

Charity Registration No. 1050596

Company Registration No. 3114996 (England and Wales)

THE BRIDGE (EAST MIDLANDS)

**ANNUAL REPORT
AND
CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

**SOMERBYS LIMITED
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
30 NELSON STREET
LEICESTER
LE1 7BA**

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**REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

The Board of Trustees presents its report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Reference and Administrative information

Charity name:	The Bridge (East Midlands)
Operating name:	The Bridge
Charity registration number:	1050596
Company registration number:	3114996

Board of Trustees

Karen Jewell – Resigned 20/07/2021
Ashiedu Joel
Susan Lees
Jonathan Olds
Rosemary Thomas – Resigned 08/09/2021
Jay Webb – Chair
Richard White
Joanne Emmett – Appointed 24/07/2020
Steven Ablett – Appointed 23/07/2020
Helen Tighe – Appointed 23/07/2020
Amanda Soraghan – Appointed 23/07/2020

Company Secretary

Peter Davey – resigned 08/09/2021

Chief Officer

Peter Davey – Resigned 26/03/2021
Paul Snape – Acting Chief Officer - Appointed 26/03/2021

Registered Office and Operational Address

38 Leicester Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 2AG

Statutory Auditor

Somerbys Limited, Chartered Accountants, 30 Nelson Street, Leicester, LE1 7BA

Bankers

Cambridge & Counties Bank, Charnwood Court, 5B New Walk, Leicester LE1 6TE
CAF bank Limited, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4TA
The Charity Bank Limited, Fosse House, 182 High Street, Tonbridge, TN9 BE

**REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

Structure, Governance and Management*Governing document*

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association, which sets out the objects and powers of the company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Recruitment and appointment of Trustees

The Directors of the company are also charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Board of Trustees. The charity may, by ordinary resolution, appoint a person who is willing to act to be a Trustee. No person other than a Trustee retiring may be appointed a Trustee at any general meeting unless:

- he or she is recommended for re-election by the Trustees; or
- not less than fourteen nor more than thirty-five clear days before the date of the meeting, the charity is given a notice that:
 - (a) is signed by a member entitled to vote at the meeting;
 - (b) states the member's intention to propose the appointment of a person as a Trustee;
 - (c) contains the details that, if the person were to be appointed, the charity would have to file at Companies House; and
 - (d) is signed by the person who is to be proposed to show his or her willingness to be appointed.

All members who are entitled to receive notice of a general meeting must be given not less than seven nor more than twenty eight clear days' notice of any resolution to be put to the meeting to appoint a Trustee other than a Trustee who is to retire by rotation.

- (a) the Trustees may appoint a person who is willing to act to be a Trustee.
- (b) a Trustee appointed by a resolution of the other Trustees must retire at the next annual general meeting and must not be taken into account in determining the Trustees who are to retire by rotation.
- (c) the Trustees may co-opt any individual who has appropriate specialist skills to support them in fulfilling the objectives of the charity.

The appointment of a Trustee, whether by the charity in general meeting or by the other Trustees, must not cause the number of Trustees to exceed any number fixed as the maximum number of Trustees.

The organisation recognises that recruitment of new Trustees by way of personal recommendation is flawed. When looking to recruit new Trustees, the organisation advertises externally and invites expressions of interest from individuals. Information packs are then dispatched to individuals along with an application form. Individuals who return a completed application are invited to an interview with the Chief Officer and an existing Trustee (usually the Chair). The organisation is keen to recruit individuals with specific areas of interest or expertise.

Trustee Induction and Training

The organisation provides all new Trustees with an information pack containing details of the rights and responsibilities of Charity Trustees – this includes information published by the Charity Commission. All new Trustees are invited to attend an induction evening facilitated by an experienced Trustee. Training is ongoing and based around Trustee Meetings with an emphasis on using the individual expertise of Trustees in specific areas of work.

**REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

Risk Management

The Trustees conduct their own review of the risks to which the charity is exposed and establish systems to mitigate those risks. These systems are periodically reviewed to ensure they still meet the needs of the charity both now and for the future. The organisation has developed a robust Risk Register which is reviewed by the Board of Trustees bi-annually.

Organisational Structure

The charity provides a number of services, early intervention and homelessness prevention services, including a Specialist Housing Advice and Tenancy Relations Service, Housing Related Support Services, the talk2sort Mediation Service, a Single Access Point for 16 & 17 year olds, a Homelessness Transitions Rough Sleeper Programme, Rutland's Community Prevention and Wellbeing Services and two European Social Fund and Big Lottery Funded services, Moneywise Plus and YES Project.

The charity has a central office providing Customer Services including Welfare Provision (Starter Packs and Food and Fuel Vouchers) and financial and administrative support for the overall operation of the charity. The Trustees are responsible for developing overall policy, aided by the Chief Officer.

Volunteers are welcomed in all our work and are given training and support to enable them to work alongside our paid staff.

Objectives and Activities

The objectives, for which the charity was established, as defined by the Memorandum of Association, and amended in February 2012 are to promote charitable purposes only; more specifically for the relief and rehabilitation of homeless persons in need in the East Midlands and in particular by the provision of accommodation and associated facilities calculated to alleviate their need, to promote any other charitable purpose for the benefit of homeless persons and those at risk of homelessness in the East Midlands.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Trust's aims and objectives and in planning future activities. Public Benefit is demonstrated more specifically in the following Performance and Achievements sections which highlight specific client work from each of the services within the organisation.

A Message from the Chair

Another year for us all to remember in one way or another! We have just completed our 25th Anniversary Year of delivering services in the community we serve.

It has been a whirlwind of activity for everyone at The Bridge, including staff, volunteers, our Trustees and the organisations we partner with. We have seen such generosity of spirit from so many people during the pandemic. We have juggled the provision of services whilst having to adapt to the changing circumstances of our community and our service users with the restrictions placed upon us due to Covid-19 and two national lockdowns. The team have done a tremendous job and continued to work throughout with changes to ensure that staff and our clients were protected.

Unfortunately, we had to retain the temporary closure of our front facing doors, but we redefined and adjusted our services to a significantly increased number of clients, respecting social distancing and simultaneously dealing with additional, new and very vulnerable clients in collaboration with our local partners.

We have lost some very key members of our team who have gone onto pastures new, including our Communications & Fundraising Manager, Jessica Metson, who has done so much to raise our profile since she joined us. Our heartfelt thanks to every one of our employees for all their hard work, dedication, and their support. It is never easy to lose great staff, but heart-warming to know that they are advancing their careers.

**REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

We have also had to face the loss of our lynch pin, Peter Davey who was our CEO for over 20 years and will be missed greatly. I always said that if you cut him in two, he would have "The Bridge" written all the way through. Peter gave unstintingly of his time, and effort, and did so much to help so many over the years, developing a strong team which he leaves as his legacy.

Throughout the year we have experienced generosity on an epic scale from the public, members of the business community, local organisations, volunteers, our community partners, the local council, churches, politicians and clubs as we have worked together and been supported to raise funds to help some of the most vulnerable in our society. Thank you all so much for your continued support.

Food poverty has been highlighted by so many in their campaigns this year as this dreadful situation has continued to worsen for so many. Together with our partners in the community we have been able to alleviate some of the issues, but we know that so much work needs to continue to eradicate this.

I want to pay tribute to our dedicated and hard-working Board of Trustees who do so much to support the organisation, Richard White, Jon Olds, Karen Jewell, Sue Lees, Ashiedu Joel, Steve Ablett, Jo Emmett, Amanda Soraghan, Rosemary Thomas and Helen Tighe. Not only do they ensure that we undertake our governance role properly, but they do also so much more to support the organisation and consistently give of their time and expertise. This year has been a roller coaster ride as our new Trustees embedded themselves into the organisation and took up the mantle to help and support our staff. Thank you each and every one of you for going above and beyond with your support.

No organisation can exist without the hard work and dedication of its Strategic Management Team and the staff who work to deliver services and I want to thank them all for the fabulous work that they have undertaken during the last 12 months and for rising to the challenge every day. You make me proud to be part of such a great organisation.

Jay Webb, Chair of the Board of Trustees

Service Aims and Outcomes**Young People's Services (Single Access Point (SAP), talk²sort and Youth Employability Support (YES))**Aims (SAP):

- To prevent homelessness and reduce the use of B&B accommodation for 16/17-year-olds.
- To improve young people's life chances.
- To enable family members to plan future accommodation options and avert crises which often result in youth homelessness.
- To increase the young person and family members understanding of the reality of their personal and housing situation(s).

Aims (talk²sort):

- To prevent homelessness.
- To undertake one to one mediation sessions and facilitate meetings between young people and families where appropriate.
- To provide an opportunity for families to improve relationships, to build agreements and plan for the future.
- To raise awareness of mediation services, other local support services and homelessness issues in general.

**REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

Aims (YES):

- To support young people to access education, employment, or training.
- To enable young people to overcome challenges and barriers to positive outcomes.
- Provide intensive support to build confidence, self-esteem, and wellbeing.
- Deliver one to one mediation support and joint appointments between young people and families where appropriate.

Performance:

- 194 young people supported during the period.
- 100% homelessness prevented/relieved.
- 91.23% improved communication skills.
- 87.47% improved mental health.

Support Services (Housing Matters, Rutland Community Wellbeing Service)Aims:

- To prevent repeat homelessness and promote independent living.
- To provide effective support in order to assist people to sustain their tenancies.
- To promote social inclusion and encourage clients to access and engage in meaningful activity.
- To improve the health and wellbeing of clients accessing the service.

Performance:

- 85.72% of clients were prevented from becoming homeless.
- 85.94% felt that their housing conditions had improved.
- 90.33% felt that they were making more positive life choices and taking better care of themselves.
- 77.38% felt that their confidence/ self-esteem has improved.

Street Homelessness and Offenders Service (Homeless Offenders and Rapid Rehousing)Aims (Homeless Offender Services):

- To provide specialist housing advice to those who are homeless and have an offending history.
- To provide intensive support to those who are homeless to help them access accommodation.
- To support those who are homeless to address any barriers to accessing accommodation.
- To provide outreach support to rough sleepers and prisoners due for release with no fixed abode.

Aims (Rapid Rehousing Pathway):

- To support those who are homeless with no accommodation options available to them outside of the pathway, into suitable accommodation.
- To provide outreach support to those who are rough sleeping.
- To support those who are homeless to address any barriers to accessing accommodation.
- To provide support to those who access accommodation to promote positive tenancy management.

**REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

Performance:

- 656 referrals received, of which 407 engaged, 319 closed.
- 93.57% homelessness prevented/relieved.
- 90.74% clients making better life choices.
- 81.69% improved mental health.

Housing Advice, Tenancy Relations ServicesAims:

- To provide a free, independent and holistic Housing Advice service to all residents in the Borough of Charnwood.
- To provide an emergency advice and assistance service to those in housing crisis.
- To prevent homelessness through partnership working and tenancy relations work with both private and social landlord.
- To provide a free, independent telephone advice service.

Performance:

- 713 clients live during the period.
- 96.08% improved housing conditions.
- 64.79% improved financial circumstances.
- 85.15% felt more able to make their own choices.

Customer ServicesAims:

- To provide a drop-in/telephone service to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- To provide an effective and efficient housing triage service to ensure people have access to the right service for their needs.
- To deliver a welfare service, providing food parcels, fuel vouchers, starter packs and access to the telephone and/or computer
- To support the organisation's services in an administrative capacity

Performance:

- 186 households issued with fuel vouchers worth £6,340 for gas and electricity.
- 29 hot food vouchers issued to those who are of No Fixed Abode (NFA) worth £290.
- 31 starter packs issued to those moving into new accommodation.
- Triaged and dealt with 72% more enquiries in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20.

Charnwood Food Poverty GroupAims:

- To increase access to good food, empowering people to use and enjoy it, improve advocacy for the reduction in household food poverty and work together in partnership with agencies to provide food within a non-judgemental model.
- To provide strategic support, advice and guidance to foodbanks, hot food providers and organisations who offer food provision.
- To deliver food provision in Mountsorrel, support delivery in Loughborough and identify other localities in Charnwood to set up food provision.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Performance:

- Charnwood Community Action developed in crisis response to COVID-19 in Charnwood, with Charnwood Borough Council, John Storer Charnwood and The Bridge.
- 24 organisation's delivering food provision are now members of Charnwood Food Poverty Group.
- 22,773 food parcels delivered to households across Charnwood in 2020/2021.
- New food provision pathway developed for Charnwood, to be launched in Summer 2021.

Organisational Achievements

During the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021, The Bridge has made positive progress, despite the challenges which COVID-19 brought, against its 4 Year Strategy, which has 4 overarching strategic objectives. Specific highlights for the year, for each strategic objective include:

1. The organisation has expanded its service offering for clients through a number of new partnerships. A new specialist Housing Advice Service for the sub-regional IAPT Service, working closely with VITA Health Group. The organisation has also entered into a partnership with NACRO to deliver an East Midlands wide Dynamic Framework for the Ministry of Justice.
2. Throughout the last year, the organisation has driven forward work to further improve its governance. The Board of Trustees and SMT have created a Governance Improvement Team remit is to review, and continually improve, the organisations systems and processes relating to the Board of Trustees and the relationship of the Board with the SMT.
3. "Lockdown", as with many voluntary sector organisations, has created an opportunity to review fundraising and communications practices, and has been a time for innovation and interacting differently with the public and supporters. The organisation has been able to work differently, and as a result, has increased the public profile of The Bridge, along with the number of community donations.
4. The organisation is proud to announce that it passed its Advice Quality Standard again for its Specialist Housing Advice Service. This is a bi-annual audit which The Bridge has been committed to for the past two decades. Furthermore, the organisation's Business Improvement Team has continued to meet throughout "lockdown" and has been instrumental in the improvements made to the organisation's recruitment processes.

