

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

England & Wales · Charity number 1073822

Details

Status Registered

Legal form Charitable company

Company number [03647391](#)

Registered 1999-02-04

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address 32 Houndgate
Darlington
DL1 5RH

Phone 01325254463

Email info@firststopdarlington.org.uk

Website www.firststopdarlington.org.uk

Activities

Objects: 3.The Charity?s objects (?the Objects?) are the relief of those persons in the Borough of Darlington and its surrounding areas, who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress, in particular by the provision of a centre from which advice, support, training and other activities are delivered to help them towards wellbeing and work.

Activities: First Stop Darlington provides a Wellbeing and Work Hub in the town centre of Darlington and houses a range of practical, free facilities and activities designed to help people navigate from life events and difficulties through to having control of their destination and plan how to get there, no matter what the future vision is.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Disability, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Economic/community Development/employment, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity, Recreation, Other Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** BOROUGH OF DARLINGTON
- Darlington

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£235,037	£231,629	-	-
2024-03-31	£263,371	£262,554	-	-
2023-03-31	£196,344	£219,077	-	-
2022-03-31	£143,588	£149,587	-	-
2021-03-31	£239,584	£168,989	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Bernadette Mary Chapman		2016-03-08
Christine Tarran		2025-06-24
David Hemingway		2025-08-20
Debra Irving		2020-03-03
JOHN WILLIAM KILGOUR		2014-09-29

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

England & Wales - Charity number 1073822

Accounts

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03647391 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1073822

Report of the Trustees and
Unaudited Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025
for
FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Mitchell Gordon LLP
43 Coniscliffe Road
Darlington
Co. Durham
DL3 7EH

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

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for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

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TRUSTEES' ACCOUNTS

MARCH 2025

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

The Trustees present the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2025. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in the notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and 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 published on 16 July 2014 (as amended by Update Bulletin 1 published on 2 February 2016).

The trustees are directors of the Company for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006.

Reference and Administration Information

Charity Name:	First Stop Darlington
Charity Registration number:	1073822
Company registration number:	3647391
Registered office and operational address:	32 Houndgate, Darlington, Co. Durham, DL1 5RH
Governing document:	Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 21 September 1998 and amended by special resolution(s) dated 20 th October 2011 and amended further by special resolution(s) dated 9 th February 2021

Board of Trustees

William John Kilgour	
Bernadette Mary Chapman	(Acting Chair)
Debra Irving	
James Stephen McGill	
Victoria Kate Gill	Resigned 24 th February 2025
Julie Whitehouse	Resigned 8 th April 2025 (after the year end but prior to the date of this report)

Company Secretary

Vacant

Independent Examiner

Lee Harris Bsc (Hons), FCCA
Mitchell Gordon LLP
43 Coniscliffe Rd
Darlington
Co. Durham
DL3 7EH

Bankers

Unity Trust Bank plc
Nine Brindley Place
Birmingham
B1 2HB

Solicitors

Close Thornton
31 Houndgate
Darlington
Co. Durham
DL1 5RH

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Report of the Trustees **for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

Chair Report

This year's Trustee report reflects what has been a very challenging year for the charity, and we have once again, successfully adapted to enable the organisation to meet the increasing needs of the people of Darlington. Charity funding for poverty is currently quite scarce, and this has been extremely difficult to navigate for the organisation. The charity has adapted but sadly this has meant reducing the number of workers in the project leaving a small team to deal with the most important issues and problems of our clients.

The Trustees would like to place on the record our grateful thanks to the staff for their loyalty and professionalism during this difficult time as they have continued to support our clients and each other with professionalism and empathy while maintaining their sense of humour.

First Stop continues to receive funding from a variety of faithful sources which reflects the value that our funders apply to our work and in doing this we are trying to ensure that we are not too reliant upon one main funder but as stated above funding is becoming an increasingly challenging problem for the charity.

I have recently been made acting chair of the board, and I would like to place on record my thanks to my fellow trustees for their support and their contributions to the strategy of First Stop and in addition the support of the staff in our fundraising efforts. I would also like to give special thanks to our long-time chair John Kilgour who served in this capacity for 9 years and our gratitude to him for remaining on the board and continuing to provide his support and advice. We would also like to thank Tori Gill who stood down as acting chair in February for the contribution she made while on the Board and as Acting Chair, and the contribution she continues to make through sharing her PR skills.

Acting Chair
Bernadette Chapman

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

Who are we?

First Stop Darlington (FSD) is a charity in Darlington, we work with people aged over 16 years of any culture, who experience disadvantages, for example: poverty, isolation, mental health, poor attainment; anything that means a person has fewer options and faces more barriers to live a fulfilled life due to their circumstances. Most of our clients live in the most deprived wards in our town, which are in the lowest 10 percentile of deprivation.

The biggest need that we currently address is that of poverty and all its ugly guises. We support people who are unemployed, people who are in full-time work and people in part-time work, we work with single people, couples, families, and anyone in between. Nobody is turned away; it is literally a person's 'first stop' to getting help in a time of crisis.

The charity was founded in 1999 to support people 'in need and distress within Darlington'. Unfortunately, that need is still here and we have adapted our services to help meet historic and emerging demands, increasing support to families and all on low income. We continue to find ways to adapt to growing needs, ensuring we provide a high-quality service to as many people as possible.

FSD is situated in Houndgate, within an area of deprivation under 10% percentile of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, where we operate a centre with an appointment service, with crisis access available every day on the ground floor and have offices and a training/activity room/meeting room on the first floor. We offer an in-depth advice service with the use of phones and laptops so that clients can be supported to solve their problems and increase their access to benefits, housing, mental health support, employment support and other services.

Since we began in Feb 1999, we have supported over 10,400 vulnerable people to help them work on their issues and move forwards towards an independent life. We have provided, in total, a range of support services to over 12,500 people over the years, with the addition of various outreach events. (A full Annual Report is available on request).

How are we constituted?

First Stop Darlington is a company limited by guarantee, No. 3647391, governed by its Articles and Memorandum of Association. It is registered charity No 1073822 with a core membership of 12 people.

The directors of FSD are the Board of Trustees and are elected by the membership. In 2024-2025, the board had 5 members serving on the Board with 3 vacancies, none of whom are related to each other.

The Board has an appointed Acting Chair currently with a vacant Vice Chair position at present. The Articles of Association require that one third of the directors/ trustees retire each year by rotation; retiring trustees are eligible for re-election.

We do not have a treasurer, but all trustees have undergone training in the field of financial management of charities and all trustees are expected to oversee all financial reporting by our financial officer, the CEO and our financial advisors.

The role of the trustees is to further the objectives of FSD by formulating and regularly reviewing strategic aims, ensuring that policy and practice are in keeping with its aims and that FSD functions within the legal and financial requirements of a charitable organisation and strives to achieve best practice.

The Board has updated the Risk Register, taking account of the increased risks posed by the economic pressure caused by the years of inflation and increased energy prices on all aspects of public life. As clients' needs increased so also does the pressure on our staff and donors. The Risk Register takes these factors into account along with the various risks pertinent to our building, staff, funding etc.

Through the course of this year no trustee has received any remuneration or reimbursement of expenses. As well as participating in Board meetings and strategy reviews, individual board members have participated in fund raising activities. Raising money at a local level remains a challenge, but coffee mornings, CEO Sleepout and Carnival activities remain on the agenda. During this financial year £4,963 was raised through fundraising events and £4,410 raised in donations from the general public.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Report of the Trustees **for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

FSD employs a CEO who is responsible for the general management of all FSD projects, management of staff and volunteers, building management and leading the team in procuring funding. The CEO attends Board meetings and reports to The Board on finance and operational matters.

The CEO is Tracy Freeman and there are 4 other members of experienced and dedicated staff who provide support and share skills with our clients, with a vacancy post ready to advertise in May.

Grant giving funding bodies are our main source of income, supplemented by fund raising efforts by Trustees and staff, and personal donations as mentioned above.

Our thanks for 2024-25 funding go to, National Lottery Community Fund, Ballinger Trust, Garfield Weston Trust, Watson Hope Foundation, Point North, Greggs Foundation, Trusthouse Foundation, 1989 Willan Trust, Harrison Foundation and all those who sponsored, donated and supported our fundraising efforts throughout the year.

Our aims and how we work

First Stop Darlington provides a Wellbeing and Work Hub in the town centre of Darlington and houses a range of practical, free facilities and activities designed to help people navigate from poverty and all its trappings, through to employment with decent wages that helps lift people out of poverty and to achieve long lost goals.

The aims of the organisation are:

- To ensure that confidential, impartial information, advice and support is provided in ways that empower local people to make informed decisions about their life choices and in a way that is sensitive to their needs.
- To provide Information, Advice and Guidance services regarding welfare benefit claims, benefit issues, money issues, expenditure, poverty, housing issues, access to services etc.
- To provide one to one support while people are working through their issues, sharing problem solving skills and increasing self-esteem and self-confidence to make behavioural changes in their lives.
- To promote positive mental health among service users, including Mindset and Mindfulness work.
- To provide activities around prevention of poor mental health, addiction behaviours, and to promote a healthy sense of well-being and increased self-worth.
- To support local people to help themselves move forward out of life's difficulties and onwards towards independence.
- To work in partnership with other likeminded organisations to deliver wrap around services.
- To highlight the problem of poverty and its associated issues.
- To provide accurate statistical information on poverty issues to inform service planning and delivery.

The Centre is open to the public every weekday to provide impartial confidential information, advice, guidance, support, and onward referral to our clients. For a breakdown and photos of all our achievements over the year, please refer to our Annual Report 2025, available on our website and by request.

Staffing Support and Appraisal

Staff are offered regular support and an open-door policy by the CEO; they have opportunities to talk about their work and progress both formally and informally and to also have input and ideas into the running of our services and how they develop.

FSD is historically fortunate to have had minimal staffing restructures for downsizing purposes, however 2024 has presented some challenges due to changes in funding availability and we have been unable to recruit into vacant posts. We are blessed with an existing staff team who have been a crucial part of our charity for some years. We do enjoy the energy that new people bring and always welcome new team members when funding allows.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Report of the Trustees **for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

First Stop Thanks

Trustees

The Trustees have met frequently in formal Board meetings and on an ad hoc basis to monitor developing situations, e.g. Finances and supporting the CEO. Currently, poverty is not seen as an important criterion for funding by many Trusts and Foundations resulting in a significant drop in income this year. The Trustees and the CEO continue to work together to find solutions and new partners to ensure the continuity of the charity.

