported the county's consultations for the new domestic abuse strategy and the needs assessment refresh, and facilitated ten service users who were happy to speak to researchers about Pathway and the work we do, as well as their general experiences of domestic abuse.

Legal Clinics

Unfortunately, we were unable to run any of our legal clinics during 2020/21. This was a combination of being unable to provide a venue for them to run with the working from home agenda, alongside a high level of furlough for local solicitors and the significant reduction in the number of cases being heard with the effect of COVID on courts. We will be aiming to return to delivering clinics in 2021/22.

Change of Name

We made the decision to change our legal name this year. Although we always go by the name Pathway Project, our legal name was The Burntwood Pathway Project, which reflected the position of our organisation when it was first set up. Since then our geography has extended to cover Lichfield, Tamworth, and even East Staffs with some services. We also deliver projects that cover the entirety of Staffordshire, and even Stoke, on some occasions. We therefore made the decision to change our legal name to The Staffordshire Pathway Project, as we felt this better reflects the areas we work in to our supporters and funders. This was legally agreed by the Charity Commission and Companies House in October 2020.

Logo and Marketing

Our new logo launched in August alongside our website, and we took this opportunity to work with a local company on updating all of our leaflets, posters and banners to refresh our look. All of this has been completed and we will now be looking to do the same with all of our promotional material once we have worked through all of our current stock.

Website

Our website launched on the 3rd August and is a great addition to the organisation. We have the ability to continually make changes that we need to, and can add on additional pages and options, such as advertising events we are running and selling tickets. We are also looking at incorporating a system that allows people to make one off donations and set up regular giving on there, in order to make is as simple as possible for people who want to support us.

The strategy that drives the activities...

As always, the main focus for Pathway Project is the needs of our service users, and we have always strongly believed that the best people to tell us what they need to make that journey from victim to survivor are our service users themselves. This means that as well as using county and local authority strategies, national data and information from the police to shape our delivery, Pathway Project also spends a lot of time identifying specific needs within our local community, through the people we work with. We do this through a combination of analysing the data we are able to collect through our case and data management system, Oasis, key trends spotted by staff, service user's direct request/comments and our own consultations that we run through our service user group and Away Days. This year we have been sadly unable to do this, however, Pathway Project's focus has very much been on ensuring that we meet the needs of our service users and our staff during this unprecedented time, and we hope to be able to move back to our normal way of working post COVID.

As always Pathway Project is also very proud to be affiliated with National Women's Aid who continues to provide support in a number of different ways, including the national framework for domestic and sexual abuse services. Accreditation for the standards was extended to five years, up to 2021, and with the standards put on hold by Women's Aid during COVID; we are currently just working through our evidence for our re-accreditation.

Pathway Project continues to work closely with our partner domestic abuse agencies across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. We have supported New Era, Glow and Staffordshire Women's Aid with our County Counselling services and we are subcontracting with Staffordshire Women's Aid to help deliver Survive, the County sexual violence service. Pathway Project also works closely with a number of agencies both statutory and voluntary, including Tamworth Borough and Lichfield District Housing and Community Safety Partnerships, Children's Services, Citizens Advice Bureau and Bromford Housing.

We are continuing with our focus on specialist workers, supported by our Risk Reduction Worker. We have our Mental Health and Domestic Abuse Specialist and Domestic Abuse and Housing Specialist in place, thanks to funding from Lichfield District Council and Nationwide Bank. As part of our refuge funding we were also able to take on a Financial Abuse Specialist in 2020/21. This post has been put in place to help support the number of women coming into the refuge who are struggling with managing debts and budgeting, and also to allow us to put more capacity into supporting women with housing arrears, as it is becoming harder for them to be rehoused in a timely manner. We hope that this will empower women to feel that they have the financial skills they need when they leave the refuge.

Dealing with the effects of COVID and ensuring we can maintain and deliver services have been our main focus for 2020/21 but from the data that we have been able to pull from Oasis, our main focuses on specialisms moving forward into 2021/22 will be an, Economic Abuse Specialist, focusing on women suffering financial abuse in the community, but also looking to support women who have not been allowed to continue with education, training or enter into work and a Substance Misuse Specialist.

Our online data and case management system, Oasis, remains a fantastic tool in allowing us to respond to funding applications and to meaningfully contribute to the local and national agenda on domestic and sexual abuse trends and issues. Not only does the system streamline the data into easy searches it also puts it into easy to read report formats, reducing what has previously been time consuming work. We are also happy to be able to share anonymous data with Women's Aid to allow them to help build a national picture of what survivors want and need.