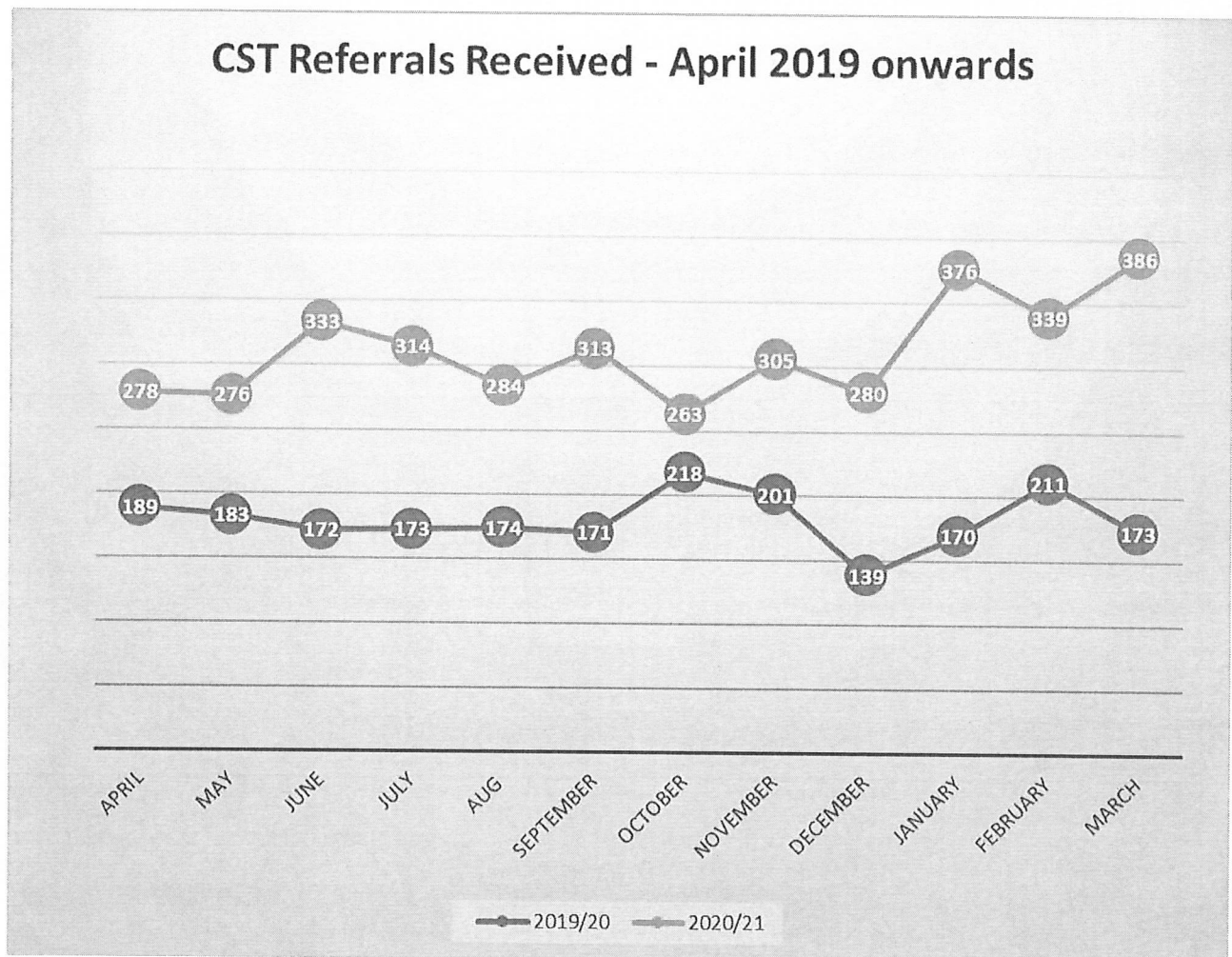
The Bridge's new outcome and impact framework has enabled the organisation to better capture the outcomes its clients have been achieving, and to better understand the impact the charity has had, from a client perspective. For the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021, The Bridge received 6,187 referrals and enquiries and worked with 2,494 households. The increase in the number of referrals and enquiries is 39.1% in comparison to the same period last year, with the number of households increasing by 13.9%. Throughout the same period, clients have self-reported the following outcomes:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Homelessness Prevented 92.13% | • Accessed Employment 41.38% |
| • Improved Housing 87.94% | • Accessed Training/Education 47.89% |
| • Improved Finances 79.55% | • Improved Independence 81.53% |
| • Improved Mental Health 83.68% | • Reduced Substance Misuse 76.14% |
| • Improved Physical Health 81.16% | • Reduced Crime/ASB 84.42% |
| • Feeling Less Isolated 68.92% | • Improved Confidence/Self Esteem 81.77% |
| • Improved Relationships 67.83% | • Improved Communication Skills 71.14% |
| • Involved in the Wider Community 43.48% | • More Able to Make Own Choices 88.00% |

Over and above the achievements against the organisation's strategic objectives and the client outcomes detailed above, The Bridge has had further success during the last financial year. The biggest achievement has to be the fast response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In March 2020, the organisation was hit was the announcement of the national lockdown, and therefore had to quickly decide how it would continue to deliver the much-needed services to its clients. Firstly, the safety of staff and clients was paramount, and along with that, came the reluctant decision to close the offices and the front door. This decision was taken alongside the introduction of a new 0800 freephone number which was a lifeline to many people needing to access the organisation's services.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

The introduction of the 0800 number, alongside the financial impact that COVID-19 was having on The Bridge's clients and the community, the organisation saw a significant increase in the number of enquiries coming through the customer services and triage team. Over last financial year, there was a 72% year on year increase in enquiries and referrals, as demonstrated in the graph below. It is anticipated that demand will continue to grow following the end of the eviction ban in May 2021.



Throughout the year, the organisation has been successful in applying for COVID-19 emergency funding, COVID-19 recovery funding, and where available, other grant funding to continue to deliver services, or deliver new services in response to COVID-19 and the challenges that the pandemic has brought for the community. Over the course of the financial year, the organisation has generated an additional £109,546 in core cost grants, £45,546 in emergency COVID-19 funding (including for food), and £12,000 to expand its rough sleeper services.

This funding enabled the organisation to expand its staffing levels across some of its services, specifically an additional member of staff in the Rapid Rehousing Service for Rough Sleepers. Furthermore, the organisation was able to increase its staffing capacity within its Housing Triage Service by 35%, which went some way to supporting the 72% increase in enquiries through that team.

Finally, The Board of Trustees and Strategic Management Team would like to say a big thank you to the individuals, business, community groups and trust funds who have generously donated £96,996, in addition to the considerable amount of food donations, to the organisation over the last year; contributing to core costs, delivery of services, enabling the organisation to provide emergency food parcels and respond quickly and robustly to the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Pay Awards

Recommendations are made to the Trustees by Strategy Advisory Groups, consisting of Executive Officers and Trustees, for annual pay awards including any one off performance related or enhancements in pay. The Board of Trustees are responsible for agreeing any recommendations.

Plans for Future Periods

The Bridge's vision of "resilient, compassionate communities, where individuals thrive in safe and secure homes" has provided the foundations for the development of the charity's Four-Year Strategy for the period 2020-2024. The strategic objectives outlined within the strategy support and guide the organisation with its direction.

Strategic Objectives

1. We will expand upon our early intervention and prevention offer.
 - a. We will build resilience in communities to combat loneliness, isolation, and stigma.
 - b. We will demonstrate the impact that sustainable housing has on health and wellbeing.
 - c. We will identify gaps in our service delivery and develop innovative solutions.
 - d. We will maintain and build upon the organisation's strategic relevance.
2. We will ensure that everyone continues to be valued, nurtured, and respected.
 - a. We will invest in our staff and cultivate a high performing workforce.
 - b. We will strengthen our governance and cultivate a high performing Board.
 - c. We will adopt a strengths-based approach for the benefit of our clients.
 - d. We will be a competitive and well-regarded organisation to work for.
3. We will continually drive forward a sustainable organisation built upon our reputation and integrity.
 - a. We will create successful and innovative income generation solutions.
 - b. We will enhance our approach to marketing & PR to raise the organisations profile.
 - c. We will strive for the organisation to have continued nationwide recognition.
 - d. We will identify, and explore, effective finance, and asset, management opportunities.
4. We will be advocates of best practice, taking a reflective approach to continual improvement.
 - a. We will continue to invest in the ongoing improvement of the business.
 - b. We will better evidence our social value and impact, developing a robust reporting framework.
 - c. We will maintain high levels of compliance across the organisation.
 - d. We will establish a bespoke and supportive consultancy solution through TheBridge²Excellence.

Financial Review

The results for the year showed a 22.2% increase on last year in total incoming resources. Total resources expended in the year showed an increase of 24.6% on last year, resulting in a net surplus for the year of £2,513 (2020 - £26,073).

Investment Policy

Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the charity has the power to make any investment which the Trustees see fit.

Reserves Policy

The charity has set itself a policy of maintaining unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the charity, at a level which equates to approximately six months expenditure. This policy is designed to provide the charity with sufficient funds to sustain its operations in the event of any changes to its funding streams and is aligned to Charity Commission recommended good practice. The target level of free reserves based on current activities is approximately £750,000. At 31 March 2021 the actual level of free reserves, excluding designated funds, was £160,382. The charity continues to work on adding to these reserves and continues to keep the policy under review.

**REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

The Trustees (who are also Directors of The Bridge (East Midlands) for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Board of Trustees' and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Board of 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 the year. 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 judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statement on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Board of Trustees are responsible for keeping proper 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.

Members of the Board of Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 2.

In accordance with company law, the company's Directors certify that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all the steps that ought to have been taken in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

Auditor

The auditor, Somerbys Limited, has indicated its willingness to continue in office.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (issued in January 2015) and in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies' subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 29th September 2021 and signed on its behalf by:


Jay Webb (Oct 1, 2021 15:24 GMT+1)

J Webb
Chair

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
THE BRIDGE (EAST MIDLANDS)****Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of The Bridge (East Midlands) (the 'parent charitable company') and its subsidiary (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, Group and Company Balance Sheets, the Group and Company Cash Flow Statements and notes to the financial statements, including 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 group and parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021, and of the group'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 Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group and parent 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 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 group or parent 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 board of trustees' report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's 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.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
THE BRIDGE (EAST MIDLANDS) (CONTINUED)****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' 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 group and parent charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the board of trustees' report.

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

- adequate and sufficient accounting records have not been kept by the parent charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company's 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 board of 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 11, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of financial statements which give a true and fair view, 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 groups and parent 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 group or parent charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with this Act.

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, is detailed below.

The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from error is considered to be low. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls.

In the context of the Bridge (East Midlands) and the group we have not identified any specific laws and regulations applicable other than general commercial laws and regulations such as: Companies Act 2006; Charity Commission guidance; employment law; health & safety legislation and GDPR.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
THE BRIDGE (EAST MIDLANDS) (CONTINUED)**

In response to the audit risks identified, we have undertaken the following procedures:

- Enquiry of trustees to identify any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Enquiry of trustees of actual and/or potential litigation and claims.
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Auditing the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluation of the rationale of any significant transactions falling outside the normal course of activities.

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 auditor's 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 charitable company'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 the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Marcus Dockerty FCA FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Somerbys Limited

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

Date: 1 October 2021

30 Nelson Street
Leicester
LE1 7BA

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCLUDING CONSOLIDATED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2020 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	166,732	-	166,732	23,250	-	23,250
Investments		2,385	-	2,385	2,541	-	2,541
Charitable activities	3	661,748	707,813	1,369,561	616,702	616,196	1,232,898
Total Income		830,865	707,813	1,538,678	642,493	616,196	1,258,689
Expenditure on:							
Costs of generating funds		68,804	-	68,804	25,674	-	25,674
Charitable activities		760,158	707,203	1,467,361	591,986	614,956	1,206,942
Total expenditure	5	828,962	707,203	1,536,165	617,660	614,956	1,232,616
Net income/expenditure before transfers		1,903	610	2,513	24,833	1,240	26,073
Transfer between funds	16	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure)		1,903	610	2,513	24,833	1,240	26,073
Fund balances at 1 April 2020		326,925	1,986	328,911	302,092	746	302,838
Fund balances at 31 March 2021		328,828	2,596	331,424	326,925	1,986	328,911

As permitted by S408 Companies Act 2016, the charity has not presented its own Income and Expenditure Account and related notes. The charity's net income for the year was £6,399 (2020 – £27,867).

The notes on pages 20 to 35 form part of these financial statements.

**CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2021**

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9	18,446	18,625
Current assets			
Debtors	11	45,018	39,286
Cash at bank and in hand		448,288	380,258
		493,306	419,544
Creditors			
Amounts falling due within one year	12	(180,328)	(109,258)
		312,978	310,286
Net assets		331,424	328,911
Funds			
Unrestricted funds	14	328,828	326,925
Restricted - Income	16	2,122	1,512
Permanent endowment	15	474	474
Total funds	13	331,424	328,911

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 29 September 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

Jay Webb
Jay Webb (Oct 1, 2021 15:24 GMT+1)

J Webb
Chair

Company Registration number 3114996

The notes on pages 20 to 35 form part of these financial statements.

**CHARITY BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2021**

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9	17,384	17,344
Current assets			
Debtors	11	45,017	66,294
Cash at bank and in hand		436,100	339,917
		481,117	406,111
Creditors			
Amounts falling due within one year	12	(169,157)	(100,610)
		311,960	305,601
Net assets		329,344	322,945
Funds			
Unrestricted funds	14	326,748	320,959
Restricted Income	16	2,122	1,512
Permanent endowment	15	474	474
Total funds	13	329,344	322,945

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 29 September 2021 and signed on its behalf by:

Jay Webb
Jay Webb (Oct 1, 2021 15:24 GMT+1)

J Webb
Chair

Company Registration number 3114996

The notes on pages 20 to 35 form part of these financial statements.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flow from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	20	<u>82,339</u>	<u>80,379</u>
Net cash flow from operating activities		<u>82,339</u>	<u>80,379</u>
Cash flow from investing activities			
Purchase of new property, plant and equipment		(16,694)	(7,724)
Investment income received		<u>2,385</u>	<u>2,541</u>
Net cash flow from investing activities		<u>(14,309)</u>	<u>(5,183)</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		68,030	75,196
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April 2020		<u>380,258</u>	<u>305,062</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March 2021		<u>448,288</u>	<u>380,258</u>
Cash and cash equivalents consists of:			
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>448,288</u>	<u>380,258</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March 2021		<u>448,288</u>	<u>380,258</u>

CHARITY STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flow from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	20	<u>109,537</u>	<u>66,137</u>
Net cash flow from operating activities		<u>109,537</u>	<u>66,137</u>
Cash flow from investing activities			
Purchase of new property, plant and equipment		(15,739)	(7,180)
Investment income received		<u>2,385</u>	<u>2,541</u>
Net cash flow from investing activities		<u>(13,354)</u>	<u>(4,639)</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		96,183	61,498
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April 2020		<u>339,917</u>	<u>278,419</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March 2021		<u>436,100</u>	<u>339,917</u>
Cash and cash equivalents consists of:			
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>436,100</u>	<u>339,917</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March 2021		<u>436,100</u>	<u>339,917</u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

1. Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies are summarised below.