Staff

The Trustees of First Stop wish to pay tribute to the dedication and hard work of all members of staff and volunteers who ensured those who need our services and help were able to access support throughout the year. Our staff members work with dedication, professionalism, compassion and their wonderful sense of humour, putting everyone at ease as soon as they meet us.

Financial Review

a. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

b. Reserves Policy

The Trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves considering the main risks to the organisation. It has established a policy that the Charity's unrestricted funds, not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets and that are cash-backed, should be adequate to cover foreseeable shortfalls in income for a sufficient period to enable the Trustees to take corrective action. At 31 March 2025, the Trustees have calculated the reserves level required to be between £59,767 and £119,534 in light of the level of project expenditure planned in 2025/26, which is 3 - 6 months reserves. The management committee will continue to keep this policy, and the reserves level under review. At 31 March 2025 the actual level of free reserves is £70,048 equalling 3.5 months reserves. (2024: £66,640).

C. Financial Review

The Statement Of Financial Activities on page 8 and the Balance Sheet on pages 9-10 show a healthy financial position, the main features of which are: Unrestricted reserves of £266,501 which includes the revalued freehold property.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 24 June 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

.....*B. Chapman*.....
B M Chapman - Trustee

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
First Stop Darlington**

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of First Stop Darlington ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by Section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of Section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



L Harris Bsc (Hons), FCCA

Mitchell Gordon LLP
43 Coniscliffe Road
Darlington
Co. Durham
DL3 7EH

Date: 24 June 2025

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Total funds £
Income and endowments from					
Donations and legacies		4,986	-	4,986	13,912
Charitable activities					
Charitable activities		43,319	173,559	216,878	218,750
Other trading activities	3	8,943	-	8,943	28,283
Investment income	4	<u>4,230</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,230</u>	<u>2,426</u>
Total		<u>61,478</u>	<u>173,559</u>	<u>235,037</u>	<u>263,371</u>
Expenditure on					
Raising funds		17,707	115,669	133,376	158,770
Charitable activities					
General activities		-	-	-	38,276
Charitable activities		<u>40,174</u>	<u>58,079</u>	<u>98,253</u>	<u>65,508</u>
Total		<u>57,881</u>	<u>173,748</u>	<u>231,629</u>	<u>262,554</u>
Net gains/(losses) on investments		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1)</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		3,597	(189)	3,408	816
Other recognised gains/(losses)					
Gains on revaluation of fixed assets		<u>30,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>30,000</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		33,597	(189)	33,408	816
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		<u>232,904</u>	<u>189</u>	<u>233,093</u>	<u>232,277</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u>266,501</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>266,501</u>	<u>233,093</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Balance Sheet
31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31/3/25 Total funds £	31/3/24 Total funds £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	10	196,063	-	196,063	167,222
Current assets					
Debtors	11	9,096	-	9,096	14,074
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>164,340</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>164,340</u>	<u>227,517</u>
		173,436	-	173,436	241,591
Creditors					
Amounts falling due within one year	12	(44,681)	-	(44,681)	(112,016)
		<u>128,755</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>128,755</u>	<u>129,575</u>
Net current assets					
		324,818	-	324,818	296,797
Creditors					
Amounts falling due after more than one year	13	(58,317)	-	(58,317)	(63,704)
NET ASSETS		<u>266,501</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>266,501</u>	<u>233,093</u>
Funds	16				
Unrestricted funds				266,501	232,904
Restricted funds				<u>-</u>	<u>189</u>
Total funds				<u>266,501</u>	<u>233,093</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

The notes form part of these financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Balance Sheet - continued

31 March 2025

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 24 June 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:

.....*B. Chapman*.....
B M Chapman - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

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

1. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

Unrestricted Funds:

General - The free funds of the charity which are available for the general work of the charity at the discretion of the Trustees.

Watson Hope Foundation - This is a new foundation that kindly extended their donation of £20,000 per year for an additional 2 years (2023-2025) The grant is for core funding given due to the work and dedication of the charity in supporting people out of their worst circumstances, with opportunities to gain confidence and enhance self-belief.

Restricted Funds:

These funds relate to grants and donations received for specific purposes as follows:

The Ballinger Charitable Trust - £20,000 per year April 2023 - March 2026 funding is for Core services in supporting vulnerable people.

The National Lottery Fund - Reaching Communities Fund -£294,504 April 2024 - March 2028 for providing a Mental Health Support Worker and the delivery of a Mindset Mentor programme with group activities to further support the programme and client journey.

Garfield Weston - £25,000 July 2023 - June 2024 core funding to deliver advice and support services to vulnerable people.

Greggs Foundation -£20,000 per year Nov 2023 -October 2026 3-year funding towards the strategic and administrative development of the organisation.

Harrison Foundation - £29,344 Nov 2023 - October 2024 to provide Digital Inclusion courses to those who do not have IT skills and experience digital exclusion.

Awards4All - £9,469 Sept 2023 - Aug 2024 provides activities to support people with their mental wellbeing and activities towards gaining employment skills.

Trusthouse Charitable Foundation - £9,764 Nov 2023 - Oct 2024 towards the cost of core service provision - Welfare benefits and financial wellbeing.

1989 Willan Trust - £4,613 Nov 2023 - Oct 2024 towards salary cost of Support Worker delivering core services.

North Point (formerly County Durham Community Foundation) - £4,820 core cost funding August 2024 - July 2025 to support those struggling due to poverty.

The Princes Trust - £4,500 Nov 2023 - Oct 2026 3 year funding towards promotional and publicity of group activities for those experiencing poor mental health.

North Point (formerly County Durham Community Foundation) - Waiting Well - £4,965 April 2024 - March 2025 to provide support to on NHS waiting lists who may need support to help them cope and manage their situation until treatment is received.

NHS - Health Improvement Fund - £7,500 to provide mental health wellbeing services and activities between October 2024 - September 2025 to improve their overall wellbeing and improve their self-confidence and self-worth.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued **for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) '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 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments which are included at market value, as modified by the revaluation of certain assets.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the Charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Freehold property	- not provided
Fixtures and fittings	- 33% on cost and 20% on cost
Computer equipment	- 33% on cost

Taxation

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

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

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

3. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	31/3/25	31/3/24
	£	£
Fundraising events	4,963	14,613
Management charges income	-	7,440
Room hire	<u>3,980</u>	<u>6,230</u>
	<u>8,943</u>	<u>28,283</u>

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31/3/25	31/3/24
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>4,230</u>	<u>2,426</u>

5. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	31/3/25	31/3/24
	£	£
Depreciation - owned assets	1,629	1,489
Client welfare	25,711	35,052
Other direct costs	<u>2,558</u>	<u>1,370</u>

6. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2024 - £nil).

Trustees' expenses

During the year, no Trustee expenses were incurred (2024 - £nil).

7. STAFF COSTS

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

	31/3/25	31/3/24
Charitable services	<u>7</u>	<u>9</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

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

8. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Income and endowments from			
Donations and legacies	8,912	5,000	13,912
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	-	218,750	218,750
Other trading activities	28,283	-	28,283
Investment income	<u>2,426</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,426</u>
Total	<u>39,621</u>	<u>223,750</u>	<u>263,371</u>
Expenditure on			
Raising funds	158,770	-	158,770
Charitable activities			
General activities	38,276	-	38,276
Charitable activities	<u>(158,054)</u>	<u>223,562</u>	<u>65,508</u>
Total	<u>38,992</u>	<u>223,562</u>	<u>262,554</u>
Net gains/(losses) on investments	<u>(1)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1)</u>
NET INCOME	628	188	816
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward	<u>232,277</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>232,277</u>
Total funds carried forward	<u>232,905</u>	<u>188</u>	<u>233,093</u>

9. INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REMUNERATION

Fees payable to the Charity's independent examination of the Charity's annual accounts £1,668 (2024: £1,588).

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

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

10. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Freehold property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST OR VALUATION				
At 1 April 2024	165,000	9,770	4,001	178,771
Additions	-	-	470	470
Revaluations	<u>30,000</u>	-	-	<u>30,000</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>195,000</u>	<u>9,770</u>	<u>4,471</u>	<u>209,241</u>
DEPRECIATION				
At 1 April 2024	-	9,341	2,208	11,549
Charge for year	-	<u>168</u>	<u>1,461</u>	<u>1,629</u>
At 31 March 2025	-	<u>9,509</u>	<u>3,669</u>	<u>13,178</u>
NET BOOK VALUE				
At 31 March 2025	<u>195,000</u>	<u>261</u>	<u>802</u>	<u>196,063</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>165,000</u>	<u>429</u>	<u>1,793</u>	<u>167,222</u>

Included in cost or valuation of land and buildings is freehold land of £195,000 (2024 - £165,000) which is not depreciated.

Cost or valuation at 31 March 2025 is represented by:

	Freehold property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
Valuation in 2025	30,000	-	-	30,000
Cost	<u>165,000</u>	<u>9,770</u>	<u>4,471</u>	<u>179,241</u>
	<u>195,000</u>	<u>9,770</u>	<u>4,471</u>	<u>209,241</u>

Freehold property was revalued by Smith & Friends estate agents on a market value basis on 2 October 2024.

The directors believe that there was no material change in the property value since its revaluation, therefore no depreciation has been provided. This is due to the maintenance and upkeep of the building.

11. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/25 £	31/3/24 £
Trade debtors	2,867	3,804
Other debtors	-	250
Accrued income	576	815
Prepayments	<u>5,653</u>	<u>9,205</u>
	<u>9,096</u>	<u>14,074</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

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

12. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/25	31/3/24
	£	£
Bank loans and overdrafts (see note 14)	5,387	5,049
Trade creditors	790	1,056
Social security and other taxes	2,816	2,779
Pension creditor	795	752
Deferred income	32,880	100,333
Accrued expenses	<u>2,013</u>	<u>2,047</u>
	<u>44,681</u>	<u>112,016</u>

13. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	31/3/25	31/3/24
	£	£
Bank loans (see note 14)	<u>58,317</u>	<u>63,704</u>

14. LOANS

An analysis of the maturity of loans is given below:

	31/3/25	31/3/24
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year on demand:		
Bank loans	<u>5,387</u>	<u>5,049</u>
Amounts falling due between two and five years:		
Bank loans	<u>23,987</u>	<u>23,487</u>
Amounts falling due in more than five years:		
Repayable by instalments:		
Bank loans	34,330	40,217

15. SECURED DEBTS

The following secured debts are included within creditors:

	31/3/25	31/3/24
	£	£
Bank loans	<u>63,704</u>	<u>68,753</u>

The above debt is secured against the building owned by the company.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

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

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/24 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/25 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	232,904	33,597	266,501
Restricted funds			
Awards for all	189	(189)	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>233,093</u>	<u>33,408</u>	<u>266,501</u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	41,478	(37,881)	30,000	33,597
Watson Hope Foundation	<u>20,000</u>	<u>(20,000)</u>	-	-
	61,478	(57,881)	30,000	33,597
Restricted funds				
Big Lottery Wellbeing Fund	70,264	(70,264)	-	-
Ballinger Trust	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
1989 Willen Trust	2,691	(2,691)	-	-
Awards for all	4,789	(4,978)	-	(189)
Garfield Weston Pilotlight Fund	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	20,833	(20,833)	-	-
Greggs Foundation	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
Harrison Foundation	16,320	(16,320)	-	-
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation	1,627	(1,627)	-	-
CDCF Col Fund	4,820	(4,820)	-	-
Places for People	750	(750)	-	-
Prince of Wales	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
Waiting Well	<u>4,965</u>	<u>(4,965)</u>	-	-
	<u>173,559</u>	<u>(173,748)</u>	-	<u>(189)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>235,037</u>	<u>(231,629)</u>	<u>30,000</u>	<u>33,408</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

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

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	232,277	627	232,904
Restricted funds			
Awards for all	-	189	189
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>232,277</u>	<u>816</u>	<u>233,093</u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	39,621	(38,993)	(1)	627
Restricted funds				
Big Lottery Wellbeing Fund	81,455	(81,455)	-	-
Ballinger Trust	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
Watson Hope Fund	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
1989 Willen Trust	1,922	(1,922)	-	-
Awards for all	4,680	(4,491)	-	189
County Durham Community Fund	7,427	(7,427)	-	-
Garfield Weston Pilotlight Fund	5,700	(5,700)	-	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	12,500	(12,500)	-	-
Greggs Foundation	8,333	(8,333)	-	-
Harrison Foundation	37,909	(37,909)	-	-
Health Improvement Fund	8,560	(8,560)	-	-
The Princes Trust	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
Tees Esk & Wear Valley NHS Trust	5,627	(5,627)	-	-
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation	8,137	(8,137)	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	223,750	(223,561)	-	189
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>263,371</u>	<u>(262,554)</u>	<u>(1)</u>	<u>816</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

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

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1/4/23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/25 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	232,277	34,224	266,501
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>232,277</u>	<u>34,224</u>	<u>266,501</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movemen in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	81,099	(76,874)	29,999	34,224
Watson Hope Foundation	<u>20,000</u>	<u>(20,000)</u>	-	-
	101,099	(96,874)	29,999	34,224
Restricted funds				
Big Lottery Wellbeing Fund	151,719	(151,719)	-	-
Ballinger Trust	40,000	(40,000)	-	-
Watson Hope Fund	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
1989 Willen Trust	4,613	(4,613)	-	-
Awards for all	9,469	(9,469)	-	-
County Durham Community Fund	7,427	(7,427)	-	-
Garfield Weston Pilotlight Fund	10,700	(10,700)	-	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	33,333	(33,333)	-	-
Greggs Foundation	28,333	(28,333)	-	-
Harrison Foundation	54,229	(54,229)	-	-
Health Improvement Fund	8,560	(8,560)	-	-
The Princes Trust	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
Tees Esk & Wear Valley NHS Trust	5,627	(5,627)	-	-
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation	9,764	(9,764)	-	-
CDCF Col Fund	4,820	(4,820)	-	-
Places for People	750	(750)	-	-
Prince of Wales	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
Waiting Well	<u>4,965</u>	<u>(4,965)</u>	-	-
	<u>397,309</u>	<u>(397,309)</u>	-	-
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>498,408</u>	<u>(494,183)</u>	<u>29,999</u>	<u>34,224</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

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

17. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

Owing to the nature of the Charity's operations and the composition of the Board of Trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the Charity has an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

	31/3/25	31/3/24
	£	£
Income and endowments		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	4,410	10,143
Gift aid	<u>576</u>	<u>3,769</u>
	4,986	13,912
Other trading activities		
Fundraising events	4,963	14,613
Management charges income	-	7,440
Room hire	<u>3,980</u>	<u>6,230</u>
	8,943	28,283
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	4,230	2,426
Charitable activities		
Grants	<u>216,878</u>	<u>218,750</u>
Total incoming resources	235,037	263,371
Expenditure		
Raising donations and legacies		
Wages	93,343	110,465
Social security	4,044	4,684
Pensions	1,699	2,023
Client welfare	26,604	35,052
Other direct costs	2,558	1,370
Telephone	3,514	3,418
Postage and stationery	1,265	1,226
Fundraising expenses	<u>335</u>	<u>532</u>
	133,362	158,770
Other trading activities		
Bad debts	14	-
Charitable activities		
Wages	62,837	61,960
Social security	3,754	3,800
Pensions	1,511	1,485
Insurance	3,514	2,200
Light and heat	3,636	3,867
Advertising	197	123
Other fees	4,692	8,635
IT costs	4,372	6,256
Carried forward	84,513	88,326

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

	31/3/25	31/3/24
	£	£
Charitable activities		
Brought forward	84,513	88,326
Governance costs	162	266
Premises costs	6,536	7,579
Administration costs	1,090	1,495
Fixtures and fittings	168	168
Computer equipment	1,461	1,321
Mortgage	<u>4,323</u>	<u>4,629</u>
	<u>98,253</u>	<u>103,784</u>
Total resources expended	<u>231,629</u>	<u>262,554</u>
Net income before gains and losses	3,408	817
Realised recognised gains and losses		
Realised gains/(losses) on fixed asset investments	<u>-</u>	<u>(1)</u>
Net income	<u>3,408</u>	<u>816</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

England & Wales - Charity number 1073822

Accounts

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03647391 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1073822

Report of the Trustees and
Unaudited Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024
for
FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Mitchell Gordon LLP
43 Coniscliffe Road
Darlington
Co. Durham
DL3 7EH

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

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for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

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Detailed Statement of Financial Activities	25 to 26



TRUSTEES' REPORT

MARCH 2024

32 Houndgate, Darlington, DL1 1PD

Tel: 01325 254463 Registered Charity Number 1073822

Company Limited by Guarantee 3647391

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Trustees' Annual report for the year ended 31 March 2024

The Trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in the notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and 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 published on 16 July 2014 (as amended by Update Bulletin 1 published on 2 February 2016).

The trustees are directors of the Company for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006.

Reference and Administration Information

Charity Name:	First Stop Darlington
Charity Registration number:	1073822
Company registration number:	3647391
Registered office and operational address:	32 Houndgate, Darlington, DL1 5RH
Governing document:	Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 21 st September 1998 and amended by special resolution(s) dated 20 th October 2011 and amended further by special resolution(s) dated 9 th February 2021

Board of Trustees

William John Kilgour	Replaced as Chairman April 2024 – after the year end date but prior to the reporting date
Maire Margaret Kennan	Resigned 1 st March 2024
Alan Coultas	Resigned 19 th September 2023
Bernadette Mary Chapman	
Debra Irving	
James Stephen McGill	
Victoria Kate Gill	Appointed 29 th August 2023 (Appointed as Chair person April 2024 – after the year end date but prior to the reporting date)
Julie Whitehouse	Appointed 23 rd January 2024

Company Secretary

Vacancy

Independent Examiner

Lee Harris Bsc (Hons), FCCA
Mitchell Gordon LLP
43 Coniscliffe Rd
Darlington
DL3 7EH

Solicitors

Close Thornton
31 Houndgate
Darlington
DL1 5RH

Bankers

Unity Trust Bank plc, Nine Brindley Place, Birmingham, B1 2HB

Chair Report

This year's Trustee Report reflects the adaptability of the Charity to the increasing needs of people in Darlington. The Charity has developed innovative ways to address some of the fundamental issues underlying the challenges people are having at this difficult time. The work of giving practical advice and support to obtain their rightful benefits and access to housing are complemented by the Well-Being and skills programmes. The important recognition of peoples' mindset and fear of IT lead to support that improves their confidence, self-esteem and ability to cope with the life challenges they face.

First Stop continues to receive funding from a variety of sources which reflects the value our funders apply to our work but also gives a financial confidence that we are not reliant on one funder. We are very grateful for the generosity of our funders for not only financial but also moral support.

The Charity has adapted to the changes after the sad closure of the BikeStop enterprise which was a success in the benefits it brought to many people but not financially sustainable.

The Trustees and CEO benefitted from the Pilotlight Project which helped us to review and evaluate the Charity. We are grateful to Garfield Weston for the Award funding.

On behalf of the Trustee board, I would like to thank the staff for their hard work and enthusiasm during the year, they all make a difference. They fulfil the ethos of First Stop in providing a listening ear and time to work through issues.

I would also like to thank my fellow Trustees for their contributions to the governance and strategy of First Stop as well as support to the Staff and local fundraising. Special thanks to Alan Coultas, a founder Trustee who has been a major factor in the success of First Stop and has stepped down. Along with Maire Kennan who has given 6 years of support and wise advice.

William John Kilgour
Chair

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Trustees' Annual report for the year ended 31 March 2024

Who are we?

First Stop Darlington (FSD) is a charity in Darlington. We work with people aged over 16 of any denomination who experience disadvantages due to poverty, isolation, mental health, poor attainment etc. Anything that means a person has fewer options and faces more barriers to live a fulfilled life due to their circumstances. Most of our clients live in the most deprived wards of our town, which are in the lowest 10% decile of deprivation.

The biggest need that we are currently addressing is that of poverty and all its ugly guises. We are supporting people who are unemployed, people who are in full-time work and people in part-time work, we are working with single people, couples, families, and everything in between. Nobody is turned away; it is literally a person's first stop to getting help in a time of crisis.

The charity was founded in 1999 to support people 'in need and distress within Darlington'. Unfortunately, that need is still here, and we have adapted our services to help meet historic and emerging demands, increasing support to families and all on low income. We continue to find ways to adapt ensuring we provide a high-quality service to as many people who need us as possible.

FSD is situated in Houndgate, within an area of deprivation under 10% percentile of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, where we operate a centre with an appointment service, with crisis access available every day on the ground floor and have offices and a training/activity room/meeting room on the first floor. We offer an in-depth advice service with the use of phones and laptops so that clients can be supported to solve their problems and increase their access to benefits, housing, mental health support, employment support and other services.