In 2019/20 Pathway Project spent a lot of time getting back to our roots of community fundraising, and in January 2020 we had already set out a whole set of events we were personally organizing, and community events that we were going to attend, for the whole year. Sadly this plan had to be put on hold when the pandemic struck and we had to accept that we had lost a whole stream of fundraising. Despite this we re-grouped, our Community Engagement Worker focused on generating interest and fundraising from other people on line this included support from Amazon and their fundraising team, our Head of Operations focused on engaging with local companies and organisations, this included donations of cleaning products for refuge from Morrison's and monetary donations from John Lewis, and our CEO concentrated on utilizing our COVID pipeline to ensure that bids were written and submitted on time. Overall, this led to a more successful 2020/21 than we could have anticipated. We hope to move back into more community fundraising, and re-develop our Patrons Scheme during 2021/22.

Achievements and Performance

Like many charities one of the biggest achievements for 2020/21 has been surviving COVID. In a time when funding cuts and competitive tendering, combined with rising costs had already affected many organisations, COVID provided an additional layer of worries and concerns, alongside a level of uncertainty we had never encountered before. This meant, that as with many others, simply being able to keep your services running, your doors open and remain fully staffed was the biggest achievement of the year. Despite everything this year has bought, Pathway Project is still just as committed to delivering services to the people who need them most, as we always have been. This year Pathway Project has seen:

- All of our services remain open, with all staff still working, ensuring that the needs of all of our service users have continued to be met during such a challenging time.
- A quick and efficient move to remote and online working, including in our counselling service and group work.
- Advent for Change and their team choosing us to be one of their charities for the third year running, this year will be on both the premium Advent Calendar and the Advent Candle.
- The development of our Community Engagement Worker role thanks to the Big Lottery Funding.
- Our refuges secure a further years Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MCHLG) funding.
- The establishment and funding of our County Counselling Service.
- Staffordshire Women's Aid sub contract us to support delivery of the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent sexual violence Survive Service.

- Smallwood Trust award us funding, allowing us to make grants to our service users who are in financial hardship.
- The Big Lottery fund us through Awards for All to complete work needed in our new offices.
- An overwhelming response to our Christmas Present Drive with lots of people donating and purchasing items through our Amazon wish list.
- An amazing Easter Campaign with huge donations of presents and eggs for the children.
- A number of local organisations work with us to do combined events over social media e.g. gyms, people making masks and donating the profits to us.
- Our continuing contribution to the local community and county domestic abuse strategies, as well as all of the additional requirements for managing DA support throughout COVID.

From April 2020 to April 2021 our helpline took 4454 calls and emails, resulting in 1649 referrals into services, with most service users wanting more than one service. In total we supported 697 adults, young people and children.

Our group programmes provided 36 sessions, supporting 61 people, all online.

One of the greatest assets that Pathway Project has is our wonderful team. The work that we do as an organisation is demanding in many ways, but our staff never falter in making sure that they do their best for the service users who need us, and this has never been more obvious than in the last year. Staff have done all they can to ensure that they have managed their service users around the challenges of home life, and still come in for work every day. Pathway Project would like to say a huge thank you to every one of our staff for the commitment and love that they have shown our organisation, no matter what the challenges.

Beneficiaries of our services

The complex needs of our beneficiaries have been recognised in our strategy focusing on specialist support, as very rarely do service users present with domestic/sexual abuse, and no other additional support needs. We feel that the more support that can be offered from one central point, with one trusted worker in a places that enables someone to feel safe, the better engagement we will receive and the greater opportunity for success for our service users.

Pathway Project continues to take on feedback, both negative and positive, and use this to drive forward our services and make effective changes. Throughout COVID Pathway Project have been overjoyed at the support we have received from funders, our local community, and individuals who have done everything from raising money having their head shaved, to putting us forward at their local companies, and in some cases national companies. At such a difficult time for everyone, it was lovely to be able to feel the support and passion for what we do from such a variety of places.

Financial Review

Pathway Project has continued to make fundraising its key priority throughout COVID, with the focus being on covering those costs which we would normally have funded with our community fundraising e.g. core costs, and increased costs that were particular to COVID. We also took the opportunity to apply for funding for management posts that are normally unfunded and would have had to be paid out of reserves, when this was available.