(a) Basis of accounting

The Bridge (East Midlands) is a private company limited by guarantee (registration number 3114996) and registered charity regulated by the Charity Commission (registered number 1050596) with a registered address at 38 Leicester Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 2AG.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Companies Act 2006, 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) (effective 1 January 2015) – (Charities SORP (FRS102)) and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The Bridge (East Midlands) meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include certain items at fair value. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated. There have been no changes to accounting estimates during the reporting period.

(b) Basis of consolidation

The consolidated financial statements present the results of the charity and its subsidiary ("the Group") as if they formed a single entity. Intercompany transactions and balances between the Group entities are therefore eliminated in full.

The results of the subsidiary undertaking are shown in the consolidated statement of financial activities within income and expenditure. The assets and liabilities of the subsidiary undertaking are combined with those of the company in a consolidated balance sheet and a consolidated cash flow statement on a line by line basis. A separate statement of financial activities for the company is not presented as permitted by section 408 of the Companies Act 2006.

(c) Fund accounting

- Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.
- Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Board of Trustees for particular purposes.
- Restricted funds are subject to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1. Accounting policies (continued)

(d) Recognition of income

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Voluntary income is received by way of donations and grants and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant. Legacies are recognised where there is an entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.
- Incoming resources from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance.
- The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included in these accounts.
- Investment income is included when receivable.

(e) Expenditure recognition

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes VAT, which cannot be recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of fundraising purposes.
- Charitable activities expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries.
- Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the audit fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.
- All costs are allocated between the expenditure categories of the Statement of Financial Activities on a basis to reflect the use of the resource. Costs relating to a particular activity are allocated directly. The resources expended in the operation of the Charity's central services system and central office which cannot be directly allocated are apportioned between the expenditure categories on the basis of the estimated amount of staff time involved in each activity.

(f) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost, less the estimated residual value, of each asset over its expected useful life, at varying rates:

	%	
Fixtures and equipment	20.00	Straight line
Leasehold property improvements	6.67	Straight line
Computer equipment	33.33	Straight line

All items of equipment that are not consumable in nature are capitalised.

Donated assets are brought in at their second hand value at the date of receipt.

(g) Pensions

The charity participates in a defined contribution pension scheme for the benefit of the employees, the regular costs of which are expended in the Statement of Financial Activities as and when incurred.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

(h) Leases

All leases are regarded as operating leases and payments made under them are expended in the Statement of Financial Activities over the term of the lease.

(i) Employee Benefits

When employees have rendered service to the charity, short-term employee benefits to which the employees are entitled are recognised at the discounted amount expected to be paid in exchange for that service.

(j) Debtors and creditors receivable/payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

(k) Taxation

The Company is a registered charity and thus is exempt from taxation on its income and capital gains.

For the subsidiary company tax currently payable is based on taxable profit for the year. Taxable profit differs from net profit as reported in the accounts because it excludes items of income or expense that are taxable or deductible in other years and it further excludes items that are never taxable or deductible. The company's liability for current tax is calculated using tax rates that have been enacted or substantively enacted by the reporting end date.

(l) Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing material adjustment to the carrying amounts of the assets and liabilities within the next financial year are addressed below.

i) Useful economic lives of tangible assets:

The annual depreciation charge for tangible assets is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are reassessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments, economic utilisation and physical condition of the assets. See accounting policy note (above) for the useful economic lives for each class of assets.

ii) Expenditure allocations:

Expenditure is apportioned where it relates to more than one category (see note 5).

iii) Covid-19 pandemic:

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic became significant throughout the UK in March 2020. As a result the way in which some services are delivered has been affected. A degree of estimation uncertainty exists surrounding the financial and operational impact as the economic and social effects of the pandemic unfold.

2. Voluntary income

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2021	2020
Donations	£166,732	-	£166,732	£23,250
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

3. Incoming resources from charitable activities

	2021	2020
	£	£
Unrestricted funds:		
Government and other public authorities	513,961	418,445
Public Sector Health	36,000	36,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	30,000
Leathersellers Charitable Fund	-	15,000
Subsidiary income – government and other public authorities	111,787	117,257
	<u>661,748</u>	<u>616,702</u>
	2021	2020
Restricted funds:		
Children In Need	44,162	43,324
Loughborough Welfare Trust – Canvas Bag Scheme	-	500
Big Lottery Fund	92,070	107,746
Vicars Relief Fund	3,411	2,099
Glasspool	2,591	2,025
Charity Link	645	320
Maud Elkington Charitable Trust – Food Poverty Grant	1,000	2,000
Henry Smith	-	38,000
Mountsorrel United Charities	7,104	3,000
Moneywise Plus	99,370	127,515
DWP Client Benefits	-	291
Rutland Grants	158	195
YES	53,796	48,980
BLF - Homelessness Prevention	218,517	128,464
CBC – Canvas Bag Scheme	1,146	1,146
CBC – Emthink licence fee reimbursement	6,419	-
Open Gate Trust – Food Poverty Grant	-	2,292
Co Op Food Poverty Funding	1,856	-
White Bread Trust	58	348
Amazon	-	300
Police and Crime Commissioner Mediation Grant	12,249	6,125
NWLDC Rapid Rehousing	117,630	75,000
Loughborough Welfare Trust	250	548
Leicestershire County Council CWP Supplies Funding	7,930	17,978
Leicestershire County Council Shire Community Grant	-	8,000
Leicestershire and Rutland Community Foundation*	-	-
Intelligent Energy	22,015	-
Schroder Trust*	1,600	-
7 Stars Foundation grant	500	-
Shires Community Grant	10,000	-
Charnwood Borough Council Members Grant	2,336	-
Other food poverty donations	1,000	-
	<u>707,813</u>	<u>616,196</u>

* Funder has provided further amounts that have been deferred into the following year – see note 19.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

4. The Bridge (Trading) East Midlands Limited

	2021	2020
Income	111,787	117,256
Administration expenses	(109,829)	(111,292)
Surplus before taxation	1,958	5,964
Tax on surplus	-	-
Surplus for financial period	1,958	5,964

This is a wholly owned trading subsidiary incorporated in England and Wales and limited by guarantee.

The Bridge (Trading) East Midlands Limited (10922464) undertakes activities of a similar nature to The Bridge (East Midlands).

A summary of the trading results are shown above. Audited accounts have been filed with the Registrar of Companies.

The distributable net profit is to be distributed to The Bridge (East Midlands).

5. Total resources expended

Basis of Allocation	Voluntary Income	HAT	Housing Matters	Family Support	Subsidiary	Transitions	Mediation	SAP	Syrian Resettlement	Moneywise	YES	TRO	BLF	Food Poverty	COVID	Total 2021	Total 2020
Direct client welfare costs	20,586	-	£ 165,000	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 76,635
Salaries & wages	48,650	165,656	77,692	21,632	83,927	123,774	115,099	41,369	115,503	117,927	68,560	24,052	37,987	28,924	-	1,070,750	941,895
Sundry expenses	-	280	135	30	231	376	681	98	86	76	63	42	45	31	-	2,174	6,200
Audit fees	-	2,228	947	211	3,378	2,462	1,483	676	1,069	1,321	521	331	603	258	-	15,488	8,164
Insurance	-	1,018	431	86	92	1,143	672	308	488	646	236	154	269	108	-	5,561	6,568
Literature & subscriptions	-	1,137	308	122	835	1,371	681	365	342	342	261	159	205	316	-	6,444	5,933
Print, postage & stationery	-	1,127	363	118	683	1,401	781	371	363	561	241	297	258	155	-	6,720	9,649
Recruitment	-	75	42	10	53	66	54	21	44	71	23	10	28	14	-	511	-
Telephone	-	4,826	1,739	572	2,847	5,653	3,182	1,565	1,932	1,932	966	701	1,159	580	-	27,654	35,626
Training and travel	-	4,634	1,729	428	5,305	8,219	3,417	1,831	2,413	3,588	1,350	629	1,588	1,915	-	37,047	39,151
Repairs & renewals	-	3,610	1,246	424	5,950	4,326	2,389	1,186	1,376	1,377	688	527	825	482	3,223	27,629	24,310
Starter packs	-	594	264	69	332	654	382	178	264	256	146	81	153	77	-	3,450	15,866
Rent and room hire	-	4,284	1,687	517	2,470	4,798	2,870	1,356	1,875	1,875	938	615	1,125	563	-	24,973	26,632
Legal & Prof fees	-	3,619	1,140	399	1,807	4,129	2,220	1,127	1,526	1,266	633	499	760	380	-	19,505	12,923
Utilities	-	509	173	60	272	612	333	168	192	192	96	74	115	58	-	2,854	4,172
Publicity	-	928	274	106	474	1,180	593	315	305	305	390	138	183	91	-	5,282	4,913
Donations	1,316	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,316	-
COVID Emer supplies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13,506	11,913	25,419	-
Food Poverty	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,197	-	6,197	-
Funding costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation	-	2,532	1,596	200	1,173	2,087	1,181	629	1,811	2,394	875	368	997	399	-	16,872	13,979
Total	70,522	197,058	254,765	24,984	109,829	162,251	136,647	51,563	129,589	134,129	75,987	28,678	90,943	54,054	15,136	1,536,166	1,232,616

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

6. Auditor's remuneration

	2021	2020 £
Auditors' remuneration – audit services	6,710	4,002
Auditors' remuneration – audit of subsidiary	2,000	1,500
Fees paid to Auditor for non audit services	2,500	1,620
Fees paid to Auditor for non audit services – subsidiary	1,000	925
	12,210	£8,027

7. Staff costs and numbers

	2021 £	2020 £
Staff costs were as follows:		
Salaries	873,590	839,547
Agency and other staff costs	25,262	-
Social security costs	42,030	43,862
Pension contributions	77,177	58,486
Ex gratia payment	29,000	-
	£1,047,059	£941,895

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme in respect of its employees. The scheme and its assets are held by independent managers. The pension charge represents contributions due from the company and amounted to £77,177 (2020 - £58,486). Unpaid contributions at the balance sheet date amounted to £9,158 (2020 - £5,920).

The ex gratia payment was made to a former employee to settle a dispute and potential employment rights claims, which would have otherwise been lodged.

During the year £nil (2020 - £nil) of out of pocket expenses were reimbursed to Trustees and no Trustees in this year or the preceding year were in receipt of remuneration.

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

The Chief Officer is considered to be a key employee along with the Deputy Chief Officer (Head of Business & Development), Quality & Business Manager and Head of Programmes & Services; their remuneration for the year was £192,567 (2020: £173,520)

The average number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2021	2020
Charitable activities	42	40
Generating funds	1	1
	43	41

8. Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities. The trading subsidiary company is liable for tax.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

9. Tangible fixed assets

Group	Leasehold Improvements £	Computer Equipment £	Fixtures & Equipment £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 April 2020	84,863	50,236	51,518	186,617
Additions	-	16,948	1,062	18,010
Disposals	-	(1,973)	-	(1,973)
At 31 March 2021	84,863	65,211	52,580	202,654
Accumulated Depreciation				
At 1 April 2020	76,232	44,113	47,648	167,993
Charge for year	5,636	8,657	2,580	16,871
Eliminated on disposals	-	(658)	-	(658)
At 31 March 2021	81,868	52,112	50,228	184,206
Net book values				
At 31 March 2021	2,995	13,099	2,352	18,446
At 31 March 2020	8,631	6,123	3,871	18,625
Tangible fixed assets				
Charity				
Cost				
At 1 April 2020	84,863	47,284	51,517	183,664
Additions	-	15,994	1,061	17,055
Disposals	-	(1,973)	-	(1,973)
At 31 March 2021	84,863	61,305	52,578	198,746
Accumulated Depreciation				
At 1 April 2020	76,232	42,441	47,647	166,320
Charge for year	5,636	7,481	2,582	15,699
Eliminated on disposals	-	(657)	-	(657)
At 31 March 2021	81,868	49,265	50,229	181,362
Net book values				
At 31 March 2021	2,995	12,040	2,349	17,384
At 31 March 2020	8,631	4,843	3,870	17,344

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

10. **Subsidiary**

The Bridge (East Midlands) is the sole member of The Bridge (Trading) East Midlands Limited – 10922464 a company incorporated by guarantee in England and Wales. The subsidiary's accounts have been consolidated in line with the accounting policies. A summary of the trading results is stated in note 4.

11. **Debtors**

Group	2021	2020
Trade Debtors	28,299	25,073
Prepayments and other debtors	16,718	14,213
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£45,017	£39,286
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Charity	2021	2020
Trade Debtors	28,299	24,929
Prepayments and other debtors	16,718	41,365
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£45,017	£66,294
	<hr/>	<hr/>

12. **Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)**

Group	2021	2020
Trade creditors	20,151	13,692
Other taxes and social security	27,356	19,780
Accruals and deferred income	123,664	69,865
Other Creditors	9,157	5,921
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	180,328	£109,258
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Charity	2021	2020
Trade creditors	14,619	13,401
Other taxes and social security	24,416	13,772
Accruals and deferred income	120,964	67,516
Other Creditors	9,157	5,921
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£169,157	£100,610
	<hr/>	<hr/>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

13. Analysis of net assets between funds
31 March 2021

Group	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Income Funds £	Endowment funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	18,446	-	-	18,446
Net current assets	310,382	2,122	474	312,978
Net assets at 31 March 2021	328,828	2,122	474	331,424
Charity	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Income Funds £	Endowment funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	17,384	-	-	17,384
Net current assets	309,364	2,122	474	311,960
Net assets at 31 March 2021	326,748	2,122	474	329,344

31 March 2020

Group	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Income Funds £	Endowment funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	18,625	-	-	18,625
Net current assets	308,300	1,512	474	310,286
Net assets at 31 March 2020	326,925	1,512	474	328,911
Charity	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Income Funds £	Endowment funds £	Total £
Tangible fixed assets	17,344	-	-	17,344
Net current assets	303,615	1,512	474	305,601
Net assets at 31 March 2020	320,959	1,512	474	322,945

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

14. Unrestricted funds
31 March 2021

Group	General Undesignated Funds £	Premises & Repairs £	Redundancy Contingency £	Total £
Balance at 1 April 2020	176,925	120,000	30,000	326,925
Surplus/(deficit) for year	1,903	-	-	1,903
Balance at 31 March 2021	178,828	120,000	30,000	328,828
Charity	General Undesignated Funds £	Premises & Repairs £	Redundancy Contingency £	Total £
Balance at 1 April 2020	170,959	120,000	30,000	320,959
Surplus/(deficit) for year	5,789	-	-	5,789
Balance at 31 March 2021	176,748	120,000	30,000	326,748

31 March 2020

Group	General Undesignated Funds £	Premises & Repairs £	Redundancy Contingency £	Total £
Balance at 1 April 2019	152,092	120,000	30,000	302,092
Surplus/(deficit) for year	24,833	-	-	24,833
Balance at 31 March 2020	176,925	120,000	30,000	326,925
Charity	General Undesignated Funds £	Premises & Repairs £	Redundancy Contingency £	Total £
Balance at 1 April 2019	144,332	120,000	30,000	294,332
Surplus/(deficit) for year	26,627	-	-	26,627
Balance at 31 March 2020	170,959	120,000	30,000	320,959

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

15. Restricted funds – permanent endowment

This fund represents the assets donated by Charnwood Shelter Project to The Bridge (East Midlands). There has been no movement on this fund during 2021 nor 2020.