Since we began in Feb 1999, we have supported over **10,000** vulnerable people to help them work on their issues and move forwards towards an independent life. We have provided, in total, a range of support services to over 12,000 people over the years, with the addition of various outreach events.

How are we constituted?

First Stop Darlington is a company limited by guarantee, No. 3647391, governed by its Articles and Memorandum of Association. It is registered charity No 1073822 with a core membership of 12 people.

The directors of FSD are the Board of Trustees and are elected by the membership. In 2023-2024, the board had 6 members serving on the Board, none of whom are related to each other.

The Board has an appointed Chair with a vacant Vice Chair position at present. The Articles of Association require that one third of the directors/ trustees retire each year by rotation; retiring trustees are eligible for re-election.

We do not have a treasurer, but all trustees have undergone training in the field of financial management of charities. All trustees are expected to oversee all financial reporting by our financial officer, the CEO and our financial advisors. We are pleased to announce that as of 1st April 2024 we now have a Treasurer – James McGill, who is an existing Trustee who has past and present experience of Treasury roles within the charitable sector.

The role of the trustees is to further the objectives of FSD through taking part in formulating and regularly reviewing strategic aims, ensuring that policy and practice are in keeping with its aims and that FSD functions within the legal and financial requirements of a charitable company and strives to achieve best practice.

The Board has updated the Risk Register, taking account of the increased risks posed by the economic pressure caused by the years of inflation and increased energy prices on all aspects of public life. As clients' needs increased so also does the pressure on our staff and donors. The Risk Register has these factors taken into account along with the various risks pertinent to our building, staff, funding etc.

Through the course of this year no trustee has received any remuneration or reimbursement of expenses. As well as participating in Board meetings and strategy reviews, individual board members have participated in fund raising activities. Raising money at a local level remains a challenge, but coffee mornings, CEO Sleepout and Carnival activities remain on the agenda. During this financial year £14,613 was raised through fundraising events and £5,144 raised in donations from the general public.

FSD employs a CEO whose responsibility is the general management of all FSD projects, management of staff and volunteers, building management and leading the team in procuring funding. The CEO attends Board meetings and reports to The Board on finance and operational matters.

The CEO is Tracy Freeman and there are 7 other members of experienced and dedicated staff who provide support and share skills with our clients.

Grant giving funding bodies are our main source of income, supplemented by fund raising efforts by Trustees and staff, and personal donations as mentioned above.

Our thanks for 2023-24 funding go to, National Lottery Community Fund, Ballinger Trust, Garfield Weston Trust, Watson Hope Foundation, County Durham Community Foundation, Greggs Foundation, Trusthouse Foundation, 1989 Willan Trust, Harrison Foundation and all those who sponsored, donated and supported our fundraising efforts throughout the year.

Our aims and how we work

First Stop Darlington provides a Wellbeing and Work Hub in the town centre of Darlington and houses a range of practical, free facilities and activities designed to help people navigate from poverty and all its trappings, through to employment with decent wages that helps lift people out of poverty and achieving long lost goals.

The aims of the organisation are:

- To ensure that confidential, impartial information, advice and support is provided in ways that empower local people to make informed decisions about their life choices and in a way that is sensitive to their needs.
- To support local people to help themselves move forward out of life's difficulties and onwards towards independence.
- To promote positive mental health among service users, including Mindset and Mindfulness work.
- To provide activities around prevention of poor mental health, addiction behaviours and to promote a healthy sense of well-being and increased self-worth.
- To provide Information, Advice and Guidance services regarding welfare benefit claims, benefit issues, money issues, expenditure, poverty, housing issues, access to services etc.
- To provide one to one support while people are working through their issues, sharing problem solving skills and increasing self-esteem and self-confidence to make behavioural changes in their lives.
- Support people to broaden their CV, increase skills through volunteering and courses, improving their job opportunities.
- To work in partnership with other likeminded organisations to deliver wrap around services.
- To highlight the problem of poverty and its associated issues.
- To provide accurate statistical information on poverty issues to inform service planning and delivery.

The Centre is open to the public every weekday to provide impartial confidential information, advice, guidance, support, and onward referral to our clients.

There are 2 Core Project Support Staff, 1.5 Mental Health Support Worker, 1.5 Digital Inclusion Worker, 1 Administrative officer and the CEO. The CEO works directly with clients during holidays and staff illness, ensuring there is full cover for our services.

Strategic Developments During the Year

Darlington Connect & Additional Partnership Engagement

Our commitment to working with other organisations locally involving dealing with the negative results of poverty has continued through the involvement and support of Darlington Connect, a multi-agency project in Darlington Town Centre that First Stop supports through providing staffing one morning per week and through the strategy board.

The CEO also sits on the Voluntary, Charity, Social Enterprise Strategy Group and attends regular meetings, fitting into appropriate task and finish groups as and when appropriate. The group is one of the ways that the VCSE and the Public and Private sector can join together to champion those people in our town who need services and provision. Representing their views at Board meetings is extremely important to all charities.

Pilotlight Project

We continued our work with the Pilotlighters through to October 2023 and continued to gain further insight and strategic support from our team of experts. This resulted in a refreshed Strategy, including a helpful and clear Strategy On A Page, designed to inform quickly and sets out our mission, vision, aims and objectives in an easily accessible visual representation of the larger document.

We continue to work towards the aims and objectives set out in the strategy.

Who do we help?

We have an instant access policy and offer appointments with support staff on the same day of presentation or within 24 hours. This is a crucial part of the relationship that we build with people, if they are brave enough to reach out for help, then we must be attentive enough to begin helping as fast as we can.

We support vulnerable people and families who are experiencing severe poverty. Issues such as finances, housing or benefit problems initially presented by clients, but they may frequently hide other issues such as debt, hunger, poor hygiene, anxiety & stress and often relationship troubles. Our support workers use various tools in their work, such as Trauma Informed Care approach and Mindfulness and are skilled in taking an holistic approach with clients to help them feel at ease and gain the confidence needed to discuss difficult issues.

Our clients are often:

- cash poor
- struggling to manage on low income
- struggling to compete for work due to digital exclusion
- experiencing anxiety, stress and other related mental health issues
- under threat of eviction due to arrears or no accommodation of their own
- sofa surfing and have no permanent address
- have poor prospects of obtaining paid employment
- unable to escape out of poor living conditions without financial and legal support.

Our clients may have experienced at least 3 of the following:

at risk of homelessness; low income and/or zero hour contracts; fuel poverty; hunger; socially excluded; poverty; debt; unemployment; mental ill health; mental illness; low self-esteem; lack self-confidence; low or no self-worth; young parents; leaving care young adults; domestic abuse victims; domestic violence perpetrators; relationship breakdown; self-harm; sexual abuse; survival sex; bereavement; removal of child/children from family home; coping with bereavement; widowed; widower; isolated.

Our services are available in the following formats:

- Pre-booked appointments between 9.30am – 12.30pm – (minimum 6 appointments per day)
- Daily accessed appointments between 1.30pm – 4.30pm – (minimum 6 appointments per day)
- 7 week Mindset Mentor Course running 6 times per year
- Weekly Gardening Club
- Weekly Walk & Talk Session
- Weekly Men’s Group/Activities
- Daily Digital Inclusion Sessions
- Differing activity sessions, such as art, meditation etc.
- Outreach sessions for appointments in the community x 2 sessions per week.

Outputs

In 2023 – 2024 we were privileged to work with and support 424 people:

This is again an increase on the previous year’s figures, the current economic climate that we are all experiencing continues to cause significant problems for so many people living in our communities. There remains no sign of this abating for those with the lowest incomes.

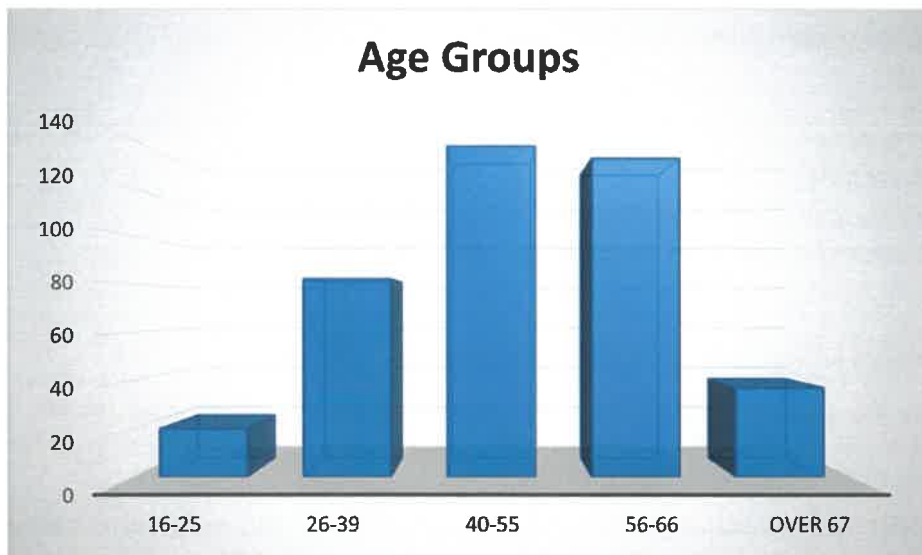
There continues to be a shift in how many women have used the services this year, this continues to bare up the evidence of poverty and bill paying etc. as it is still mainly females who are responsible for organising the household income. There are now only 24 more males accessing the services to women, this has changed from a predominantly male oriented service in the past.

Women are also more likely to keep returning and continuing with their support, slightly more than their male counterparts.