As always, the successful delivery of a professional organisation means that it is necessary to have management oversight and buildings to operate from, including their operating costs, and all of these contribute to the front line services at the heart of Pathway Project. We are aware that this is a

constant struggle for all charities, when the focus remains only on direct delivery and not its associated costs, but Pathway Project continues to work hard to source any funding that may support this.

Nationwide, after the last round of successful funding from the MHCLG our refuges remain safe until April 2022 when it is anticipated that the new format of funding for refuges will be put in place. At the moment it appears that funding will be dispersed to County Councils to administer to refuges while they complete the work needed to be ready and compliant for tendering of refuge services. The indication from Staffordshire County Council is that they expect to continue as is with current providers, until the tender process is ready, this will likely be for April 2022.

We have continued to dedicate some time from our Head of Operations to the development of our community work and fundraising, and this role is now supported by the Community Engagement Worker. While how we deliver this work has had to change during COVID we have taken the time to invest more into the use of social media to generate fundraising, and also into building relationships with big local and national companies, encouraging them to think of us when it comes to their community giving.

During this year our total income increased to £903,409 (2020: £690,662). This was primarily down to the development of new services within the organisation, including the County Counselling Service, Community Engagement Worker, the grant making funding we were awarded by the Smallwood Trust and the sub contract we were awarded by Staffordshire Women's Aid. We were also fortunate to be awarded some COVID support funding.

Expenditure has been tightly managed but still increased to £780,287 (2020: £728,573), this was due to additional services and additional costs generated by managing COVID. We did still manage to make some unexpected cost savings from areas such as working from home which reduced the utilities bills, moving buildings which meant a small period of time with no rent charges and remote working meaning a reduction in all staff expenses.

Thank you to the Patrons and Friends of Pathway Project for their on-going commitment. It is a huge encouragement to us that so many people are passionate about the work that we do.

Principal funding sources

Our refuge 'bricks and mortar' costs are funded through the housing benefit which is paid to us on behalf of residents, we review this yearly with our District and Borough Councils and we are thankful the campaigning that has secured government support for retaining housing benefit payments for refuges, as this remains our only consistent source of funding. The money from MHCLG has been instrumental in funding the staffing of our refuges, which are critical to successful refuge provision. MHCLG also provided additional COVID money to cover the additional costs generated in refuge by COVID.

Big Lottery Empowering Women and Girls Initiative completed its final year, with funding finishing in July 2021. This project has been extremely important for Pathway, not only allowing us to trial new services, but in also providing us with secure funding for our helpline, and allowing us to really grow our volunteering and group work, something we would never have been able to achieve without the Volunteer and Training Manager role. It has also really shown us what can be achieved when you have a secure period of funding – five years – rather than ad hoc amounts that have to be constantly renewed, meaning there is always a fear that a service will come to an end. We are currently actively looking for funding to continue delivering these services. We were also fortunate to received COVID funding from the lottery which allowed us to develop our Community Engagement Worker, complete our marketing and cover additional COVID costs.

The Ministry of Justice, through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, has supported our County Counselling project. Due to us providing fully qualified and registered counsellors, the support costs for this are high, but the number of people seen and the current outcomes are excellent.

The Smallwood Trust has supported us to be able to offer our first grant making service to any women working us who are struggling with financial hardship. The fund provides a small amount to help cover the work that needs to be done by our Finance Manager to administer the payments, and the remainder of the money is paid out to service users to support them with things such as housing arrears, new furniture etc. We were also fortunate to receive some core cost funding from the Smallwood Trust during COVID.

The Nationwide Community Foundation has continued to fund our Domestic Abuse and Housing Specialist for a further year. This comes to an end in December 2021 and we are currently looking for further funding.

Children in Need has also been a key funder in supporting the work that we do with children and young people alongside Evason Charitable Trust who helped contribute towards our children's work in refuge.

We are very grateful to our District and Borough Councils for their support around our Mental Health and Domestic Abuse Specialist. We also have a number of other grants and gifts from trust funds, foundations and through individuals in our Patron's scheme.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Board of Trustees is very aware of on-going risks and regularly reviews the work done to mitigate these. We have both a business plan and an income generation plan that we work towards and review. We have a Risk Management Policy and regularly review the principal risks identified, which are financial, operational and reputational.

Financial – Income generation still remains a key focus and priority for Pathway Project, both around securing contributions to core costs, but also in preparation for the ending of the Big Lottery Women and Girls Fund in July. We will be continuing our community work when it becomes safe to do so after COVID, and we are still working hard on securing significant funding streams and sustainable funding options.