16. Restricted funds

31 March 2021

	At 01/04/20 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	At 31/03/21 £
Children in Need Fund	-	44,162	44,162	-	-
Rutland Grants	-	158	158	-	-
Loughborough Welfare Trust – Canvas Bag Scheme	-				
Vicars Relief Fund	40	3,411	3,408	-	43
The National Lottery Community Fund	-	92,070	92,070	-	-
Glasspool	270	2,591	1,853	-	1,008
Leicester Charity Link	160	645	527	-	278
White Bread Trust	-	58	58	-	-
Moneywise Plus	-	99,370	99,370	-	-
YES	-	53,796	53,796	-	-
BLF Homelessness- Prevention	-	218,517	218,517	-	-
Buttle Trust	192	-	-	-	192
Leicestershire County Council- Shire Community Grant	-	10,000	10,000	-	-
Leicestershire County Council- CWP Supplies Funding	600	7,930	7,930	-	600
Maud Elkington Charitable Trust – Food Poverty Grant	-	1,000	1,000	-	-
Charnwood Borough Council - Canvas Bag Grant	-	1,146	1,146	-	-
Charnwood Borough Council - Emthink licence fee reimbursement	-	6,419	6,419	-	-
NWLDC – Rapid Rehousing Grants	-	117,630	117,630	-	-
Police & Crime Commissioner – Mediation Grant	-	12,249	12,249	-	-
Mountsorrel United Charities	-	7,104	7,104	-	-
Loughborough Welfare Trust	250	250	499	-	1
Schroder Trust	-	1,600	1,600	-	-
7 Stars Foundation Grant	-	500	500	-	-
Intelligent Energy	-	22,015	22,015	-	-
Charnwood Borough Council - Council members grant	-	2,336	2,336	-	-
Co-op Food poverty funding	-	1,856	1,856	-	-
Other food poverty donations	-	1,000	1,000	-	-
	1,512	707,813	707,203	-	2,122

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

The main funds are held for the following purposes:

Children in Need – funding towards 3 x mediator posts and a contribution towards non-staffing costs
 Rutland Grants - funding for client essentials/furniture/rent
 Loughborough Welfare Trust – contribution towards canvas bag initiative (reduction in plastic carrier bag use for food parcels)
 Vicars' Relief Fund – Funding for client essentials/furniture/rent
 The National Lottery Community Fund – Funding to deliver homelessness prevention services to families
 Henry Smith – funding towards the costs of employing the Head of Housing Services
 Glasspool - funding for client essentials/furniture/rent
 DWP Client Benefits - clients benefit paid in due to no bank account
 Leicester Charity Link - funding for client essentials/furniture/rent
 White Bread Trust – funding for client essentials/furniture
 Moneywise Plus – funding to work with people to increase their financial and digital skills
 YES - funding to work with young people who are furthest from the labour market
 The National Lottery Community Fund (MHCLG) – Funding to a homelessness offenders service
 Buttle Trust – funding for client essentials/furniture
 Leicestershire County Council Shire Community Grant - contribution towards Charnwood Food Poverty Group
 Leicestershire County Council CWP – funding for Charnwood Welfare Provision (emergency food and fuel).
 Maud Elkington Charitable Trust – contribution towards Charnwood Food Poverty Group
 CBC (Canvas Bag Grant) – contribution towards canvas bag initiative (reduction in plastic carrier bag use for food parcels)
 CBC – Reimbursement of database licence costs for rough sleeper programme.
 Open Gate Trust – Contribution towards canvas bag initiative (reduction in plastic bag use for food parcels)
 NWLDC (Rapid Rehousing) – funding for 3 x support workers to deliver a rapid rehousing service
 Police and Crime Commissioner – funding for a mediator to work with missing young people
 Mountsorrel United Charities - contribution towards Charnwood Food Poverty Group
 Amazon – Funding for client essentials/furniture.
 Loughborough Welfare Trust – funding for client essentials/furniture
 7 Stars foundation grant – funding for young people packs
 Schroder Trust – funding for starter packs
 Intelligent Energy – funding for food poverty
 Charnwood Borough Council (Council members grant) – Food poverty group
 Co op – funding for food poverty
 Other food poverty donations – various individual donors who specified that the money be used for food poverty relief.

Where the balance is in credit this represents a short term timing difference with expenses yet to be recouped through service contracts.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

16. Restricted funds

31 March 2020	At 01/04/19 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	At 31/03/20 £
Children in Need Fund	-	43,324	43,324	-	-
Rutland Grants	-	195	195	-	-
Loughborough Welfare Trust – Canvas Bag Scheme	-	500	500	-	-
Vicars Relief Fund	40	2,099	2,099	-	40
Big Lottery Funding	-	107,746	107,746	-	-
Henry Smith	-	38,000	38,000	-	-
Glasspool	-	2,025	1,755	-	270
DWP Client Benefits	-	291	291	-	-
Charity Link	40	320	200	-	160
White Bread Trust	-	348	348	-	-
Moneywise Plus	-	127,515	127,515	-	-
YES	-	48,980	48,980	-	-
BLF – Homelessness Prevention	-	128,464	128,464	-	-
Buttle Trust	192	-	-	-	192
Leicestershire County Council – Shire Community Grant	-	8,000	8,000	-	-
Leicestershire County Council- CWP Supplies Funding	-	17,978	17,378	-	600
Maud Elkington Charitable Trust – Food Poverty Grant	-	2,000	2,000	-	-
Charnwood Borough Council- Canvas bag grant	-	1,146	1,146	-	-
Open Gate Trust – Food Poverty Grant	-	2,292	2,292	-	-
NWLDC – Rapid Rehousing Grants	-	75,000	75,000	-	-
Police & Crime Commissioner – Mediation Grant	-	6,125	6,125	-	-
Mountsorrel United Charities	-	3,000	3,000	-	-
Amazon	-	300	300	-	-
Loughborough Welfare Trust	-	548	298	-	250
	272	616,196	614,956	-	1,512

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

17. Operating lease commitments

Group and Charity

The charity had the following commitments under non-cancellable operating leases as set out below:

	Land and Buildings		Other Operating Leases	
	2021	2020	2021	2020
Operating leases which expire:				
One year	12,500	-	-	392
Between two and five years	-	25,000	2,897	3,194
After five years	-	-	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£12,500	£25,000	£2,897	£3,586
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

The operating lease commitments relate solely to the charity.

18 Related Party Transactions

During the year there were no related party transactions.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

19. Deferred Income

Group and Charity

Deferred income comprises grant and other income paid up front for the fulfilment of charitable activities:

	2021	2020
Balance as at 1 April 2020	64,335	6,000
Amount released to income earned from charitable activities	(64,335)	(6,000)
Amount deferred in year	111,004	64,335
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance as at 31 March 2021	£111,004	£64,335
	<hr/>	<hr/>

There is no deferred income in relation to the subsidiary.

20. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operations

Group	2021	2020
Net income for year	2,513	25,953
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	16,872	13,978
Investment income	(2,385)	(2,541)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(5,851)	(9,324)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	71,190	52,313
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£82,339	£80,379
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Charity	2021	2020
Net income for year	6,399	27,867
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	15,699	13,152
Investment income	(2,385)	(2,541)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	21,277	(25,827)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	68,547	53,486
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£109,537	£66,137
	<hr/>	<hr/>

In memory of the

976

homeless people whose deaths were recorded across
the UK in 2020; an increase of a third from 2019

**TOGETHER, WE CAN PREVENT
AND RELIEVE HOMELESSNESS**

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Front page statistics gathered from
The Guardian, 2020.



A THANK YOU TO PETER DAVEY

Last year marked an incredible milestone in the career of our long-standing Chief Officer, Peter Davey, as he celebrated his 20th Anniversary of leading The Bridge (East Midlands).

Having nurtured our organisation from its small beginnings to the twelve thriving services we currently offer, Peter decided it was a good time to step down from his role as Chief Officer and leave the organisation earlier this year. Under his leadership tens of thousands of local people have received advice, support, and avoided housing crisis or homelessness.

**"As staff, Trustees, volunteers
and clients of The Bridge, we
owe him so much thanks."**

As Chief Officer, Peter's passion for social justice and equality was inspirational. His dedication to supporting overlooked members of our society and creating strong communities has undoubtedly enabled our charity to achieve so much in the last twenty years.

Working with elected members and Councils and advocating for change both nationally and locally, Peter was often the voice for thousands of local people who had sought support from The Bridge.

His ethos has played a huge part in shaping our mission, vision, and day-to-day working style. In fact, much of what our organisation prides itself on has stemmed from his leadership: the family-feel amongst our staff, the person-centred approach to our work, and our shared desire to never let a member of our community go without support.

Peter; as an organisation, we are so grateful for your twenty years of service. Your longevity is testament to your success, commitment and to the incredible relationship you fostered with your staff team.

Thank you.

**"Developing sustainable
housing solutions for
individuals and communities
through partnership,
empowerment and
good practice."**

- Peter Davey



OUR VALUES

RESPECT

We have a commitment to fairness and equality.

We acknowledge an individual's needs, beliefs and their right to make their own choices.

QUALITY

We have a commitment to delivering excellence; providing a high standard of services with a person-centred approach.

PARTNERSHIP

We work with others to create trusting and positive relationships which enhance the delivery of services for the benefit of the community.

EMPOWERMENT

We encourage clients and staff to develop their existing skills and knowledge. We help to build self-confidence and increase opportunities to make positive contributions.

POSITIVITY

We have an optimistic attitude and approach which is focused upon identifying innovative solutions for all.

FUNDRAISERS, YOU ARE AMAZING!

This year has been extremely tough for us all but, despite the circumstances, you have supported us like never before. Words cannot thank our donors enough for the funding we have received in the last year.

When we started out on our 25th Anniversary campaign in 2020, our target was £25,000 – a higher amount of community donations than we had ever received before...

Thanks to you, our 25th Anniversary community donation total for the year 2020 was an incredible £61,049!

But, your generosity did not cease: our April 2020 – March 2021 community fundraising total was a mind-blowing £96,995!

Your unwavering support and kindness has meant that our services have been able to achieve fantastic outcomes throughout periods of vastly increased demand.

The creativity and enthusiasm of fundraisers was fantastic, during a year where normality was halted. A few examples of what you achieved are:



Josie's 40k @ 40 Run



Loughborough Hospital's Jumper Days



The Needle & Pin's 'Brave the Shave'



Diane's Pet Portraits



St Paul's CE Primary School's Taste & Try



Redefine Living's Bake Sale



Pleasant Close Crew's £1 Meals Challenge

We even had extremely generous individual donors who have funded whole projects, such as Christmas Food Parcels and Private Rented Deposits for those in need!

On top of this, we would like to thank our regular monthly donors, whose ongoing support means the utmost to our charity and has made the world of difference to our work.

Every time that you donate, fundraise, spread the word about our services, or share our posts online, you are helping us fight homelessness every day, and we couldn't do it without you!

Jessica Metson
Communications and Fundraising Manager



A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

Another year to remember for us all in one way or another! We have just completed our 25th Anniversary Year of delivering services and it has been a whirlwind for everyone at The Bridge. We have seen such positive spirit throughout the pandemic, juggling the provision of services whilst adapting to constantly changing circumstances due to COVID-19.

Unfortunately, we had to prolong the closure of our front facing doors, but we redefined and adjusted our services to a significantly increased number of enquiries, respecting social distancing and dealing with additional, new and very vulnerable clients.

We have lost some very key members of our team who have gone on to new pastures, including our Communications & Fundraising Manager, Jessica Metson, who has done so much to raise our profile. We have also had to face the loss of our lynch pin, Peter Davey, who was our Chief Officer for over 20 years and will be missed greatly. Peter gave unstintingly of his time and effort and did so much to help so many over the years, developing a strong team which he leaves as his legacy.

Throughout the year, we have experienced generosity on an epic scale from the public, businesses, local organisations, volunteers, community partners, the local council, churches, politicians and clubs. We have worked together and been supported to raise funds to help some of the most vulnerable in our society. Thank you all so much.

I want to pay tribute to our dedicated and hard-working Board of Trustees who do so much for The Bridge, and who are pictured below. While ensuring that we undertake our governance role properly, they do so much more to support the organisation and consistently give their time and expertise.

No organisation can exist without the hard work and dedication of its Strategic Management Team and the staff who work to deliver services. I want to thank them all for the fabulous work that they have undertaken during the last 12 months, rising to the challenge every day. You make me proud to be part of such a great organisation.

Jay Webb
Chair



Amanda Soraghan



Jay Webb



Jo Emmett



Sue Lees



Steve Ablett



Richard White



Rosie Thomas



Ashiedu Joel



Jon Olds



Karen Jewell



Helen Tighe



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Hello, and welcome to this year's annual report.