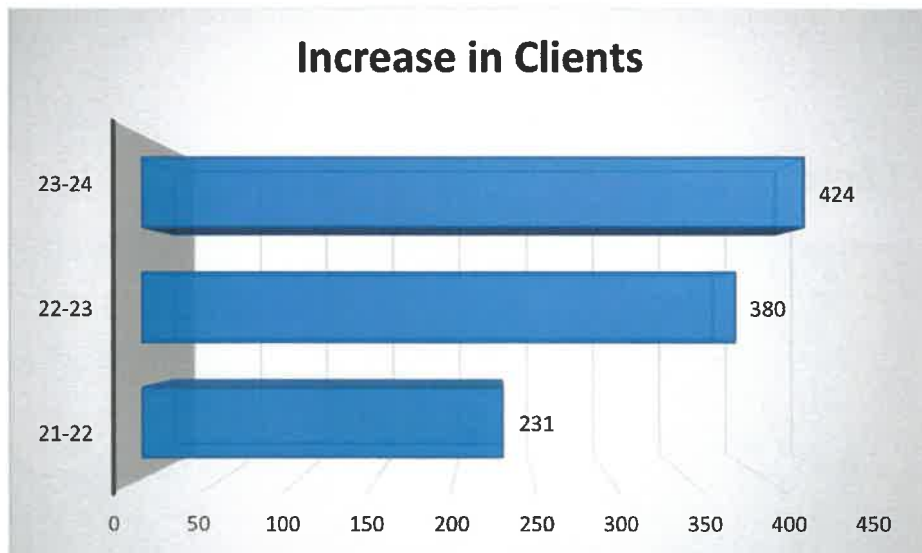


We have also experienced a change in the age range of people accessing the services. We have seen more people in the higher age brackets, as shown in the graph below. The largest increase has been in the 46-65 age group, we have supported many people in this age group who have lost their employment and are struggling to find further work due to the changes in the accepted ways of job searching and applications. This is mostly due to the Covid-19 legacy of most applications now being done online. The people who come to us have not had any regular use of digital equipment or know how to apply for work in what is classed as current

day expectations. They are also severely struggling to live on benefits when they have been used to wages and living to their means, this causes a range of problems that can get out of hand quite quickly without support and help to navigate the system and to teach new digital skills.



Increase in presentation over the past 2 years



As you can see from this graph, our clients have almost doubled in numbers since 2021/2022. It demonstrates the comeback to levels prior to Covid 2019, alongside the amount of people who are struggling with poverty and destitution in our town. We know that over 10,000 households continue to live in poverty today with almost 4,500 children within those homes.

4,378 households living with only 60% of the average income median, include 3,361 children in those homes. We still have a long way to go before we see a recovery for those living on low incomes.

In what ways have our 424 beneficiaries benefited from our support

Benefits and Income

256 people gained support with their financial income. All reported an improvement in their household situation through accessing various solutions such as; an increase of, or new benefits; additional support through increments available through our charity and other organisations e.g. utility vouchers, food

vouchers, discretionary payments to assist with temporary situations, budgeting and understanding essential payments etc.

We supported 176 people to successfully claim annual benefit of £965,246.41 during the year.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

221 people who attended our services identified themselves as having varying degrees of poor mental wellbeing through to significant mental health diagnosis. Those with significant needs were supported with their mental health and wellbeing services, 82 of whom report a significant increase in their self-confidence, self-esteem, self-worth, with improved mental health and reduced isolation also being high on their list of benefits. They have attended a range of activities and also had support through our information & advice team which has resulted in resolving stressful and difficult financial situations all of which were causing additional anxiety and stress.

38 people attended our Mindset Mentoring Course and successfully worked on their thoughts, behaviours and actions that have been holding them back from living to their true potential. This group achieved immense milestones and continue to practice self-care and use the tools they were given to continue their progress of change.

Achievements reported include career developments and career changes, new learning and qualifications, increased volunteering and much more social engagement. This course is set to continue for the next four years, with great thanks to the National Lottery Community Fund and we look forward to increasing the number of courses and supporting more people with this very empowering and life affirming course.

Pre-Employment

75 people successfully attended classes to improve and gain support towards employment or to improve their working options. They successfully improved their communication and IT skills through our Digital Inclusion courses and our pre-employment supported job search sessions. 39 reported a significant increase in their motivation and aspirations for their futures, using the lessons and skills they were given to help them understand their needs and identify their next steps towards gaining their aspired employment. This included further education and training with other providers, in-work training for promotion and applications for new jobs.

Housing

70 people needed help and gained support with their housing needs. 39 were living in unstable accommodation or sofa surfing. 14 were immediately referred to DBC Homeless Housing Officers, 21 were supported to find more stable solutions, with most opening a Darlington Home Search account and supporting them to bid on properties. 4 people are living in mobile homes and a van, we continue to support them with their housing needs.

The remaining 31 people presented with issues which were causing their tenancies to become unstable. We were able to secure the existing tenancy for 26 of those people, through working on their income and budget, ensuring they could keep up with their rent payments and still manage their household bills. We supported the remaining 5 people into more affordable accommodation.

Case study – Male aged 54

Summary of Presenting Issues and Client Background

Client presented in October 2023. He is a 54-year-old male who has worked for most of his working life as a train conductor. He has Bipolar type 1 but has always been able to keep his condition well managed at work.

He did work throughout Covid but when places started to open again, he found he could not keep up his work pace and cope with the stress of his job in the way he had before Covid. He had bouts of sickness and times off work but had been long term sick for a few months. His SSP was coming to an end when he presented at First Stop.

While chatting he also explained that his partner had just been sectioned in a mental health hospital recently, however there was no local places available, so she had been placed in a hospital 70 miles away, which was making visiting difficult.

Intervention

We made a universal credit (UC) claim but as a single man because UC does not allow you to claim benefit when someone is not physically at the appointment, meaning we could not make a joint claim due to partner being in hospital. We also sent for PIP forms as client had not wanted to claim when he was working as he stated he had enough money to live on when they both worked. This was before their mental health had deteriorated. He now accepted that they needed some additional help.

We saw the client over the next few months, sometimes to complete forms, but sometimes just a chat and catch up with what was going on in his life and how he was coping. He always stated just entering the project put him at ease and he could feel himself relaxing and felt he was in a safe place.

Partner was transferred to a hospital locally in January and they arranged an afternoon release so we could make her a universal credit claim and join it to clients claim. Client's partner was discharged from hospital in February and although still unwell was at least back at home.

Outcome

Client then felt he was well enough to try and go back to work which he did manage for a few weeks but was not coping with his bipolar, work and a clinically depressed partner. Something had to give, we spoke at length about asking for a meeting at work and just laying his cards on the table. Client spoke highly about his work managers and how they had supported him but felt it would be best if he left work to concentrate on his mental health, and the health of his partner who was struggling to get out of bed most days.

Is this the perfect end, probably not but it is what is working for them at this moment in time. We will continue to support them both on their journey for as long as they need us. Be that helping with benefits, finances etc. But also, and much more importantly, just by having an listening ear, welcoming place and a friendly smile. This can mean so much more and offer them the type of support that we believe is unique to our charity. And as the client often tells us we were there when he didn't even know he needed us.

Total amount of annual benefits applied and in receipt of was £19,013.12. This excludes council tax rebate and the housing element of universal credit which we did apply for, but amount given is unknown to us.

Case study – Female 62

Summary of Presenting Issues and Client's Background

62 year old female, married, working part-time in the retail sector. Client has worked with same employer for 28 years. Changes to working practices and an unsettled working environment leading to client wishing to consider alternative employment. They desired to know more about using technology and improve digital skills. They were able to commit to attending at various times during the week.

Intervention and Engagement

Client attended a wide range of digital sessions between May and September 2023, they dropped into sessions sometimes 2/3 times per week depending on work commitments. Their development included general computer awareness including scams, phishing, cyber security, internet, email, photos, using QR codes, introduction to word processing and using features of a smartphone. The client was given assistance to create their CV and searching for jobs. Client was able to attend more than one session per week when not working.

Outcomes

Client was recently made redundant due to closure of the retail outlet. Client was confident in job searching due to the training and in applying for jobs, they were successful in being offered several interviews and offered jobs. Within a couple of weeks of redundancy client was able to secure employment which utilises her new computer skills and is exactly what she was looking for. Client's confidence using digital equipment was much improved.

Who do we work alongside?

It is important to acknowledge the work that is undertaken in Darlington by a range of charities who all help to support our work with vulnerable people and provide fantastic services themselves. First Stop works well in partnership, and has links with the following agencies:

- Citizens Advice
- TV & D YMCA
- Darlington Mind
- St Augustine's SVP Group
- We Are With You
- Age UK
- Tandem
- DBC Housing Department
- DWP
- Darlington Refuge
- St Mary's Food bank
- Additional Food Banks
- 700 Club
- Darlington Credit Union
- Human Kind
- Learning & Skills Council
- Kings Church

Outreach in the Community

We support St Mary's Foodbank with our IAG and support service; Firth Moor Community Centre and Quakers Meeting House with IT courses during the year. We also attended The Bread & Butter sessions to ensure their attendees know what help and support they can access at First Stop.

We also attended numerous one off events to spread awareness of our services, such as Job Fairs, Volunteer Fairs etc.

Darlington Connect

We continue to be part of a new connection of charities within the town and we support the manning of the Darlington Connect Building in the Town Centre on Wednesday mornings. Plans are afoot this year to provide one or two courses from these premises too, due to their accessibility for those who have additional needs.

How do we assess outcomes and impacts?

As a Board, we strive to monitor the impact our work has on the lives of our clients. Due to the complex nature of the support offered to individuals with complex problems, this is never easy. Our staff use various techniques to measure how successful their outcomes have been. Outreach clinic sessions and time spent on one to one meetings can be listed but ultimately success will only be measured by the individuals' own stories: those who are able to manage their own finances, those whose self-confidence has grown so that they can look for work, those who are successful in finding and holding down a job, and those who manage to find long term security of housing.

The Board continues to investigate ways of assessing the effectiveness of our methods of delivery and co-operate with the CEO in exploring ways of developing the services offered. All our grant work is collated through our Inform Database and is reported to each funder on the successes and the difficulties that people face in their lives.

We are grateful to our clients for the feedback they supply to the support workers so that we can have an indicator of how the client feels about the support he or she has been offered.

We also value the feedback we receive from our funders and partners, analysis of which helps us improve our offers of support, improve our bid writing skills and ensure we are giving our funders what they need to develop their interaction with the charity and the support they provide.

Staffing Support and Appraisal

Staff are offered regular support and an open-door policy by the CEO; they have opportunities to talk about their work and progress both formally and informally and to also have input and ideas into the running of our services and how they develop. FSD is fortunate to have had minimal staffing restructures for downsizing purposes and we are blessed with a staff team who have been a crucial part of our charity for some years. We do enjoy the energy that new people bring and always welcome new team members when funding allows.

First Stop Thanks

Trustees

This year we have said a very fond farewell to Alan Coultas, who is a founding member of First Stop and remained on the Board for 25 years. Alan has dedicated much of his life to many charities within the town always leaving them in a strong, healthy position and all the better with his input but First Stop has held a special place for him and we have flourished with his involvement.

We are indeed sad to see Alan go but happy for his wife, Ann, who now gets to spend more time enjoying their retirement together. We also know that Alan is always just a phone call away and enjoys a catch up and a healthy discussion about our strategy as we move forward in our complicated and difficult economy and political landscape.