Operational – Our biggest operational uncertainty was the long term stability of the Hope Centre, and this has now been mitigated by moving to our new premises which already has a programme of external work in place to ensure the building is maintained. We continue to make maximum use of the Hope Centre, and it is key in enabling us to run our holistic provision of services. We continue to work with people with complex needs, chaotic lives, and who are often at serious risk. Having done all that we can to minimise the risks we also have insurance against many possible risks and losses.

Reputational – once again the main issue is that we work with vulnerable service users with complex needs and we need to prioritise safeguarding all of the people who we work with. Where we need to ensure our staff's safety, they work jointly in pairs or do joint visits with other agencies. We only visit service users having undertaken a thorough risk assessment. All of our working practices are aimed at supporting both staff and service users. We attend regular professionals meetings in order to maintain awareness of risk to or from vulnerable service users, and we deal promptly with any issues which arise. We monitor out media presence so that we can take action wherever appropriate.

Reserves Policy and Going Concern

The trustees have examined the charity's requirements in light of the main risks of the organisation and aim to build up our reserves to give us some financial stability if problems arise. We are susceptible to shortfalls in funding where particular activities are funded by varied and unpredictable income streams. Our policy and target level of free reserves is to hold a minimum of 12 months' operating expenditure. As a result, we estimate that we currently require approximately £700,000 to meet this target. Our actual free reserves at the year-end were £420,867 an increase on last year, although we will have a significant challenge ahead to continue to build our reserves until we meet this target level, especially with contracts coming to an end.

Restricted funds as at 31 March 2021 are £110,999 (2020: £55,506) and these funds will all be spent on the charitable activity to which they apply in the next financial year.

Despite the target to build unrestricted reserves, the free reserves of the organization are primarily supported by cash resources. We have demonstrated in the past our ability to be agile in how we have reacted to significant changes in our overall business model, including losing key sources of funding, and have demonstrated a tight control over our cost base. These practices will continue, along with the regular monitoring of the income pipeline to ensure that Pathway Project can continue to deliver its key services in an external environment presenting continued uncertainty. As a result of regularly monitoring both reserves levels and cash flow, the trustees are satisfied to approve these financial statements on a going concern basis.

Plans for the future

- Maintaining services during COVID became the priority and therefore meant we did not move forward with our proposal to implement further specialist roles, we are therefore hoping to continue to fund more specialist posts as and when the opportunity arises, in order to enhance our offer.
- We hope to continue to grow our community fundraising when the pandemic has passed, and also to re-develop our Patrons scheme and the work of the Income Generation Group.
- We hope to extend our community engagement work, alongside our social media and marketing.
- We hope to continue to develop our County Counselling programme.
- To ensure that we continue to deliver services throughout the pandemic and its aftermath.

As always Pathway Project will continue to proactively develop models of working which best meet the needs of survivors as well as seeking opportunities for funding and collaborative working. We will also continue to work on raising awareness in both the local and wider community, to ensure that domestic and sexual violence and the work needed to be done to end it is truly understood.

Fundraising

As a charity we are working hard to broaden the base of our funding streams so that there is less reliance on any single source. We have continued to plan our applications to grant funders, both

national and local. We have also taken a more pro-active approach to raising funds from the community, and particularly unrestricted funds.

We believe that our fundraising should be ethical, and in line with the Fundraising Regulator Code of Practice. Pathway Project operates a policy around the protection of vulnerable adults, and this includes ensuring vulnerable people are not negatively impacted by our fundraising. We have an Income Generation Group who plan and oversee large events. Two trustees of the charity are part of this group and ensure that best practice is always followed. We also have a member of staff who has one day each week allocated to development work and she also oversees a small volunteer group who run the smaller events.

We have a robust insurance policy which protects us for running events and we follow a risk assessment process when planning our events. The Income Generation Group feeds back to the Trustees at our monthly meetings.

We are happy for the public, including our supporters, to complain if they are unhappy with our fundraising. We received no complaints during 2020/21. Complaints and comments are welcome and we aim to use feedback, whether positive or negative, to help us to improve our service.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 7 August 1991 (in England and Wales) and registered as a charity on 14 November 1991.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. The articles were recently updated and accepted for filing at Companies House in October 2021.

All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. No expenses are reclaimed from the charity as disclosed in note 8 to the accounts.

Code of Governance

As part of our work with Pilotlight and as part of our own internal review procedures, the Trustees have considered best practice set out within the Charity Governance Code and at the date of this report are carrying out a review process to ensure that the governance of the organisation meets the principles and recommended practice of the Code.