I am sat here reflecting on the last year and a half, just as the Government have relaxed all COVID-19 restrictions and we venture into the unknown. Are cases going to run out of control? Are we going to go back into lockdown? Will things ever go back to "normal"? Who knows? All we do know, is that this last year has been a whirlwind of ups and downs, for so many reasons.

The COVID-19 pandemic has really shown how resilient our staff are, and how much they care about the clients who we work with. Being locked down from March 2020, and forced to work from home ever since, they have continued to provide our services throughout, and have had to quickly adapt to new ways of working – I could not be prouder of the team.

Unfortunately, this year as also seen the departure of our leader, Peter Davey earlier this year. Peter first employed me when I was 18 years old, and has always been so supportive, both professionally and personally. We will all miss him, but we thank him for everything he has done for the organisation, the sector, and our communities, over his 20-year tenure.

Moreover, our communities' strength and compassion has really shone through as well. From the first lockdown to the street parties for VE Day, to the weekly claps for the NHS, highlighting just a few examples of people really coming together as a society. 2020 also saw the public raise a record amount of money for our organisation as we celebrated our 25th anniversary, for which we will be eternally grateful.

There is still so much work to do though as we begin recover from the last 18 months. As an organisation, we are still experiencing very high levels of referrals, the same high level of demand for our services that we had during the peak of the pandemic. The impending cut to Universal Credit, and the rising costs of food and utilities, have meant that poverty insecurities are rising at an alarming rate, and for more people than ever.

With the economy recovering, we must not assume that everything else is too. The lack of availability in housing, combined with the aforementioned difficulties, our work could not be more vital. We strive to continue to deliver the highest quality services we can offer and look forward to working with our community, our partners, and colleagues across the sector to overcome the challenges which lie ahead – together we can achieve so much more.

I shall end by saying that it has been an absolute honour to "steer the ship" throughout the pandemic, and our recovery phase. As we now enter an exciting new stage of development, I will be handing the reins over to our new Chief Executive Officer who will be in post by the end of 2021. I look forward to working closely with them, to further build upon the great work we do to ensure The Bridge (East Midlands) continues to provide crucial services for our communities.

I wish you the very best.

Paul Snape
Deputy Chief Executive
(Head of Business & Development)

**RESILIENT,
COMPASSIONATE
COMMUNITIES
WHERE INDIVIDUALS
THRIVE IN SAFE AND
SECURE HOMES.**



NUMBERS TO NOTE

From April 2020 to March 2021, we received **6,202** referrals

A huge **39%** increase compared to 2019-20!



That includes working with **2,483** households - a 13.4% increase compared to the previous year.



OF OUR CLIENTS IN 2020-21...

100% happy with service received



Financial circumstances improved² for **80%**



92% of homelessness prevented or resolved



Many of our services work with clients over longer-periods, to help them create positive, stable futures: of our clients, **48%** were helped to access education or training³ while **41%** were specifically supported to access or maintain employment



Improved housing conditions for **88%**¹

84% reported improved mental health



Improved physical health for **81%**

- ¹ Better living conditions can include moving home or having repairs undertaken, etc.
- ² Including debt reduction, increased income, or charity applications for essential household items.
- ³ Assistance with applications and research, attendance to open days, etc.
- ⁴ CV writing, assistance with job applications, interviewing skills, etc.
- ⁵ Including taking better care of oneself
- ⁶ Increased communicative skills, positive relationships with friends and family.

88% of people making more positive life choices⁵ with **76%** reporting reduced alcohol or drug consumption



90% said they were able to make their own choices and solve their own problems, after our support



69% reported being less lonely or isolated, despite so many facing these issues during the pandemic



68% improved relationships - despite so many being distanced from loved ones during lockdown
71% improved communication skills⁶

84% reduced involvement in crime or anti-social behaviour



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



Peter Davey celebrated his 20th Anniversary as Chief Officer at The Bridge, last Summer!

This year, The Bridge was awarded a contract with the Ministry of Justice, working with Nacro, as the lead organisation, to provide support and accommodation advice to ex-offenders facing homelessness.



We have also teamed up with Vita Health Group, who are the lead organisation for the IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) service, who provide in-depth mental health services. Our clients can access their support, and we also provide housing advice for IAPT clients whose mental health is worsened by housing issues.

Working in partnership with Charnwood Borough Council and John Storer Charnwood, we have helped with the distribution of over 25,000 food parcels for Charnwood Community Action, which was set up to distribute food parcels safely during the pandemic. Working alongside our partner agencies on this project has been fantastic.



A new free 0800 telephone line was set up, to ensure that everybody was able to contact us: whether it be by telephone box, or a mobile without credit.

The Bridge, alongside partner agencies of the Charnwood Food Poverty Group and Charnwood Community Action, has led the planning of a 'Social Supermarket' model for food provision; reducing dependency and aiming to assist people before they reach crisis point.



OUR STRATEGY 2020 – 2024

1

WE WILL EXPAND UPON OUR EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION OFFER

The organisation has expanded its service offering for clients through a number of new partnerships. This includes a new specialist Housing Advice Service for the sub-regional IAPT Service, working closely with VITA Health Group. The organisation has also entered into a partnership with Nacro to deliver an East Midlands wide Dynamic Framework for the Ministry of Justice.



2

WE WILL ENSURE THAT EVERYONE CONTINUES TO BE VALUED, NURTURED AND RESPECTED

Throughout the last year, the organisation has driven forward work to further improve its governance. The Board of Trustees and Strategic Management Team have created a Governance Improvement Team. The team's remit is to review, and continually improve, the organisations systems and processes relating to the Board of Trustees and the relationship of the Board with the Strategic Management Team.



3

WE WILL CONTINUALLY DRIVE FORWARD A SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION BUILT UPON OUR REPUTATION AND INTEGRITY

"Lockdown", as for many voluntary sector organisations, has created an opportunity to review fundraising and communications practices, and has been a time for innovation and interacting differently with the public and supporters. The organisation has been able to work differently, and as a result, has increased the public profile of The Bridge, along with the number of community donations.



4

WE WILL BE ADVOCATES OF BEST PRACTICE, TAKING A REFLECTIVE APPROACH TO CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

The organisation is proud to announce that it passed its Advice Quality Standard again for its Specialist Housing Advice Service. This is a bi-annual audit which The Bridge has been committed to for the past two decades. Furthermore, the organisation's Business Improvement Team has continued to meet throughout "lockdown" and has been instrumental in the improvements made to the organisation's recruitment processes.



THE NATIONAL PICTURE AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

When we wrote our Annual Report last spring we crossed our fingers in hope that, by the time of writing this year, we would no longer be affected by the pandemic. Of course, the COVID-19 crisis has maintained its grip on society in many ways; but I am proud of the way that the charity has conducted itself to support local people through this time.

This year has truly shown the invaluable work of the voluntary sector as a whole. Pushed to our limits in terms of capacity, demand and reconfiguring services, we have seen true determination and dedication from all of our partner agencies and fellow voluntary sector organisations.

Our success over the last year is testament to the ability of all local organisations to work together in such an incredible way; a key demonstration of this being Charnwood Community Action, which is shown within our Food Poverty work.

Across the nation and the world, a new era of digital working was forced upon us. Reconfiguring our services to meet the ever-changing landscape of the pandemic has been difficult, and our staff team have taken on-going changes in their stride. Ensuring that all of our staff members had the equipment and support to achieve our high-quality outcomes from home was crucial, while we fostered a work environment that supported their mental health and overall well-being.

Although the nature of our work is people-facing, and we are excited to re-open our doors very soon, we anticipate the changes made this year will alter our working practice as we anticipate significant increase in demand for services in years to come.

The Government's approach to the COVID-19 crisis has had a definite impact

on our work on the ground. The Everyone-In campaign (housing rough sleepers during the pandemic) offered accommodation to thousands of people across the UK. Allowing space to self-isolate, it has no doubt protected the lives of vulnerable people. However, the work has highlighted the true numbers of homeless people that still continue to fall under the radar.

Government statistics suggest that, by November 2020, the scheme has supported 33,000 people into emergency accommodation.¹

The Big Issue confirmed in 2021 that as many as 26,167 people have moved on to permanent accommodation via the scheme.² As a consequence, we have seen and continue to expect a swell in demand for our services that support individuals to maintain a tenancy. At The Bridge, we understand that homelessness is not simply resolved with a roof and a bed; often, those experiencing homelessness have complex needs that requires intense holistic support.

Evidence of the need for this type of in-depth assistance is clear: especially for some of those housed in the scheme, who faced their accommodation being withdrawn due to rule-breaking or substance dependency. Without the right support to overcome these issues, many returned to sleeping rough.

The Government estimated that in autumn 2020 there were still 2,688 rough sleepers nationally- not including those who are hidden homeless (such as those sofa-surfing, or avoiding detection).³ The East Midlands is no exception: our Rough Sleeper Services will continue to identify those who are experiencing homelessness and support them on their journey to safe and stable homes.

Moving forward, we will continue to review and build upon our service offer, with regards to supporting people to maintain longer-term accommodation and prevent the cycle of homelessness. It is a prolonged challenge to obtain permanent housing for clients with the national housing shortage, making it as important as ever for us to continue to work preventatively to avoid people getting into, or back into, the cycle of repeat homelessness.

More broadly, we are looking forward to expanding our food poverty work. By identifying new areas within the locality that need further support and creating Social Supermarket models to catch those struggling before crisis point, as well as empowering people to work towards financial independence, we believe that people across Charnwood will benefit greatly.

Both in terms of food poverty and housing crisis, local people have been facing growing instability and battling various issues, which contribute to their vulnerability to homelessness. In some cases furlough or redundancy has reduced income, or a new dependency on Universal Credit caused monetary delays; whilst other families simply tried to meet the increasing food costs and bills during lockdown. Across Leicestershire and nationally, more households than ever have faced uncertainty, and sought support to try and find their way out of a housing crisis.

These added stresses, alongside the detrimental effect so many have suffered from facing isolation and being home-bound, have played an important role in to a growing mental health crisis. The Office for National Statistics states that an Opinions and Lifestyle Survey in 2021 showed that 21% of adults were facing some sort of depression as the

country entered its third lockdown. young people were impacted particularly hard, with 4 in 10 young women experiencing some sort of depression.⁴

It is with this in mind that we are so grateful to be partnered with VitaMinds new IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) Service for Leicestershire. As we navigate our way out of the pandemic, IAPT will link closely with us. Providing specialist mental health support for local people and referring clients who are facing housing crisis for advice here at The Bridge.

We will have to continue to seek funding for much needed growth and development. Restructuring of the teams at The Bridge will help rejuvenate our work as we foster new and existing partnerships to bring expansion and security to our services.

The launch of our new 4 year strategy in October 2020 has re-invigorated and refocused The Bridge. Not only are we aiming to maintain and grow our offer to clients, we are also looking forward to officially launching TheBridge2Excellence. This will enable us to expand our working relationships with a range of agencies through offering a service to upskill colleagues, and promote knowledge and best practice.

Molly Boggis
Head of Programmes
and Services



¹ Government Statistics, 2021: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2020

² The Big Issue, 2021:

³ Government Statistics, 2021: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2020

⁴ Office for National Statistics, Opinions and Lifestyle Survey, 2021: blog.ons.gov.uk/2021/05/05/are-we-facing-a-mental-health-pandemic

FIGHTING FOOD POVERTY

In what has been a challenging year, unlike one we have ever known, the community response to supporting the issue of food poverty has been so positive. From the start of the pandemic, one of our greatest challenges has been the sheer size of the response required, the constant need to replenish food and the initial barriers to recipients being able to collect this food.

The success of this emergency food response could not have been achieved without a great deal of partnership work, with the Charnwood Food Poverty Group (CFPG), for which The Bridge (East Midlands) is the strategic lead, played an important role in the coordinated response of Charnwood Community Action (CCA). This work was delivered in partnership with Charnwood Borough Council and John Storer Charnwood.

Local food banks and food services who are members of the CFPG, worked tirelessly to support different stages of the response as the year progressed. Members of the community who have donated food, fundraising and volunteering hours have very much enabled this community response, of which everyone involved can be very proud of.

Finally, I would like to place on record our thanks to Joe McSharry (Independent Chair of the CFPG), colleagues from John Storer Charnwood, Charnwood Borough Council and all members of the CFPG, whose hard work and dedication has enabled a coordinated response to significantly increased levels of food poverty across Charnwood.



22,970 FOOD PARCELS WERE DISTRIBUTED BY THE CCA, FROM MARCH 2020 TO MARCH 2021.

Our projects are growing! For instance, our Mountsorrel Community Fridge is becoming a Social Supermarket; offering support to help a wide range of Mountsorrel residents to avoid crisis point.



WHY IS OUR FOOD POVERTY WORK CRUCIAL?

It is a sad reality that food poverty has been rising for a number of years; unfortunately, the pandemic has only worsened this growing issue. With households facing redundancy, ill-health, reduced wages due to furlough - as well as the increased living costs of staying at home, like electricity bills - many more people are struggling to cover the cost of their next meal.

This reflects a national crisis...

In September 2020, the Food Foundation released research that stated 14% of UK households were unable to eat properly in the previous six months because they could not afford or access food.

That equates to **4 million** people, including **2.3 million** children.

"4% of adults living with children reported having gone for a whole day without eating in the last 6 months"¹

Nobody deserves to go hungry. For more information, visit the CFPG website at www.charnwood-fpg.org.uk

Clare Fillingham

Quality and Business Manager



469% INCREASE IN FOOD PARCEL DISTRIBUTION BY THE CHARNWOOD FOOD POVERTY GROUP IN 2020/21, COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS YEAR.



¹ The Food Foundation, September 2020



CUSTOMER SERVICES

Customer Services are the first point of contact for people presenting in crisis and for all other general enquiries.

The Customer Services Team (CST) plays a vital role in the journey of nearly all our clients; making sure every person feels listened to, understood, and triaging them into the most relevant service.

The team can also directly assist people to access a range of help, such as:

- Offering food and toiletry provision and vouchers, and organising referrals for Charnwood Community Action food parcels
- Signposting to services that can help people access debt advice/food parcels/meals/washing facilities
- Organising Charnwood Welfare Provision (support with food/heating/lighting)
- Referrals to SOFA for discounted household goods
- Distributing Starter Packs (household essentials)
- Administering 'Care of Address' arrangements for clients without a home

3,747 CST enquiries received from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 – a 72% increase in comparison to 2019/20

The past year was one of vastly increased demand, as the effects of the pandemic took hold. More local people than ever are facing instability, food poverty, reduced income, ill-health and more. Demand peaked in June 2020 and January 2021, but was most demonstrable in March 2021 when enquiries rose by 123% compared to the previous year.