We have also said goodbye to Maire Kennan who resigned at the end of the financial year. Maire has been a Trustee for 6 years and has helped guide the organisation towards its current position, helping navigate the charity through Covid, keeping a keen eye on our Risk Register and ensuring Governance and Safety were foremost in mind, alongside supporting fundraising events and a cold sleepout event too.

Staff

The Trustees of First Stop wish to pay tribute to the dedication and hard work of all members of staff and volunteers who ensured those who need our services and help were able to access support throughout the year. They work with dedication, professionalism, compassion and their wonderful sense of humour, putting everyone at ease as soon as they meet us.

Financial Review

a. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

b. Reserves Policy

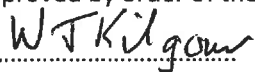
The Trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves considering the main risks to the organisation. It has established a policy that the Charity's unrestricted funds, not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets and that are cash-backed, should be adequate to cover foreseeable shortfalls in income for a sufficient period to enable the Trustees to take corrective action. At 31 March 2024, the Trustees have calculated the reserves level required to be £130,000 in light of the level of project expenditure planned in 2024/25, ensuring we have 6 months reserves. The management committee will continue to keep this policy, and the reserves level under review. **At 31 March 2024 the actual level of free reserves is £66,640 equalling 4 months reserves. (2023: £64,897).**

C. Financial Review

The Statement of Financial Activities on pages 14 and the Balance Sheet on pages 15 - 16 show a healthy financial position, the main features of which are:

Unrestricted reserves of £232,904 Which included the building. Restricted reserves of £nil.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 16 July 2024 and signed on its behalf by:


.....
William John Kilgour - Trustee

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
First Stop Darlington**

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of First Stop Darlington ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since your charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a listed body. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by Section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of Section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



L Harris Bsc (Hons), FCCA

Mitchell Gordon LLP
43 Coniscliffe Road
Darlington
Co. Durham
DL3 7EH

16 July 2024

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31/3/24 Total funds £	31/3/23 Total funds £
Income and endowments from					
Donations and legacies		8,912	5,000	13,912	3,309
Charitable activities					
Charitable activities		-	218,750	218,750	184,975
Other trading activities	3	28,283	-	28,283	7,420
Investment income	4	<u>2,426</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,426</u>	<u>640</u>
Total		<u>39,621</u>	<u>223,750</u>	<u>263,371</u>	<u>196,344</u>
Expenditure on					
Raising funds		532	-	532	1,064
Charitable activities					
General activities		38,273	-	38,273	34,038
Charitable activities		<u>187</u>	<u>223,562</u>	<u>223,749</u>	<u>183,975</u>
Total		<u>38,992</u>	<u>223,562</u>	<u>262,554</u>	<u>219,077</u>
Net gains/(losses) on investments		<u>(1)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1)</u>	<u>-</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		628	188	816	(22,733)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		<u>232,277</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>232,277</u>	<u>255,010</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>232,905</u></u>	<u><u>188</u></u>	<u><u>233,093</u></u>	<u><u>232,277</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Balance Sheet
31 March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31/3/24 Total funds £	31/3/23 Total funds £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	10	167,222	-	167,222	168,712
Investments	11	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
		167,222	-	167,222	168,713
Current assets					
Debtors	12	14,074	-	14,074	11,114
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>227,517</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>227,517</u>	<u>207,807</u>
		241,591	-	241,591	218,921
Creditors					
Amounts falling due within one year	13	(112,205)	189	(112,016)	(86,572)
		<u>129,386</u>	<u>189</u>	<u>129,575</u>	<u>132,349</u>
Net current assets					
		296,608	189	296,797	301,062
Total assets less current liabilities					
Creditors					
Amounts falling due after more than one year	14	(63,704)	-	(63,704)	(68,785)
		<u>232,904</u>	<u>189</u>	<u>233,093</u>	<u>232,277</u>
NET ASSETS					
Funds					
Unrestricted funds	17			232,904	232,277
Restricted funds				<u>189</u>	<u>-</u>
Total funds					
				<u>233,093</u>	<u>232,277</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

The notes form part of these financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Balance Sheet - continued

31 March 2024

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 16 July 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "W J Kilgour". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'W' and 'K'.

W J Kilgour - Trustee

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

1. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

Unrestricted Funds:

General - The free funds of the charity which are available for the general work of the charity at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted Funds:

These funds relate to grants and donations received for specific purposes as follows:

The Ballinger Charitable Trust - 3 year funding of £20,000 from April 2022 - March 2025 funding is for Core services.

The National Lottery Fund - Reaching Communities Fund - A 2-year pilot project from April 2022 - March 2024 for the introduction of a Mental Health Support Worker and the delivery of a Mindset Mentor programme to research the benefits of this approach to people who are stuck and unable to move forward in their lives.

Garfield Weston - 1 year core funding to support the charity to support those who are homeless, at risk of homelessness and those who are marginalised in our community. (July 2022 - June 2023 £25,000).

Additional funding gained - February 2024 - January 2025 for core funding.

Watson Hope Foundation - This is a new foundation that kindly donated £20,000 per year for 3 years (2023-2026) The grant is for core funding and given due to the work and dedication of the charity in supporting people out of their worst circumstances, with opportunities, a gain of confidence and enhance self-belief.

Greggs Foundation -£20,000 November 2023 - 2026 3 year funding towards the strategic and administrative development of the organisation.

Harrison Foundation - November 2023 - October 2024 to provide Digital Inclusion courses to those who do not have IT skills and experience digital exclusion.

Awards4All - £9,469 September 2023 - August 2024 provide activities to support people with their mental wellbeing and activities towards gaining employment skills.

Trusthouse Charitable Foundation - £9,764 November 2023 - October 2024 towards the cost of core service provision - Welfare benefits and financial wellbeing.

1989 Willan Trust - £4,613 November 2023 - October 2024 towards salary cost of Support Worker delivering core services.

Tees Esk & Wear Valley NHS Trust - £9,646 for 1year funding November 2022 - October 2023 to deliver support and activities to those experiencing anxiety, stress and depression in addition to the cost of living crisis.

County Durham Community Foundation - £5,000 core cost funding January 2023 - December 2023 to support the core work of the charity.

The Princes Trust - £4,500 November 2023 - October 2026 3 year funding towards Digital Inclusion promotional and publicity activities.

County Durham Community Foundation - Poverty Hurts Fund - £9,906 January 2023 - December 2023 to provide support to those struggling in the Cost of Living Crisis, providing help and support to maximise the income of the households of the people we are supporting.

NHS - Health Improvement Fund - £17,119 to provide mental health wellbeing services and activities between October 2022 - September 2023 to improve their overall wellbeing and improve their self-confidence and self-worth.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) '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 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments which are included at market value.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the Charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Freehold property	- not provided
Fixtures and fittings	- 33% on cost and 20% on cost
Computer equipment	- 33% on cost

Taxation

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

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

3. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	31/3/24	31/3/23
	£	£
Fundraising events	14,613	4,480
Management charges income	7,440	-
Room hire	<u>6,230</u>	<u>2,940</u>
	<u>28,283</u>	<u>7,420</u>

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31/3/24	31/3/23
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>2,426</u>	<u>640</u>

5. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	31/3/24	31/3/23
	£	£
Depreciation - owned assets	<u>1,489</u>	<u>1,260</u>

6. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2023 - £nil).

Trustees' expenses

During the year, no Trustee expenses were incurred (2023 - £nil).

7. STAFF COSTS

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

	31/3/24	31/3/23
Charitable services	<u>9</u>	<u>7</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

8. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Income and endowments from			
Donations and legacies	3,309	-	3,309
Charitable activities			
Charitable activities	3,720	181,255	184,975
Other trading activities	7,420	-	7,420
Investment income	<u>640</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>640</u>
Total	<u>15,089</u>	<u>181,255</u>	<u>196,344</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

8. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Expenditure on			
Raising funds	1,064	-	1,064
Charitable activities			
General activities	34,038	-	34,038
Charitable activities	<u>2,720</u>	<u>181,255</u>	<u>183,975</u>
Total	<u>37,822</u>	<u>181,255</u>	<u>219,077</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(22,733)	-	(22,733)
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward	255,010	-	255,010
Total funds carried forward	<u>232,277</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>232,277</u>

9. INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REMUNERATION

Fees payable to the Charity's independent examination of the Charity's annual accounts £1,588 (2023: £1,512).

10. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Freehold property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST				
At 1 April 2023	165,000	10,226	16,591	191,817
Disposals	<u>-</u>	<u>(456)</u>	<u>(12,590)</u>	<u>(13,046)</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>165,000</u>	<u>9,770</u>	<u>4,001</u>	<u>178,771</u>
DEPRECIATION				
At 1 April 2023	-	9,478	13,627	23,105
Charge for year	-	168	1,321	1,489
Eliminated on disposal	<u>-</u>	<u>(305)</u>	<u>(12,740)</u>	<u>(13,045)</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>9,341</u>	<u>2,208</u>	<u>11,549</u>
NET BOOK VALUE				
At 31 March 2024	<u>165,000</u>	<u>429</u>	<u>1,793</u>	<u>167,222</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>165,000</u>	<u>748</u>	<u>2,964</u>	<u>168,712</u>

Included in cost or valuation of land and buildings is freehold land of £165,000 (2023 - £165,000) which is not depreciated.

The directors believe that there was no material change in the property value therefore no depreciation has been provided. This is due to the maintenance and upkeep of the building.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

11. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

There were no investment assets outside the UK.

12. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/24	31/3/23
	£	£
Trade debtors	3,804	14
Other debtors	250	1,150
Prepayments and accrued income	815	-
Prepayments	<u>9,205</u>	<u>9,950</u>
	<u>14,074</u>	<u>11,114</u>

13. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/24	31/3/23
	£	£
Bank loans and overdrafts (see note 15)	5,049	4,711
Trade creditors	1,056	3,771
Social security and other taxes	2,779	2,569
Pension creditor	752	661
Other creditors	-	28
Deferred income	100,333	72,866
Accrued expenses	<u>2,047</u>	<u>1,966</u>
	<u>112,016</u>	<u>86,572</u>

14. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	31/3/24	31/3/23
	£	£
Bank loans (see note 15)	<u>63,704</u>	<u>68,785</u>

15. LOANS

An analysis of the maturity of loans is given below:

	31/3/24	31/3/23
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year on demand:		
Bank loans	<u>5,049</u>	<u>4,711</u>
Amounts falling due between two and five years:		
Bank loans - 1-5 years	<u>23,487</u>	<u>22,266</u>
Amounts falling due in more than five years:		
Repayable by instalments:		
Bank loans more than 5 years	40,217	46,519

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

16. SECURED DEBTS

The following secured debts are included within creditors:

	31/3/24	31/3/23
	£	£
Bank loans	<u>68,753</u>	<u>73,496</u>

The above debt is secured against the building owned by the company.