Appointment of trustees

A process is in place following best practice guidelines, to recruit and appoint new trustees in a similar process to that used to appoint staff members. The charity plans strategically to have a board of trustees who are able to bring a range of expertise and skills to the board meetings.

Trustee induction and training

Trustees are inducted and trained through a formal training system, which includes having a Mentor who is a more experienced board member. Part of the annual Trustee Away Day is sometimes a particular briefing session to inform and build knowledge. All trustees are welcome to attend training / briefing sessions that are being held for staff.

Policy for employment of disabled persons

Pathway Project believes in providing equality of opportunity for disabled persons. All jobs are advertised with a person specification outlining the particular aptitudes and abilities required in the role. The job is given to the person who best fulfils the requirements of the role. If necessary adjustments are required then we will seek to accommodate the adaptations.

Should a member of staff become disabled during their employment we will work with them to facilitate a return to work when possible, and will seek to accommodate their needs for adaptations or assistance.

Opportunities for training and career development will be equally open to disabled persons and they will not be disadvantaged in possible promotion opportunities.

Employee information and remuneration policy for key management personnel

The CEO and Head of Operations have delegated authority for managing the day to day operation of the organisation.

Employees are the foundation of our organisation and as such we seek to keep them informed and consulted about any changes that are being made in the organisation. This is done through regular team meetings and email memos.

When changes are being considered, which will impact on the working conditions of staff, they are fully consulted and offered opportunities to have an input into decisions being made.

The remuneration of the key management personnel is set by the Board. The Chair conducts the annual appraisal of the Chief Executive Officer and the board agrees her salary. Comparable salaries for executive roles in other similar sized organisations in the health and social care sector are used as a benchmark for setting the salary.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of Pathway Project for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report including the strategic report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent

- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements

- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware

- The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2021 was 15 (2020: 16). The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The trustee's annual report has been approved by the trustees on 26th November 2021 and signed on their behalf.

[redacted]

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Staffordshire Pathway Project (formerly The Burntwood Pathway Project) (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on The Staffordshire Pathway Project's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial

statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information; we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements
- The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the

basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
    - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
    - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
    - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent Auditors' Report
To the members of The Staffordshire Pathway Project

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Stephen P Butler (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of:
Haines Watts, Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditors

Sterling House
97 Lichfield Street
Tamworth
B79 7QF

Date: 26 November 2021

The Staffordshire Pathway Project
Statement of financial activities
For the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Total 2020 £
Income from							
Donations	2	59,995	3,666	63,661	46,194	32,312	78,506
Charitable activities							
Domestic violence prevention	3	18,121	264,034	282,155	-	233,679	233,679
Refuge	3	374,593	99,545	474,138	288,324	900	289,224
Children's projects	3	2,508	53,256	55,764	-	48,933	48,933
Other trading activities	4	26,818	750	27,568	25,171	14,541	39,712
Investments	5	123	-	123	608	-	608
Total income		482,158	421,251	903,409	360,297	330,365	690,662
Expenditure on							
Raising funds	6	2,303	-	2,303	4,162	-	4,162
Charitable activities							
Domestic violence prevention	6	-	255,472	255,472	-	285,649	285,649
Refuge	6	402,780	-	402,780	339,399	-	339,399
Children's projects	6	-	64,904	64,904	-	82,014	82,014
Refuge based activities	6	-	54,828	54,828	-	17,349	17,349
Total expenditure	6	405,083	375,204	780,287	343,561	385,012	728,573
Net income / (expenditure) before transfers		77,075	46,047	123,122	16,736	(54,647)	(37,911)
Transfers between funds	15	(9,446)	9,446	-	(91,167)	91,167	-
Net movement in funds		67,629	55,493	123,122	(74,431)	36,520	(37,911)
Reconciliation of funds							
Fund balances brought forward		359,914	55,506	415,420	434,345	18,986	453,331
Fund balances carried forward		427,543	110,999	538,542	359,914	55,506	415,420

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. All gains and losses recognised in the year are included above.