To respond to this crisis while our office has been closed in lockdown, our team have worked tirelessly to continue to create a welcoming and reassuring environment, albeit via our free phone number and electronically. We extended working hours through the pandemic and increased staff capacity to work on the phone line. This free phone number has been a lifeline to many; ensuring that people could contact us without phone credit, or even by phone box.

Every person we support is treated with respect, and by triaging and signposting, we provide a service in which clients are empowered to make positive changes.

100% of clients were happy with the service they received on the day

97% of clients saw improvement in financial situation and mental health

Hannah Brookhouse
Executive Administrator



VICTORIA'S STORY...

Customer Services

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After a drastic change in circumstances, Victoria is lodging with a friend. Usually supporting others, this was the first time Victoria had to reach out for help herself.

"I've known about The Bridge for a long time because I've supported a lot of people when I was volunteering. When my relationship ended badly, I was left with nothing and no money. So, I'm staying on the floor of my friend's home.

"He's an elderly gentleman and he never leaves the house; I support him with washing, cooking, cleaning. But, when I moved in I realised that he only had £1.60 on his electricity meter and no hot water.

"We had no money and neither of us were getting paid for weeks, so I knew I had to ask for help. My friend didn't know about The Bridge and said sometimes he just sits there in the dark. It was hard to accept that I had to ask for help for the first time, but I did."

Victoria was able to receive a Charnwood Welfare Provision utilities top-up from our Customer Services Team, and advice on where to get clothes or items as she wasn't able to retrieve belongings from her previous home.

"It made the world of difference. You can't go out when you haven't got hot water to bathe in or if you can't wash your clothes, feeling bad. You just end up laying there; the emotional toll is horrible."

"We couldn't have managed without the top-up. Even though I'm on someone's floor at the moment, it's better than my situation before. The Bridge were so quick and wonderful. Talking to Reception, they were lovely. I didn't feel judged."

"When I was volunteering, I referred so many people to The Bridge Reception for all sorts: food parcels, signposting, support. Having that one place that's so consistent and a team who have proper, practical knowledge of what to do immediately is amazing."

"I hope, in the future, they might also be able to help us with our housing situation: the friend I am staying with can't get up and down the stairs where he currently lives and he hasn't left in maybe two years."

"If anyone else is in the same situation, my first advice would be to ask The Bridge for support. I honestly can't sing their praises enough."



HOUSING ADVICE

Advice, assistance and advocacy for social tenants, private tenants, the homeless and landlords, who live in the Borough of Charnwood and who are over 18.

Our Housing Advice Team (HAT) has received 799 referrals in the last year from people living in Charnwood requiring housing advice.

Of these clients, 96% stated their housing conditions had improved and 95% said their homelessness was avoided or resolved!

We are fortunate to be well-established within the area, demonstrated by a high number of self-referrals (96%) and we have worked hard to adapt to the changing working environment this year, ensuring that our clients can continue to access the advice they need at the right time.

The proportion of our clients reporting to be statutorily homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days has increased by 25% this year, with 10% experiencing rough sleeping.

A further 135 households were at risk of future homelessness at the point they accessed the service.

In previous years, the end of an assured shorthold tenancy has been cited as the most common cause of homelessness amongst our clients. Whilst this has still been prominent this year, the main cause of homelessness has been relationship breakdown, accounting for a fifth of all cases, closely followed by eviction from parental, family, or friends' homes, and harassment and violence.

The team have faced additional challenges this year in response to the coronavirus pandemic including keeping up to date with the changing legislation around evictions in England. We anticipate an even busier year ahead as the impact of this becomes known.

Leanne Fletcher

Advice Services Team Manager



100% of clients said that they were making more positive life choices



DONNA'S STORY...

Housing Advice

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Donna was referred to Housing Advice at The Bridge to support her in the process of finding a new home and getting a fresh start. With limited finances, setting herself up in new accommodation was difficult.

"When I first started talking to my Advisor, I didn't have anything at all. I had no way of getting everything I needed all at once, like paying for rent and kitchen appliances. The Bridge helped with all of that side of things.

"I was lodging with my now ex-partner at his mum's house, but it was overcrowded and so we bid to move into this house. My Housing Advisor helped me initially by applying for a grant from the Vicar's Relief Fund to cover the first months' rent as a deposit that allowed us to actually move in.

As Donna's relationship with her partner broke down because of his behaviour, she was left with all the responsibilities of the house.

"It was difficult at the time, I knew I couldn't get all these things sorted on my own and coping with that was hard. It was a slow process but I did it.

"My Advisor also helped me in applying to CharityLink for kitchen goods, like the cooker and fridge-freezer. I would have struggled to do that without their help."

Donna was also eligible for a Starter Pack from The Bridge. Starter Packs help people who are moving into new accommodation, supplying them with key items, such as pillows, a toaster, cutlery and more.

"They also supported me with other issues too, putting me in touch with people who helped me with my bills and budgeting; for example, I couldn't afford my water bill and they helped me sign up to make the bill more affordable, and so that I'm not left short. The Budgeting advice has really helped as things are more stable and I'm more confident now.

"I feel a lot more positive about the future, there are only a few things that I haven't got. I hope to stay on top of my bills but I know that I can reach out again for support if I struggle again.

"Most of all, I'm hoping that I can have my children back at home too. I still see three of them, but it's been very hard and I miss them."



YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

talk²sort

A mediation service offered to 11-19 year olds and their families, either individually or in joint appointments.

This last year has brought about challenges for us all. Whether young or old, mixed emotions, increased social isolation and a loss of autonomy have all taken its toll. Throughout the pandemic, talk²sort has continued to deliver a specialist mediation service to young people and families across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Now more than ever, the ability to communicate effectively, resolve conflict and increase resilience is key. As a service which is recognised as delivering best practice in homelessness mediation, we understand the importance of giving people a safe space to explore feelings, thoughts and emotions. We empower people to make decisions that are right for them in the absence of judgement or a set agenda.

talk²sort is able to deliver a tailored service which meets the needs of young people and families who need help at a time that is right for them. Supporting with wellbeing and mental health, conflict, communication and defective coping mechanisms, we work in a future focused way using tools which can be used long after involvement with the service.

84% of young people reported improved family relationships as a result of accessing talk²sort

90% of young people experienced a reduction in conflict at home

100% reduced their intake of drugs/ alcohol and reduced involvement in anti-social behaviour

Chantelle Bramley

Specialist Services Team Manager

Single Access Point

Supporting 16 and 17 year olds in Charnwood who may be having difficulties living at home.

This year we have had 38 referrals to the service, all from young people who are experiencing homelessness of difficulties with their housing situation: one young person had experienced homelessness before, and another had been rough sleeping.

100% of clients said their housing conditions improved, and their homelessness was avoided or resolved.

Did you know? 68% of young people access our services due to family breakdown.

Other causes of youth homelessness this year have included overcrowding, harassment and violence, and leaving care. Seven of the 38 people we supported this year were parents themselves which, for most, presented further challenges. Additional considerations were needed when sourcing stable and suitable accommodation to enable the young person and their child to feel safe, settled, and happy.

We have signposted many of our clients to relevant mental health services, having seen a significant **340% increase in reported mental health difficulties amongst our clients.**

The young people we have supported have engaged well with the changes made within the service due to the coronavirus pandemic, namely the use of telephone and messaging services which has enabled us to continue providing this vital service to young people across Charnwood.

Leanne Fletcher

Advice Services Team Manager

TALK²SORT MEDIATION: SONIA'S STORY...

talk²sort

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When Sonia was first contacted about talk²sort Mediation with her daughter, she was shocked. The family were referred through School and consequently had around eight months of Mediation.

"It came as a surprise at first, because I didn't think things were that bad. It was hard to have that initial self-reflection but looking back, has helped me so much more than I thought it would. I felt so much better after talking.

"It started with individual appointments, where we would talk to our Mediator separately. That was really helpful as we were able to say things freely.

"We were arguing a lot back then and I put it down to her being a teenager. I felt like I couldn't say anything right and I didn't like how she spoke to me.

"Our Mediator would sit and listen, but also identify things about ourselves, to then reflect on. The cogs turned and we saw things that we didn't realise we were doing.

"I think, for Jessica and myself, it really helped us open up and communicate. Jessica felt that she couldn't talk to me or her Dad. It gave her the space to be honest about her feelings and we were consequently referred to Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for further professional support.

"We were both holding a lot of things back before, I also started to think more about my phrasing, or what type of things I don't have to tell my children. It was such a big learning curve, in learning about how each other works."

Sonia now recognises Jessica's behaviour

might not be just because she's a teenager, and that there might be something wrong.

"I used to snap at her quite easily, but now I stop and think about whether there might be a reason for her acting that way.

"I now know to open up conversations but respect when she doesn't want to talk sometimes. There were other techniques given too; like writing a letter of our feelings and destroying it afterwards.

"Jess used to be really close to me and we went through that spell where she wasn't. Me and my husband both feel like that closeness coming back now, which is really lovely."

"I am so much more confident in my whole life now and our home environment is happier; I am even working again. I feel so much more positive about our relationships as a family, and our Mediator was fantastic. They checked in on us even after closing our case, which I really appreciated."



SINGLE ACCESS POINT: MYAH'S STORY...

Having to leave home at a young age can be stressful. When Myah was first referred to the Single Access Point, she was splitting her time between her Dad's sofa and her Dad's friends' houses.

"I had just moved to Loughborough from my Mum's; I had left and then gone back to her initially, but I'd been thinking about properly leaving for a long time.

"I was trying to work out ways that I could move out and have money, but things got too bad and I left quite immediately in the end. I still feel stressed by things that have happened and it feels messy; we're not in contact at the moment.

"Staying with Dad and his friends is better because there's no shouting or drinking, and because Dad's friend is also a Mum, I still get to have that family environment around me.

"My SAP Worker helped me so much with application processes and getting on the housing register, which can take a really long time. There was lots to think about, even just getting my stuff from Mum's which was hard with the pandemic.

"Other agencies weren't as persistent as The Bridge, and it was really helpful for my SAP Worker to be so consistent; she would remind us of deadlines, because my Dad often forgets with his ADHD.

"It was also really nice to have her check in with us and make sure that we are doing well."

Currently, Myah is waiting for the outcome of her housing application.

"Things feel more stable now. I'm studying Level 3 Art and Design at the moment and next year I'm doing Level 3 Applied Sciences because I want to do Neurosciences and Psychology at University; when it comes to my future I've always been really driven. I want to learn about that so I can help others."

"Before, I contemplated leaving for so long that it got too bad and I just couldn't be there. I learnt that way, but I wouldn't want people to go through that too.

"It's been really beneficial to get support from The Bridge and from other places like therapy, which helped more than I wanted to admit when I was there. I would definitely recommend reaching out to the Single Access Point and advice from The Bridge, they do great work for young people who are having a bad time at home."

"IT'S BEEN REALLY BENEFICIAL TO GET SUPPORT FROM THE BRIDGE AND FROM OTHER PLACES LIKE THERAPY"

"MY SAP WORKER HELPED ME SO MUCH WITH APPLICATION PROCESSES AND GETTING ON THE HOUSING REGISTER"



PART OF A BIGGER JOURNEY: ALISON'S STORY...

RCWS

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When Alison first started receiving support from The Bridge, her case was complex. Fleeing domestic violence, her mental health had deteriorated and debts had started to build up.

"I was at crisis point when I first started with the service. Although I lived separately, I was on the receiving end of extreme domestic violence from my family members.

"I relocated, and left everything I had known. My Support Worker helped me through the processes of police intervention and restraining orders. There was a huge emotional impact; I had interventions with crisis teams and was hospitalised a couple of times because I couldn't cope. I was suicidal and couldn't see any way out.

"The Bridge was my lifeline and I don't believe I'd be here without them. I can't say that enough. They were always there at the end of the phone, referring me to suitable services for specialist help."

While Alison was dealing with the matters of abuse, housing issues were growing in the background.

"I was struggling hugely with all my finances; everything was being left, which created debts. My mental health had a huge part to play in that. I overlooked my bills because my priority was getting somewhere safe.

"My Support Worker organised appointments with debt agencies, Citizens Advice, contacting companies and setting up payment arrangements for me so that I could work through my debts. It wasn't just housing; it was all of the other things that needed addressing. They were there for it all.

"I've had to move again, and now many of the threats – like severe violence – have gone. I am recovering from surgery from the attacks, and I have mental health problems that I'm still working through.

"But, on moving, there were new challenges; setting up bills, letters from housing benefit, organising a GP, and things like that. I was in a mess. My Support Worker helped me through it all, again.

"The Bridge, when I look back, were always the ones who stepped in. They were friendly and non-judgmental, which I liked. Mental health can be massively misunderstood, and I never doubted that The Bridge could understand me.

"They were easy to talk to, open up and tell them what I was struggling with. I would recommend them to everyone; the help is there."

SUPPORT SERVICES

The Rutland Community Wellbeing Service

Providing the residents of Rutland with support and advice on a broad range of wellbeing issues. The service is delivered in partnership with Citizens Advice Rutland, Longhurst Group, Age UK and Vista.

During the past year, The Bridge has received 40 referrals for clients who wish to access support from the RCWS regarding housing, money management and various health and wellbeing difficulties.

The service works holistically, engaging with other partner agencies to ensure that our clients get the specialist support they need in all areas that they are struggling. This in turn helps in setting them up for a stable and positive future after the service, where they are able to happily maintain their tenancy and are no longer vulnerable to homelessness.

Clients sometimes have complex cases; for instance, their mental health may have stopped them from working, or learning difficulties or disabilities may be preventing them from completing applications or paperwork related to housing or benefits.

Generally due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, client needs have increased throughout the year with many clients requiring intensive support with mental health, substance misuse and social isolation.

The average length of support over the past year has been 1 year and 4 months, demonstrating our desire to help create long-term and lasting change for our clients.

Of the clients that provided feedback following a programme of support:

66% have reduced drug and alcohol use

80% report improved housing conditions

78% report improved emotional and mental health



Molly Splevings
Support Services Team Manager





RUTLAND COMMUNITY WELLBEING SERVICE: MARK'S STORY...