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/23	Net movement in funds	At 31/3/24
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	232,277	627	232,904
Restricted funds			
Awards for all	-	189	189
	<u>232,277</u>	<u>816</u>	<u>233,093</u>
TOTAL FUNDS			

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Gains and losses	Movement in funds
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	39,621	(38,993)	(1)	627
Restricted funds				
Big Lottery Wellbeing Fund	81,455	(81,455)	-	-
Ballinger Trust	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
Watson Hope Fund	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
1989 Willen Trust	1,922	(1,922)	-	-
Awards for all	4,680	(4,491)	-	189
County Durham Community Fund	7,427	(7,427)	-	-
Garfield Weston Pilotlight Fund	5,700	(5,700)	-	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	12,500	(12,500)	-	-
Greggs Foundation	8,333	(8,333)	-	-
Harrison Foundation	37,909	(37,909)	-	-
Health Improvement Fund	8,560	(8,560)	-	-
The Princes Trust	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
Tees Esk & Wear Valley NHS Trust	5,627	(5,627)	-	-
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation	8,137	(8,137)	-	-
	<u>223,750</u>	<u>(223,561)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>189</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>263,371</u>	<u>(262,554)</u>	<u>(1)</u>	<u>816</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	255,010	(22,733)	232,277
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>255,010</u>	<u>(22,733)</u>	<u>232,277</u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	15,089	(37,822)	(22,733)
Restricted funds			
Big Lottery Wellbeing Fund	80,197	(80,197)	-
Ballinger Trust	20,000	(20,000)	-
Watson Hope Fund	20,001	(20,001)	-
County Durham Community Fund	5,000	(5,000)	-
Garfield Weston Pilotlight Fund	618	(618)	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	16,667	(16,667)	-
Harrison Foundation	21,049	(21,049)	-
Health Improvement Fund	8,560	(8,560)	-
Tees Esk & Wear Valley NHS Trust	6,686	(6,686)	-
CDCF Col Fund	2,477	(2,477)	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	181,255	(181,255)	-
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>196,344</u>	<u>(219,077)</u>	<u>(22,733)</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1/4/22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	255,010	(22,106)	232,904
Restricted funds			
Awards for all	-	189	189
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>255,010</u>	<u>(21,917)</u>	<u>233,093</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	54,710	(76,815)	(1)	(22,106)
Restricted funds				
Big Lottery Wellbeing Fund	161,652	(161,652)	-	-
Ballinger Trust	40,000	(40,000)	-	-
Watson Hope Fund	40,001	(40,001)	-	-
1989 Willen Trust	1,922	(1,922)	-	-
Awards for all	4,680	(4,491)	-	189
County Durham Community Fund	12,427	(12,427)	-	-
Garfield Weston Pilotlight Fund	6,318	(6,318)	-	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	29,167	(29,167)	-	-
Greggs Foundation	8,333	(8,333)	-	-
Harrison Foundation	58,958	(58,958)	-	-
Health Improvement Fund	17,120	(17,120)	-	-
The Princes Trust	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
Tees Esk & Wear Valley NHS Trust	12,313	(12,313)	-	-
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation	8,137	(8,137)	-	-
CDCF Col Fund	<u>2,477</u>	<u>(2,477)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>405,005</u>	<u>(404,816)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>189</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>459,715</u>	<u>(481,631)</u>	<u>(1)</u>	<u>(21,917)</u>

18. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

Owing to the nature of the Charity's operations and the composition of the Board of Trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the Charity has an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	31/3/24 £	31/3/23 £
Income and endowments		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	10,143	3,309
Gift aid	<u>3,769</u>	<u>-</u>
	13,912	3,309
Other trading activities		
Fundraising events	14,613	4,480
Management charges income	7,440	-
Room hire	<u>6,230</u>	<u>2,940</u>
	28,283	7,420
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	2,426	640
Charitable activities		
Grants	<u>218,750</u>	<u>184,975</u>
Total incoming resources	263,371	196,344
Expenditure		
Raising donations and legacies		
Fundraising expenses	532	1,064
Charitable activities		
Wages	172,413	134,904
Social security	8,484	6,133
Pensions	3,520	2,800
Insurance	2,200	1,525
Light and heat	3,867	2,004
Advertising	123	565
Other fees	8,635	4,508
IT costs	6,256	6,847
Governance costs	266	210
Premises costs	7,579	3,588
Client Welfare	35,052	35,320
Administration costs	6,139	8,573
Other staff costs	1,370	1,245
Training costs	-	3,600
Fixtures and fittings	168	242
Computer equipment	1,321	1,019
Mortgage	<u>4,629</u>	<u>4,930</u>
	<u>262,022</u>	<u>218,013</u>
Total resources expended	<u>262,554</u>	<u>219,077</u>
Net income/(expenditure) before gains and losses	817	(22,733)

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	31/3/24 £	31/3/23 £
Realised recognised gains and losses		
Realised gains/(losses) on fixed asset investments	<u>(1)</u>	<u>-</u>
Net income/(expenditure)	<u>816</u>	<u>(22,733)</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

England & Wales - Charity number 1073822

Accounts

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03647391 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1073822



Report of the Trustees and
Unaudited Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023
for
FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Mitchell Gordon LLP
Accountants and
Statutory Auditors

Tel: 01325 368000

43 Coniscliffe Road, Darlington, Co. Durham DL3 7EH

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

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for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

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Balance Sheet	17 to 18
Notes to the Financial Statements	19 to 26



TRUSTEES' REPORT

MARCH 2023

32 Houndgate, Darlington, DL1 1PD

Tel: 01325 254463 Registered Charity Number 1073822

Company Limited by Guarantee 3647391

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Trustees' Annual report for the year ended 31 March 2023

The Trustees present their report with the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities in preparing the accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

The trustees are directors of the Company for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006.

Reference and Administration Information

Charity Name:	First Stop Darlington
Charity Registration number:	1073822
Company registration number:	03647391 (England and Wales)
Registered office and operational address:	32 Houndgate, Darlington, DL1 5RH
Governing document:	The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006. Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 21 September 1998 and amended by special resolution(s) dated 20 October 2011 and amended further by special resolution(s) dated 9 February 2021

Board of Trustees

William John Kilgour	Chair
Maire Kennan	
Alan Coultas	
James Fenny	Retired 17 th March 2023
Bernadette Mary Chapman	
Debra Irving	
James Stephen McGill	Appointed 17 th January 2023

Company Secretary

Vacancy

Independent Examiner

Lee Harris Bsc (Hons), FCCA
Mitchell Gordon LLP
43 Coniscliffe Rd
Darlington
DL3 7EH

Solicitors

Close Thornton
2 Duke Street
Darlington
DL3 7AB

Bankers

Unity Trust Bank plc, Nine Brindley Place, Birmingham, B1 2HB

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Trustees' Annual report for the year ended 31 March 2023

Who are we?

First Stop Darlington (FSD) is a charity in Darlington, which helps people who are at risk of losing their homes and is an open-door organisation which supports anyone who is vulnerable through poverty, or struggling with mental health and other issues that impede their access to benefits and other support systems.

Nobody is turned away; it is literally a person's first stop to getting help in a time of crisis.

The charity was founded in 1999 to support people 'in need and distress within Darlington'. Unfortunately, that need is still there, and we have adapted our services to help meet historic and emerging demands, increasing support to families and all on a low income. We continue to find ways to adapt ensuring we provide a high-quality service to as many people who need us as possible.

The extent of inequality in one of the poorest regions of the country is stark – re (County Durham Community Foundation: Health, Wealth and (Unequal) Opportunities to Thrive report July 2023). The report paints a bleak picture of the wide-ranging health challenges faced within the area, covering social and economic inequalities, COVID-19 and the cost of living crisis, health and wellbeing, historic factors, and the impact of national policies. Some of the stark facts are: child poverty rates are 38.7% compared to 27% nationally, the rate of emergency admissions for children is 74.4% higher in Darlington than nationally, people live shorter lives in the region, the COVID-19 mortality rate was 18% higher in the region than the national average, wages are 10% below the English average, there are higher than average rates of Universal Credit Claims, worse health accounts for 27% of lost productivity at a value of £4bn per year. This is the crisis that First Stop works in the middle of every day, helping people to survive. The case examples set out in our Trustees Report below give a glimpse of this.

FSD is situated in Houndgate, in Darlington's Town Centre, where we operate a centre with an appointment service, with crisis access available every day on the ground floor and have offices and a training/activity room/meeting room on the first floor. We offer an in-depth advice service with the use of phones and laptops so that clients can be supported to solve their problems and increase their access to benefits, housing, mental health support, employment support and other services.

Since we began in July 1999, we have supported over **9,650** vulnerable people to help them work on their issues and move forwards towards an independent life. We have provided, in total, a range of support services to over 11,920 people over the years, with the addition of various outreach events.

How are we constituted?

First Stop Darlington is a company limited by guarantee, No. 03647391, governed by its Articles and Memorandum of Association. It is registered charity No 1073822 with a core membership of 12 people.

The directors of FSD are the Board of Trustees and are elected by the membership. In 2022-2023, the board had 7 members serving on the Board, none of whom are related to each other.

The Board has an appointed Chair with a vacant Vice Chair position at present. The Articles of Association require that one third of the directors/ trustees retire each year by rotation; retiring trustees are eligible for re-election.

We do not have a treasurer, but all trustees have undergone training in the field of financial management of charities and all trustees are expected to oversee all financial reporting by our financial officer, the CEO and our financial advisors.

The role of the trustees is to further the objectives of FSD through taking part in formulating and regularly reviewing strategic aims, ensuring that policy and practice are in keeping with its aims and that FSD functions within the legal and financial requirements of a charitable company and strives to achieve best practice.

As we came out of Covid restrictions, the decision was made to hold hybrid meetings for trustees, with some trustees gathering in person, and others joining by Zoom. This has proven to be a popular move and we will continue to take this more flexible approach.

The Board has updated the Risk Register, taking account of the increased risks posed by the growing financial pressure caused by inflation and increasing energy prices on all aspects of public life. As our clients' needs increase, so also does the pressure on our staff and donors. Having sought to identify these increasing risks, we then revisited our development of strategies.