The Staffordshire Pathway Project
(registered company number 02635912)

Balance sheet
As at 31 March 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	10	10,468	13,121
Current assets			
Debtors	11	23,092	31,926
Cash at bank and in hand		563,586	423,368
		586,678	455,294
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(58,604)	(52,995)
Net current assets		528,074	402,299
Total assets less current liabilities		538,542	415,420
Total net assets		538,542	415,420
Funds			
Restricted	15	110,999	55,506
Unrestricted	15	427,543	359,914
Total funds		538,542	415,420

Approved by the Board on 26 November 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

[redacted]

The Staffordshire Pathway Project
Statement of cash flows
For the year ended 31 March 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period	123,122	(37,911)
Depreciation charges	2,653	2,851
Interest from investments	(123)	(608)
Decrease in debtors	8,834	19,093
Increase in creditors	5,609	29,993
Net cash provided by operating activities	140,095	13,418
Cash flows from investing activities		
Interest from investments	123	608
Payments to acquire fixed assets	-	(1,907)
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities	123	(1,299)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	140,218	12,119
Cash and cash equivalents at the start of the year	423,368	411,249
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	563,586	423,368

The notes on pages 29 to 41 form part of these financial statements.

1 Accounting policies

1.1 Statutory information

The Staffordshire Pathway Project is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom (England and Wales). The registered office address and operational address is The Hope Centre, 3 Quonians Lane, Lichfield, Staffordshire, WS13 7LB.

1.2 Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance and fully complies with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

1.3 Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.4 Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

1.5 Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1.6 Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding

amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

1.7 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

1.8 Fund Accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees, in furtherance of the general objectives of the charitable company, and which have not been designated for other purposes. Designated funds are unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for a specific, but not legally binding, purpose.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donors within the objects of the charity. Expenditure that meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

1.9 Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Governance costs are those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charitable company and include audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charitable company.

Direct charitable expenditure is allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However support and governance costs, so the cost of the overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the basis of staff time attributable to each activity.

1.11 Operating Leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

1.12 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

1.13 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Assets which cost in excess of £500 are initially capitalised at cost. Depreciation is provided at annual rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Children's play equipment	20%, reducing balance basis
Fixtures and fittings	20%, reducing balance basis
Office equipment	25%, reducing balance basis

1.14 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due and prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

1.15 Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1.16 Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

1.17 Pension costs

The charity has a defined contribution pension scheme to offer all employees in order to comply with the requirements of auto-enrolment. The charity is contributing a minimum employer contribution into the scheme as set by the Pension Regulator.

2 Donations

	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021	Unrestricted funds 2020	Restricted funds 2020	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Anonymous	13,000	-	13,000	-	19,000	19,000
Friel Homes Ltd	-	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
Pathway Patrons	2,849	2,666	5,515	4,562	3,087	7,649
All Saints PCC, Alrewas	-	-	-	3,625	-	3,625
HS1	2,000	-	2,000	2,000	-	2,000
Lichfield Conduit Lands Trust	2,500	-	2,500	-	-	-
Shenstone Quilters	-	-	-	1,050	-	1,050
Waitrose Ltd – John Lewis	3,000	-	3,000	-	-	-
Gift aid income tax recovered	4,387	-	4,387	6,732	-	6,732
Donations of £1,000 and under	32,259	1,000	33,259	28,225	225	28,450
	59,995	3,666	63,661	46,194	32,312	78,506

3 Income from charitable activities

Domestic violence prevention	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021	Unrestricted funds 2020	Restricted funds 2020	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Big Lottery Funding	-	110,000	110,000	-	110,000	110,000
Tamworth BC	-	-	-	-	37,303	37,303
Nationwide Community	-	6,604	6,604	-	24,576	24,576
Smallwood Trust	5,047	47,084	52,131	-	-	-
Staffordshire Women's Aid	-	44,993	44,993	-	16,800	16,800
Lichfield DC	-	15,000	15,000	-	10,000	10,000
National Lottery Awards	10,224	34,437	44,661	-	10,000	10,000
Western Power	-	4,927	4,927	-	-	-
Community Foundation	2,850	989	3,839	-	-	-
Michael Lowe	-	-	-	-	5,000	5,000
Charles Hayward Foundation	-	-	-	-	20,000	20,000
Sub-total for domestic violence prevention	18,121	264,034	282,155	-	233,679	233,679

3 Income from charitable activities (continued)

	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021	Unrestricted funds 2020	Restricted funds 2020	Total 2020
Refuge						
Accommodation charges	264,896	-	264,896	243,381	-	243,381
Tamworth Borough Council – MHCLG	99,062	51,214	150,276	39,506	-	39,506
Edgar E Lawley Foundation	-	-	-	1,500	-	1,500
Clothworkers Foundation	2,765	435	3,200	-	-	-
Southern Staffs Energy	-	-	-	1,363	-	1,363
Staffordshire County Council	3,500	-	3,500	-	-	-
Staffordshire PCC	-	47,896	47,896	-	-	-
Grants £1,000 and under	4,370	-	4,370	2,574	900	3,474
Sub-total for Refuge	374,593	99,545	474,138	288,324	900	289,224