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When Mark was first introduced to the Rutland Community Wellbeing Service, he needed support to overcome multiple obstacles. His Support Worker has helped him reach a stable and positive point in his life.

"When I first started with the service, I was in a right mess. I had my own place, but I was struggling and had nothing. I was drinking really heavily; I had support from my girlfriend and when that ended I was really stuck.

"With everything going on in my life, including debts, I couldn't cope and I just turned to the drink."

"I really needed that support to get through. It was overwhelming. Back then, my future was a mess. I was at breaking point and thinking of ending my life."

Mark was referred to The Bridge for a Support Worker by a partner agency of the Rutland Access Partnership. At that time, he was going through a tribunal, as he was not receiving the Personal Independence Payment he was entitled to. Mark's Support Worker, Nicola, said:

"Mark was struggling with money, bills and debt, so it was crucial that we sorted his PIP payment out. I sent a supporting letter outlining Mark's learning difficulties,

which make the paperwork and processes extremely hard and frustrating for him. We then needed to gather evidence for his case.

"When PIP was awarded, the financial difficulty was eased and Mark was able to buy a washing machine and clothes for example, which all improved his well-being and as a result, he is more stable now."

Mark's Support Worker has also helped him enrol in English lessons to improve his skills.

"My aim for the future is definitely to succeed with the English lessons. Having my Support Worker has changed my life and I'm so happy with the help I received. I don't know what I would have done without it.

"My support worker/the service also helped me engage with the GP for assistance with my mental health, and I'm feeling a lot more stable and positive about the future now."

"It's difficult to go and ask for help, but if you leave it everything gets worse. If anyone is facing a similar situation, I would want them to ask for help. It's not going to be easy but you can get through it."



HOUSING MATTERS: LINDA'S STORY...

Linda was referred to Housing Matters after neighbourly disputes got so bad that she knew she had to leave her address. On a long journey of PTSD, declining mental well-being and a chronic health condition, The Bridge were able to support her to create a new, safe home.

"I knew I had to leave my current home. I knew that I could find a house exchange... But that would take time, and I needed to get out.

"My daughter accompanied me to The Bridge for an initial assessment and I just broke down. They allocated a Support Worker to me and she was my outlet, helping me through some of my toughest times.

"When I first came to The Bridge, I felt like I didn't belong anywhere. I would cry to my Support Worker, because I didn't know where to run to. But, I finally felt safe and I needed that stability."

Linda was able to move into her daughter's previous house and her Support Worker was there to assist with this transition. Housing Matters offers longer-term assistance like this, supporting people to maintain stability.

"Because of my health conditions and mental health issues, I was overwhelmed by the different paperwork for things like utility bills in my new home. My Support Worker would sit with me; calling people like the Council or nurses, or organising appointments.

"It was the start of me being able to accept someone was on the end of the phone, as I wasn't even capable of making a phone call before. My mental health particularly bad."

"My Support Worker helped with my budgeting and helped me get discounts where I was eligible, for things like water bills, which saved me a lot of money.

"The Council had tried to take me to court for not paying Council Tax as my Doctor had signed forms to prove that I was exempt, but the forms had been lost. My Support Worker hand delivered new copies and helped me through the stress of that, even though it is ongoing.

"Without the support I've received from The Bridge, I honestly don't think I would be here. It's been very difficult for me to accept who I am now, after everything with my health.

"I'd never had to ask for help in my life; but something can happen or you can get a mental health issue and suddenly the person you were is gone. But now I am in a new home and it is so much calmer.

"The Bridge even helped us with food parcels when things got particularly tough last year, in the pandemic.

"When I had heard of The Bridge, I thought it was solely for homelessness. But they don't just support you with that. I can't thank them enough; my Support Worker was everything."

"Without the support I've received from The Bridge, I honestly don't think I would be here



SUPPORT SERVICES

Housing Matters

Accommodation and housing related support for individuals over the age of 18 in Leicestershire who require support to positively manage accommodation and reduce risk of future homelessness.

As of July 2020, the service (a partnership between The Bridge, Nottingham Community Housing Association and Falcon Support Services) received two years' worth of funding to deliver a revised housing related support service. Key changes include a larger focus upon drop-in support, a reduced period of up to four months' floating support and the introduction of a countywide housing advice line to offer advice and signposting to residents across Leicestershire on a range of housing related issues. Meanwhile, the accommodation aspect of the service remains the same.

In 2020, our Accommodation Project (delivered by Falcon Support Services) received 349 referrals, supporting clients who are not owed an accommodation duty via the Local Authority.

Our floating support service (delivered by NCHA and The Bridge) received 307 referrals; 182 of which were drop-in requests.

The most frequent presenting issue continues to be rent arrears and issues surrounding affordability.

Of clients that chose to provide feedback:

84% reported being more independent following a programme of support, with 90% improving their mental health.

Housing Matters Families

This year marked the final year of funding for our Housing Matters for Families service (delivered in partnership with Nottingham Community Housing Association), which came to an end in March 2021 after being funded by The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) for five years: we are so grateful to TNLCF for their long-term support. Families will now continue to be supported under the general Housing Matters contract.

During this time, the service has delivered floating support to vulnerably housed families across Leicestershire. It has supported hundreds of clients to make positive changes to their housing, from support to access essential household items to moving to adequate housing that meets their needs.

Over the past year, of the 43 referrals received to the service, 77% were for females and 33% were for males.

The average age at referral was 36 years old.

Of clients who chose to complete our closure feedback:

75% report their housing conditions have improved.

91% reported that homelessness has been prevented.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Rapid Rehousing Pathway

The Rapid Rehousing Pathway (RRP) focuses upon finding accommodation for individuals across Leicestershire and Rutland who are over the age of 18, homeless and not eligible for help elsewhere.

The RRP is there to support individuals who become homeless with no other options of support; this sometimes occurs when authorities deem that an individual has chosen to leave their home. An example of this is when somebody has decided to leave in cases of relationship breakdown.

Short-term accommodation is provided within the project for up to 6 weeks, whilst longer-term solutions are sought. When a stable source of accommodation is found, clients are empowered to maintain their tenancies through support in applying for furniture, resolving debt issues, setting up bills, and more.

Through this well-rounded support, we can be confident that the individual is no longer vulnerable to homelessness.

Delivered in partnership with Local Authorities across Leicestershire and Rutland, we work alongside Falcon Support Services to support individuals who are rough sleeping to access and maintain accommodation, working to prevent repeat homelessness by offering flexible, intensive one-to-one support to individuals who would not be able to obtain accommodation without the scheme.

DURING 2020, WE HAVE SEEN A STAGGERING 1000% INCREASE IN REFERRALS TO THE PROJECT

after the government's 'Everyone In' initiative revised the approach taken to all rough sleepers during the coronavirus pandemic.

Of those accommodated this year, **100%** have maintained their accommodation with support.

92% of clients said that they are now able to make their own choices and solve their own problems

92% said their confidence had improved



RAPID REHOUSING PATHWAY: MUKESH'S STORY...

Rapid Rehousing

RRP

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Mukesh was referred to the Rapid Rehousing Pathway (RRP) after losing his job due to a combination of physical health problems and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Debts built up and, unfortunately, he became homeless. After phoning other agencies, he was referred to the RRP.

"My situation was very bad, my head felt very heavy and I wanted to just run away somewhere. Because I lost my job I was unable to pay off the debts I had. I didn't know what was going to happen to me. I had enforcement agents at my door, which I found really worrying.

"I felt a lot of pressure on me. I didn't know where to go or where to turn. I had no family to support me and my mental health got worse."

The RRP seeks to find short-term accommodation for those eligible, in order to resolve their immediate homelessness while longer-term options are found.

"I was able to move into Mill House, and my RRP Worker supported me to apply to the housing register and then to bid on housing.

"Once I moved into my own home, they helped me set up a bank account, utility payments and also to contact a debt charity – Stepchange. I applied for bankruptcy which has really helped my mental health and my finances.

"I was supported to discuss my mental health with my GP and to access my medical history so that I could apply for PIP and Universal Credit – a health and disability payment.

"The Bridge also provided food parcels when I have been struggling with my money."

As part of the holistic support offered by the RRP, Mukesh was able to see improvements such as reduced debts, improved well-being and self-esteem, budgeting in his new home and even applying for English classes to help future employment prospects.

"This has been a big turnaround for my life, I didn't think I would be supported as much as I have been by my support worker at The Bridge.

"I couldn't see the future before but now I can see hope in my situation. I know where to ask for help now. It is good to know I have someone I can talk to who knows my situation. I hope to volunteer to help others who are homeless soon.

"People should reach out as there is a lot of different support available. Whether it is food, housing or finances, there are people who can help you."

"I couldn't see the future before but now I can see hope in my situation."

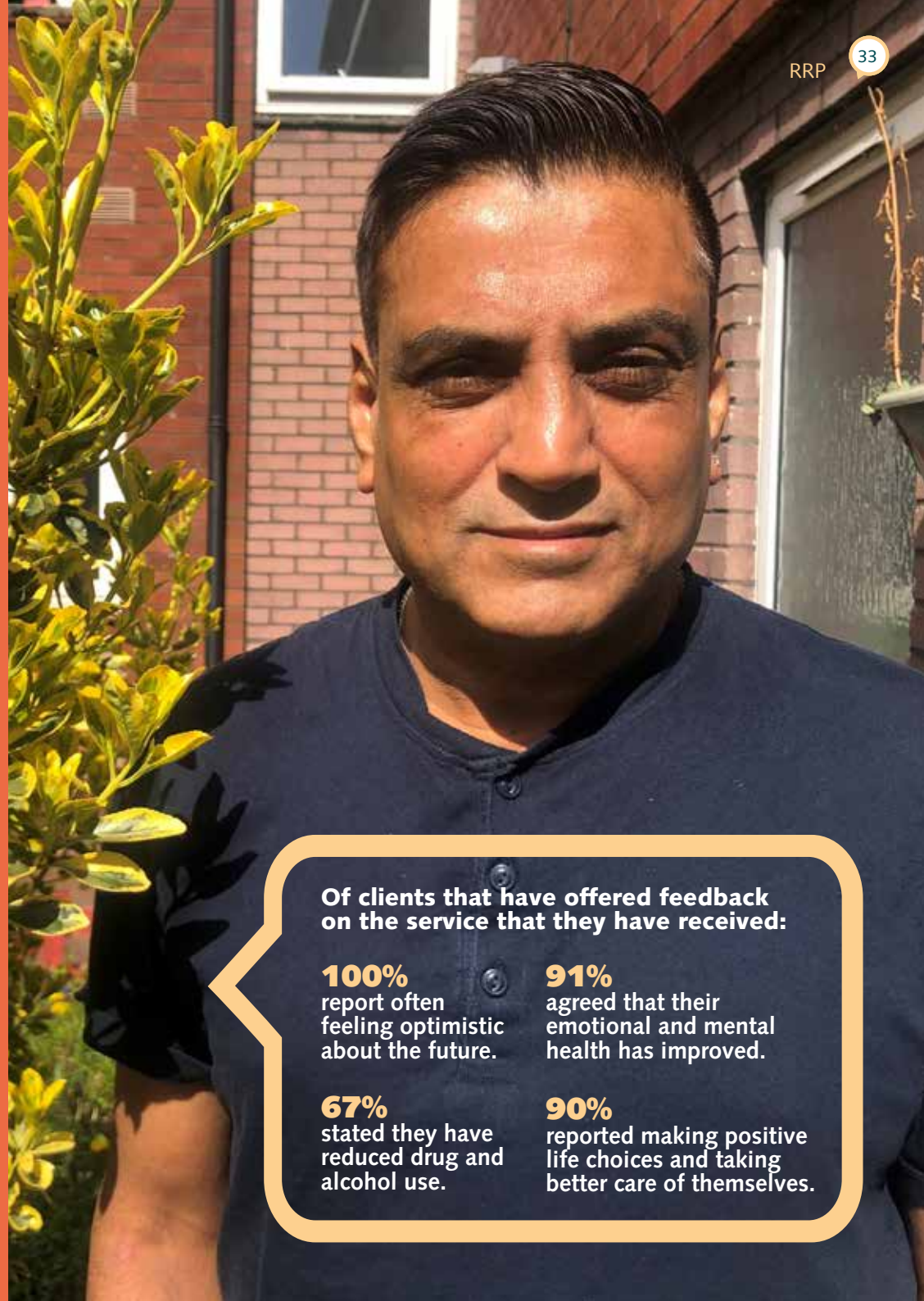
Of clients that have offered feedback on the service that they have received:

100% report often feeling optimistic about the future.

91% agreed that their emotional and mental health has improved.

67% stated they have reduced drug and alcohol use.

90% reported making positive life choices and taking better care of themselves.



HOMELESS OFFENDERS SERVICE

The Homeless Offenders Service (HOS) provides intensive and holistic support for clients with an offending history and who are homeless or rough sleeping, to access accommodation.

We support our clients to access suitable accommodation, sustain a tenancy where applicable, and reduce the likelihood of reoffending.

Our specialist HOS Mediator is available to provide mediation to strengthen and improve relationships with family members or key individuals to support more positive futures.

Service demand is consistently high; we have had a 15% increase in referrals to the service last year from prisons, probation services, and local authorities, along with many self-referrals.

Despite the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, we have continued to provide street outreach each week to support our most vulnerable clients and identify those who may be new to rough sleeping.

We are proud to share that 96% of our HOS clients stated that their homelessness was prevented or resolved during their time with the service, with 94% stating their housing conditions had improved.

88% of clients reported that they had reduced their involvement in crime or antisocial behaviour

93% of clients felt more able to make their own choices and solve their own problems.

Leanne Fletcher

Advice Services Team Manager



HOMELESS OFFENDERS SERVICE: JOSEPH'S STORY...

Homeless Offenders

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Determined to move forwards, Joseph has been engaging with the Homeless Offenders Service, after his Probation Officer referred him for support. However, his case was made complex as he fled a toxic relationship and had suffered violence.

"I was in a relationship but it was very toxic, and there were too many things going wrong. We were in accommodation together, but I just had to leave. I took the clothes on my back and left.

"I had nowhere to turn. I was facing homelessness and I ended up facing a lot of other trouble. Everything's been emotional. But you can't stay down forever and you have to make the most of the help you've got."

Joseph suffered a series of traumatic events prior to and during his time with The Bridge, so his Support Workers have supported him through this. Other accommodation options were found after initial placements were deemed unsafe for his circumstances.

"My Support Workers were always on the end of the phone to talk to. They've been there for loads of different things really. They even got Primark vouchers because I couldn't go back to my previous home to get my clothes."

From helping with private rental accommodations, talking to different councils and looking into accommodation options, food parcels, Universal Credit, PIP, and mental health support, Joseph's Support Worker has consistently supported him through his journey.

Despite the obstacles he has faced, Joseph has finished his monitoring supervision with Probation and looks forward to finding stable employment as time goes on.

"The main thing is putting one foot in front of the other. I've been through a lot but there's no point staying thinking about it, you have to move forwards."

"In the future, I just look forward to settling somewhere and having my own flat, hopefully. It feels more achievable now with the support I've had."

"I was a landscape gardener before, and I'd love to do that again in the future. I feel positive about that; I know I can do it and it will only be me that stands in the way. It's hard work in landscape gardening, but I like seeing the project done from start to finish.

"If anyone else is in a similar situation, I would definitely recommend The Bridge. The biggest thing is getting out and getting the support that's there, by picking up the phone."

"In the future, I just look forward to settling somewhere and having my own flat, hopefully. It feels more achievable now with the support I've had."



BUILDING BETTER OPPORTUNITIES

The YES Project

Supporting young people aged between 15-24 to take steps towards employment, education or training.

The YES Project is delivered by a number of local organisations and offers a range of activities and support services to empower young people to overcome barriers to achievement. It strives to support and inspire young people to meet their goals and achieve their maximum potential.

An Intensive Young Persons Support Worker provides holistic and tailored support, covering a range of areas from housing, benefits and emotional wellbeing and mental health. The support is tailored to each individual and future focused.

COVID-19 has tested young people and adults alike. Increased social isolation, poor emotional wellbeing and a loss of purpose are just some of the issues faced by YES participants. As an organisation we are proud to have continued to deliver support to young people accessing the project throughout the pandemic, ensuring their needs are met.

To date, the YES Project has supported over 600 young people to work towards employment, education or training.

75% of young people have improved their confidence as a result of engaging

72% have increased their skills set through the support and activities delivered on the project.



Moneywise Plus

Supporting those who are unemployed or economically inactive in Leicester and Leicestershire, to move towards job search, employment, education or training through improved digital and financial skills.

Moneywise Plus has supported over 1,200 clients, which we are very proud of. As a service we recognise the importance of digital, financial and employability skills, but understand that there are often barriers to achieving a positive outcome. For example, low confidence and self-esteem, poor wellbeing and unstable housing. That is why Moneywise Plus is made up of a number of local organisations, all of whom offer specialist services, tailoring the support to the individual needs of each client.

Our advisors are dedicated to supporting clients to achieve what is important to them; whether that is increased access to the internet, financial savings or the creation of a CV. We work with the client, at the client's own pace, ensuring that they feel empowered to succeed.

Chantelle Bramley
Specialist Services Team Manager



JORDAN'S STORY...

YES Project

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When Jordan was first referred to the YES Project, he was not in education, training or employment.

With the help of YES Intensive Young Person's Support Workers at The Bridge, he has been looking at various volunteering opportunities, community involvement, improving his financial situation and building confidence.

"I started with the YES Project back in early 2020, and they've helped me with a lot of different things. One of the main problems was with my bank account, which was closed as I was a victim of fraud.

"My Support Worker has done a lot to help me in contacting the banks and trying to set up a new account, which has made it a lot easier than doing it alone."

Because Jordan had no active bank account, he was unable to apply for things like Universal Credit. With his Support Worker, he will take these steps to become more financially stable.

The YES Project are able to offer clients involvement in a wide range of courses and opportunities, like online cooking courses, The Princes Trust or, in Jordan's case, the Leicester Street Soccer Foundation.

The aim is to improve overall wellbeing, confidence and help young people overcome barriers to work, education or training.

"Starting football again has been really good, because it's getting me used to going out more again and really helping me with confidence. My Support Worker helped me get signed up.

Confidence building is a main aim for Jordan, as he has had negative experiences when out in the community.

"My advice to anyone else in a similar situation to me is to reach out. The YES Project can help you and you just have to get involved."

"I feel more positive about the future now and I'm looking forward to getting involved with more football and volunteering opportunities."

"THE YES PROJECT HAS ALSO HELPED ME A LOT IN GETTING INVOLVED WITH THE COMMUNITY AGAIN. I WANT TO GO INTO SOME VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES."





Stephen struck financial difficulty after the passing of his father in 2016, who he had cared for. As he was not a named tenant in his parents' property, he was offered a new home by the Council, but debts and arrears started to build.

"It has been an absolute financial disaster since I lost my Dad. When I moved here, the initial wait for Universal Credit left me five weeks without money and so the arrears began."

Since starting with the Moneywise Plus service, Stephen has received a lot of budgeting support for his arrears to increase his stability; his Advisor has helped with applications, and arranged a monthly repayment plan for his debts.

"I've had various jobs and I've really enjoyed some of them, but three months has been the longest employment in recent years; and short-term agency work and the pandemic have made it even harder.

"Having my Advisor there really helps and they've been brilliant. Before, I was really at the end with it all.

"The reality is that it's quite lonely and I am what I call 'financially depressed'. I owe friends money and that's the worst bit, I look forward to being able to repay them.

"It's difficult - once all my payments are done every month; the amount I have left to live on is almost nothing. I have to get gas and electric from that too, so I've relied on food banks. My Advisor has helped signpost

me for help with those sorts of things.

"Although the main aim is for me to find work again, I'm off sick with osteo-arthritis at the moment, so my Advisor has also helped me to improve my well-being and my home, like getting a donation of paints to re-do my walls, and applying for a cooker and new flooring.

"I've been close to eviction before, and while the repayment plan is tough, I know I'm not going to lose this place now."

Although Stephen is still on his journey to find employment and faces barriers such as his health and well-being, he is more stable with the budgeting support offered by his Moneywise Plus Advisor.

With his repayment plans in place, he is no longer at risk of housing crisis or eviction, and his Advisor will continue to take direct and holistic steps to improving his financial situation, job-seeking and employability skills.

"MY ADVISOR HAS ALSO HELPED ME TO IMPROVE MY WELL-BEING AND MY HOME, LIKE GETTING A DONATION OF PAINTS TO RE-DO MY WALLS, AND APPLYING FOR A COOKER AND NEW FLOORING."



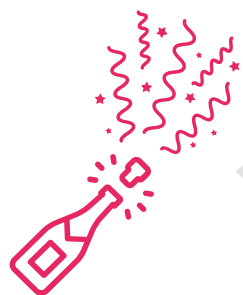
OUR STAFF

We value our team highly and recognise the importance of offering our staff plenty of meaningful development and learning opportunities to help them flourish in their careers and create a staff team that we can be proud of.

We also want to achieve the best outcomes possible for our clients as many have complex needs and circumstances. So we seek to ensure that all staff are fully equipped to provide the best quality service possible.

In the last year, we made the most of all that was available to us, despite many events taking place digitally. Our team has taken part in many digital learning opportunities, including:

- ✓ Personality Disorder Training
- ✓ Children's Mental Health Capacity Act Training
- ✓ Benefits Training
- ✓ Anti-Discriminatory Practice Training
- ✓ Transferring a Tenancy Training
- ✓ Understanding Neglect Training
- ✓ Universal Credit Training
- ✓ Adult Safeguarding Training
- ✓ Suicide Awareness
- ✓ ACE and Trauma Awareness Workshop
- ✓ Time Management for Effective Remote Working
- ✓ Introduction to Radicalisation Training
- And much more...



Welcoming our New Starters...

Gemma Skevington	Catherine Cox	Alisia Heslop
Molly Beaumont	Jim Dziemianko	Rachel Wood
Marley Emms	Natalie Steiner	Hannah Fox

A big hello to the newest members of 'The Bridge family'!

Congratulations to Parmit (Senior Homeless Offenders Officer) and husband Harks on the birth of their baby girl, Amara, as well as to Lydia (Housing Support Worker) and partner Ben on the birth of their boy, Albie.

Two of our Intensive Young Persons Support Workers are also celebrating; Kerry and husband Stephan welcomed little Ella-Faith, while Vickie, and husband Kam, gave birth to their baby Arjun. Congratulations!



WORKING AT THE BRIDGE

If I were asked what I enjoy most about my job, without a doubt my answer would be the clients I support. Within my role I get time to understand each of them as individuals so we can work together to ensure they maintain their tenancies and have a place to call home.

I started at The Bridge in 2019, having worked in a homeless hostel before; I worked initially in Leicestershire then changed role in 2020 to work in Rutland. The past year has been challenging for everyone during the pandemic but I have still been able to maintain contact through visits as necessary as well as being at the other end of the phone for my clients. This has been vital to the people I support, as it has been such an isolating time. Sometimes just having a chat over the phone, taking time to listen and having someone just to ask how things are, has made a huge difference to them.

Despite not being in our office over the last year, all of us have adjusted to working from home. We still have our team meetings via our laptops, we extended the number of staff being able to take general phone enquiries and continued to fundraise – many of us got more active with our December fitness challenge!

All the staff are so passionate about their jobs and want to achieve the best outcomes for all the people we support. We have continued to work with many agencies and charities to ensure our service has been consistent and we have still provided the best opportunities and support for all our clients. The Bridge supports us to attend regular training so we develop our skills and knowledge.

Reaching out and asking for help can be a difficult first step, however, once clients do, we allow them to feel listened to and never judged.

I am just about to start my new job, joining the Senior Leadership Team as the Trainee Prevention & Wellbeing Services Manager. I look forward to the new challenge- and hopefully a year ahead where we can all start to return to seeing each other face to face, both staff and clients!

Mary Bullivant
Complex Needs Support Worker



OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Thank You



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Action Homeless
Advice Quality Standard
AGE UK Leicestershire & Rutland
Alex's Wish
All Saints Thorpe Acre
Alpkit
Amazon Smile
Asda Feeding Communities
Big Lottery Fund
Blaby District Council
Blackbaud
Broomfield School
Central Seafoods Fish Shop Supplies
Charnwood Borough Council
Charnwood Community Lottery
Charnwood Food Poverty Group
Children in Need
Citizens Advice Charnwood
Citizens Advice Leicestershire
Citizens Advice Rutland
De Lisle College
Department for Work and Pensions
EASE
European Social Fund

Fairfield Prep School
Falcon Support Services
Florence Turner Trust
Fundraising Regulator
G. Gamble & Sons
Garfield Weston Foundation
George's Traditional Fish & Chips
Glasspool
Halifax Bank
Harborough District Council
Harbour Housing
Hardwick House School
Hinckley & Bosworth District Council
HM Probation Service
Intelligent Energy Charitable Trust
Iveshead School
Job Centre Plus Loughborough
John Storer House
Julian House
JustGiving
Kirby Muxloe Women's Institute
Leicester Adult Learning College
Leicester CharityLink
Leicester City Council

Leicester City Football Club
Leicestershire Cares
Leicestershire County Council
Living Without Abuse
LLR Community Foundation
Longhurst Group
Loughborough Churches Partnership
Loughborough College
Loughborough Grammar School
Loughborough Hospital
Loughborough University & Students Union
Loughborough Welfare Trust
Markfield Benefice
Markfield Churches Together
Maud Elington Charitable Trust
Melton Borough Council
Mountsorrel United Charities
Neighbourly Community Fund
Newtown Linford Primary School
North West Leicestershire District Council
Nottingham Community Housing Association

Oadby & Wigston Borough Council
PACE
PayPal
Perdiem Limited
Public Health Leicestershire
Reaching People Consortium
Redefine Living
Rev'd Lisa & St Paul's Church Woodhouse Eaves
Rutland County Council
Schroder Charity Trust
Seagrave Village Primary School
Soft Touch Arts
Spire Homes
St Andrew's Church Foxton
St Bartholemew's United Church
St Pauls C of E Primary School
Stonebow Primary School
Stonewater Housing Association
Straw and Pearce Solicitors
Tesco Bags For Life - Groundwork
Tesco Ltd
The 29th May 1961 Charity
The 7 Stars Foundation

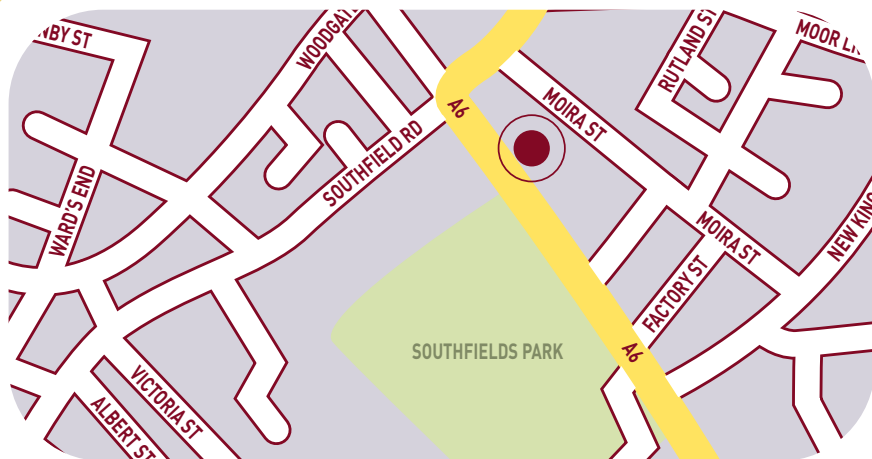
The Blakemore Foundation
The Helen Jean Cope Charity
The Henry Smith Charity
The John Salmon Trust
The Leathersellers Company
The Loughborough Lions
The Loughborough Welfare Trust
The Needle & Pin Pub
The Y
Thomas Estley Community College
Thornton, Bagworth & Stanton Parochial Church Council

TK Maxx Loughborough
Trinity Reformed Church
TwentyTwenty
Uppingham Town Council
The Vicar's Relief Fund
VISTA
Voluntary Action Leicestershire
Waitrose Mountsorrel



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JUSTGIVING, PAYPAL
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The Bridge, 38 Leicester Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 2AG

Tel: 01509 260500


Email: assistance@thebridge-eastmidlands.org.uk

Web: www.thebridge-eastmidlands.org.uk

Charity No: 1050596 **Company No:** 03114996



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