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Total 2020 £
Children's projects						
Children in Need	2,508	31,256	33,764	-	33,933	33,933
Lichfield DC – Action Kids	-	10,000	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
Eveson Charitable Trust	-	12,000	12,000			
Souter Charitable Trust	-	-	-	-	4,000	4,000
Grants £1,000 and under	-	-	-	-	1,000	1,000
Sub-total for children's projects	2,508	53,256	55,764	-	48,933	48,933
Total income from charitable activities	395,222	416,835	812,057	288,324	283,512	571,836

4 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Total 2020 £
Fundraising events	26,720	750	27,470	17,091	-	17,091
Training and services income	-	-	-	5,360	14,541	19,901
Memberships	98	-	98	98	-	98
Sundry	-	-	-	2,622	-	2,622
	26,818	750	27,568	25,171	14,541	39,712

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021	Unrestricted funds 2020	Restricted funds 2020	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Bank interest receivable	123	-	123	608	-	608

6a Analysis of expenditure 2021

	Raising funds £	Domestic violence prevention £	Refuge £	Children's projects £	Refuge based activities £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	Totals 2021 £
Staff costs	44	157,809	189,891	48,019	104	67,808	28	463,703
Refuge costs	-	-	122,715	-	-	-	-	122,715
Management	-	30,661	10,262	2,348	5,000	-	-	48,271
Finance	-	-	31,124	-	-	-	-	31,124
Information technology	-	7,441	2,412	745	-	-	-	10,598
Office costs	-	11,427	15,497	2,010	1,182	-	284	30,400
Audit fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,880	2,880
Professional fees	-	-	-	-	26,585	-	1,575	28,160
Other sundry expenses	742	20,636	2,200	6,475	12,383	-	-	42,436
	786	227,974	374,101	59,597	45,254	67,808	4,767	780,287
Support costs	1,517	25,529	26,401	4,787	9,574	(67,808)	-	-
Governance costs	-	1,969	2,278	520	-	-	(4,767)	-
Total 2021	2,303	255,472	402,780	64,904	54,828	-	-	780,287

Support and governance costs are allocated according to the time spent by the relevant staff on each activity.

6b Analysis of expenditure 2020

	Raising funds £	Domestic violence prevention £	Refuge £	Children's projects £	Refuge based activities £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	Totals 2020 £
Staff costs	252	176,530	203,960	63,193	2,931	48,653	940	496,459
Refuge costs	-	-	105,171	-	-	-	-	105,171
Management	-	35,765	10,262	-	-	-	-	46,027
Finance	-	-	1,725	-	-	-	-	1,725
Information technology	-	7,748	1,327	555	-	-	-	9,630
Office costs	-	10,012	14,416	4,404	210	-	309	29,351
Audit fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,880	2,880
Professional fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other sundry expenses	3,250	22,066	1,548	7,761	2,705	-	-	37,330
	3,502	252,121	338,409	75,913	5,846	48,653	4,129	728,573
Support costs	660	30,872	-	5,618	11,503	(48,653)	-	-
Governance costs	-	2,656	990	483	-	-	(4,129)	-
Total 2020	4,162	285,649	339,399	82,014	17,349	-	-	728,573

Support and governance costs are allocated according to the time spent by the relevant staff on each activity.

7 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

Net income / (expenditure) is stated after charging the following items:	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Auditors' remuneration	2,400	2,400
Operating lease rentals	1,824	4,402
Depreciation	2,653	2,851

8 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses and the cost of key management personnel

	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Wages and salaries	432,311	449,887
Social security costs	28,452	29,682
Employer contributions to defined contribution pension schemes	15,996	16,890
	476,759	496,459

The average number of employees during the year based on a headcount basis was 29 (2020: 30).

No employee earned in excess of £60,000 per annum (2020: none).

The total employee benefits (including employer's pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £44,170 (2020: £44,875).

No trustee received any remuneration or benefits during the year ended 31 March 2021, nor in the year ended 31 March 2020.

No trustees received expenses during the year ended 31 March 2021 (2020:none).

9 Related party transactions

There are no related party transactions to disclose for 2021 (2020: none).
There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Children's play equipment £	Fixtures and fittings £	Office equipment £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 April 2020	12,179	63,520	20,813	96,512
Additions	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2021	12,179	63,520	20,813	96,512
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2020	11,342	51,759	20,290	83,391
Charge for the year	167	2,354	132	2,653
At 31 March 2021	11,509	54,113	20,422	86,044
Net book value				
At 31 March 2021	670	9,407	391	10,468
At 31 March 2020	837	11,761	523	13,121

11 Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Accounts receivable	6,783	15,666
Rent receivable	7,505	1,246
Prepayments and accrued income	8,804	15,014
	23,092	31,926

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Operating creditors	3,916	6,111
Social security and other taxes	7,328	8,623
Accruals and deferred income	47,360	38,261
	58,604	52,995

13 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods:

	Land and buildings		Equipment	
	2021	2020	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£
Within 1 year	20,000	-	758	1,824
Between 2 and 5 years	44,000	-	2,469	3,227
	64,000	-	3,227	5,051

14a Analysis of net assets between funds 2021

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Fixed assets	6,676	3,792	10,468
Debtors	15,326	7,766	23,092
Cash	426,481	137,105	563,586
Creditors	(20,940)	(37,664)	(58,604)
Net assets as at 31 March 2021	427,543	110,999	538,542

14b Analysis of net assets between funds 2020

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Fixed assets	8,378	4,744	13,121
Debtors	16,388	15,537	31,926
Cash	355,492	67,876	423,368
Creditors	(20,344)	(32,651)	(52,995)
Net assets as at 31 March 2020	359,914	55,506	415,420

15a Movement in funds 2021

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2021 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	359,914	482,158	(405,083)	(9,446)	427,543
Restricted funds					
Children's Projects: Children in Need	3,699	31,257	(34,291)	-	665
Children's Projects: Other	-	44,705	(30,613)	-	14,092
Central costs	-	46,682	(38,934)	-	7,748
Domestic violence prevention: Big Lottery Funding	5,000	110,000	(119,446)	9,446	5,000
Domestic violence prevention: Other	41,691	106,454	(108,528)	-	39,617
Refuge	5,116	57,153	(29,105)	-	33,164
Smallwood Trust	-	25,000	(14,287)	-	10,713
	55,506	421,251	(375,204)	9,446	110,999
Total funds	415,420	903,409	(780,287)	-	538,542

15b Movement in funds 2020

	At 1 April 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2020 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	434,345	360,297	(343,561)	(91,167)	359,914
Restricted funds					
Children's Projects: Children in Need	-	33,933	(30,234)	-	3,699
Children's Projects: Other	-	30,942	(45,679)	14,736	-
Central costs	-	33,540	(33,540)	-	-
Domestic violence prevention: Big Lottery Funding	5,000	110,000	(127,810)	17,810	5,000
Domestic violence prevention: Other	3,056	119,731	(139,717)	58,620	41,691
Refuge	10,930	2,218	(8,032)	-	5,116
	18,986	330,365	(385,012)	91,167	55,506
Total funds	453,331	690,662	(728,573)	-	415,420

15 Movement in funds (continued)

Transfers between funds
Transfers between unrestricted and restricted funds were to cover any deficit of funds spent on restricted projects compared with grant income received, together with the transfer of agreed management costs.

Purposes of restricted funds:

Children's projects: funding, including grants from **Children in Need**, received for the provision of support to children in the refuges who are suffering as a result of living in a home with domestic violence. The funding received is provided to work with children both in the refuge and as an outreach to service users through a children's worker, a parenting support carer and a sessional crèche worker, together with additional costs such as outings and equipment.

Central costs: funding received towards the central costs of the refuge centres including the Operations Director.

Domestic violence prevention and advice fund: funding received for the provision of support to women who have suffered as a result of domestic violence. The funding is provided to work with women both in the refuges and as an outreach to service users through the provision of an early intervention worker, an independent domestic violence adviser and a 24 hour helpline operated by the project.

Refuge: funding received for the provision of support to service users whilst resident with the project. Such funding is provided to work with women in the refuge through a specialist support worker, a counselling service and activities to promote a healthier life style.

The Smallwood Trust: a restricted fund that allows us, as a Community Grant Partner, to issue individual monetary grants to our service users to increase the financial resilience of low-income individuals. Applications have to be made to the fund, alongside evidence of the individual's current financial situation, these are then assessed by support workers, and the Finance Manager, before grants can be issued directly to the applicant.