With advice from Pilotlight, the board has sought to clarify a simpler strategy model. The Board and staff have met to identify any gaps in service, changes to need etc., ensuring we provide the best possible service for our beneficiaries. The staff were able to advise the Board using case studies and describing their own experiences with clients.

Through the course of this year no trustee has received any remuneration or reimbursement of expenses. As well as participating in Board meetings and strategy reviews, individual board members have participated in fund raising activities. Raising money at a local level remains a challenge, but coffee mornings, Santa's Sleigh and Carnival tombola remain on the agenda.

FSD employs a CEO whose responsibility is the general management of all FSD projects, management of staff and volunteers, building management and leading the team in procuring funding. The CEO attends Board meetings and reports to The Board on finance and operational matters.

The CEO is Tracy Freeman and there are 6 other members of staff.

Grant giving funding bodies are our main source of income, supplemented by fund raising efforts by Friends of FSD, and personal donations. This year we have begun to bring fundraising events back into the calendar since Covid rules have been relaxed to their lowest level since Covid emerged.

Our thanks for 2022-23 funding go to, National Lottery Community Fund, Ballinger Trust, Garfield Weston Trust, Watson Hope Foundation, County Durham Community Foundation, and NHS TEWV MH Trust whose grants over the year have made the work of FSD possible.

FSD has a Social Enterprise, Bike Stop Darlington (BSD), set up in 2012 providing training, volunteering opportunities and work experience for the clients of FSD and other vulnerable people within the Borough of Darlington, especially those furthest from the job market. Our CEO provides overall direction and strategic support. BSD has been managed by its own board and produces its own accounts. These are available on request.

Our aims and how we work.

First Stop Darlington provides a Wellbeing and Work Hub in the town centre of Darlington and houses a range of practical, free facilities and activities designed to help people navigate from poverty and all its trappings, through to employment with decent wages that helps lift people out of poverty and achieving long lost goals.

The aims of the organisation are:

- To ensure that confidential, impartial information, advice and support is provided in ways that empower local people to make informed decisions about their life choices and in a way that is sensitive to their needs.
- To support local people to help themselves move forward out of life's difficulties and onwards towards independence.
- To promote positive mental health among service users, including Mindset and Mindfulness work.
- To provide activities around prevention of poor mental health, addiction behaviours and to promote a healthy sense of well-being and increased self-worth.
- To provide IAG services regarding benefit claims, benefit issues, money issues, expenditure, poverty, housing issues, relationships, access to services etc.

- To provide one to one support while people are working through their issues, sharing problem solving skills and increasing self-esteem and self-confidence to make behavioural changes in their lives.
 - Support people to broaden their CV, increase skills through volunteering and courses, improving their job opportunities.
 - To work in partnership with other likeminded organisations to deliver wrap around services.
 - To highlight the problem of poverty and its associated issues.
- To provide accurate statistical information on poverty issues to inform service planning and delivery.

The Centre is open to the public every weekday to provide impartial confidential information, advice, guidance, support, and onward referral to our clients.

There are three Project Support Staff, 1 Mental Health Support Worker, 1 Digital Inclusion Worker, 1 Administrative officer and the CEO. The CEO works directly with clients during holidays and staff illness, ensuring there is full cover for our services.

Strategic Developments During the Year

Pilotlight Project

In June 2022 FSD won a Weston Charity Award after a rigorous selection process. This award provided a service from the Pilotlight Organisation which entails consultation and advice from senior professionals across private and public organisations. The work is a project for a year with a dedicated Project Manager and 4 'Pilotlighters' who attend a series of meetings with the CEO and Trustees. The purpose is to provide a package of leadership mentoring through expert coaching across the range of operational and strategic aspects of the Charity. The project is in progress but has already provided the Charity with valuable advice and development. In addition the Award included a contribution of £6,500 to unrestricted funds.

Darlington Connect

Our commitment to working with other organisations locally dealing with the negative results of poverty has involved us in the development of Darlington Connect, a multi-agency project in Darlington Town Centre. Still in its infancy, this project promises to have a profound effect on how the agencies can cooperate to tackle the increasing negative effects of poverty in Darlington. Further details are given below. The Board recognises that Tracy Freeman has played a significant role supporting Yvonne Beattie from the 700 Club in the development of this initiative which has had a significant benefit to the Town's approach to the 'Cost of Living' crisis.

Who do we help?

We have an instant access policy and offer appointments with support staff on the same day of presentation or within 24 hours. This is a crucial part of the relationship that we build with people, if they are brave enough to reach out for help, then we must be attentive enough to begin helping as fast as we can.

We support vulnerable people and families who are experiencing severe poverty. Issues such as finances, housing or benefit problems are initially presented by clients but they may frequently hide other issues such as debt, hunger, poor hygiene, anxiety & stress and often relationship troubles. Our support workers use various tools in their work, such as Trauma Informed Care approach and Mindfulness and are skilled in taking a holistic approach with clients to help them feel at ease and gain the confidence needed to discuss difficult issues.

Our clients are often

- cash poor
- struggling to manage on their low income

- struggling to compete for work due to digital exclusion
- experiencing anxiety, stress and other related mental health issues
- under threat of eviction due to arrears or no accommodation of their own
- sofa surfing and have no permanent address
- have poor prospects of obtaining paid employment
- unable to escape out of poor living conditions without financial and legal support.

Our clients may have experienced at least 3 of the following:

at risk of homelessness; low income and/or zero hour contracts; fuel poverty; hunger; socially excluded; poverty; debt; unemployment; mental ill health; mental illness; low self-esteem; lack self-confidence; low or no self-worth; young parents; leaving care as young adults; domestic abuse victims; domestic violence perpetrators; relationship breakdown; self-harm; sexual abuse; survival sex; bereavement; removal of child/children from family home; coping with bereavement; widowed; widower; isolated;

Our services were available in the following formats:

- Pre-booked appointments between 9.30am – 12.30pm – (minimum 6 appointments per day)
- Daily accessed appointments between 1.30pm – 4.30pm – (minimum 6 appointments per day)
- Quarterly 7 week Mindset Mentor Course
- Weekly Gardening Club
- Weekly Walk & Talk sessions
- Daily Digital Inclusion sessions
- Differing activity sessions, such as art, meditation etc.
- Outreach sessions for appointments in the community x 2 sessions per week.

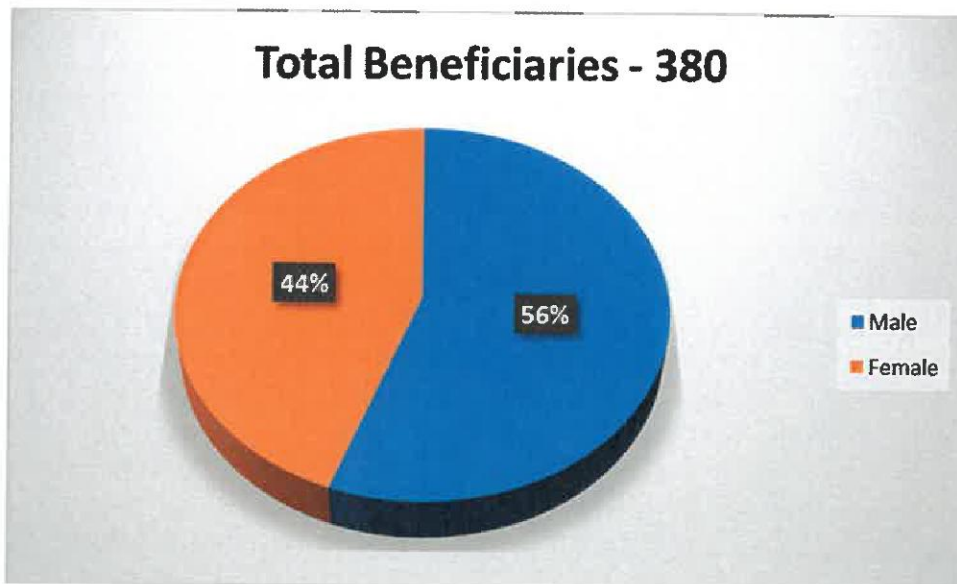
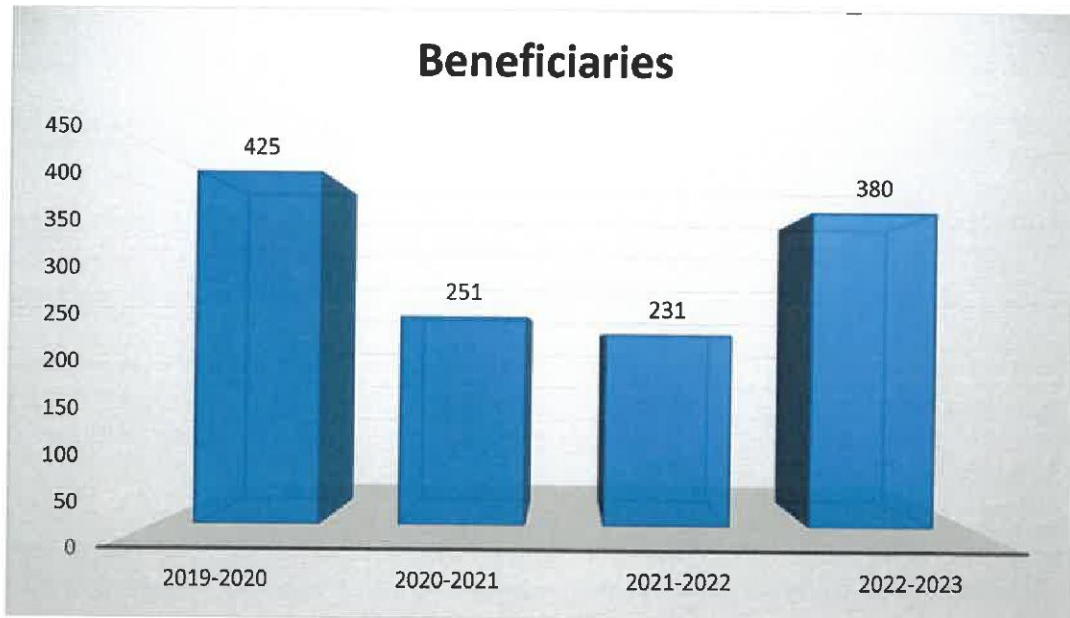
Outputs

In 2022 – 2023 we were privileged to work with and support 380 people:

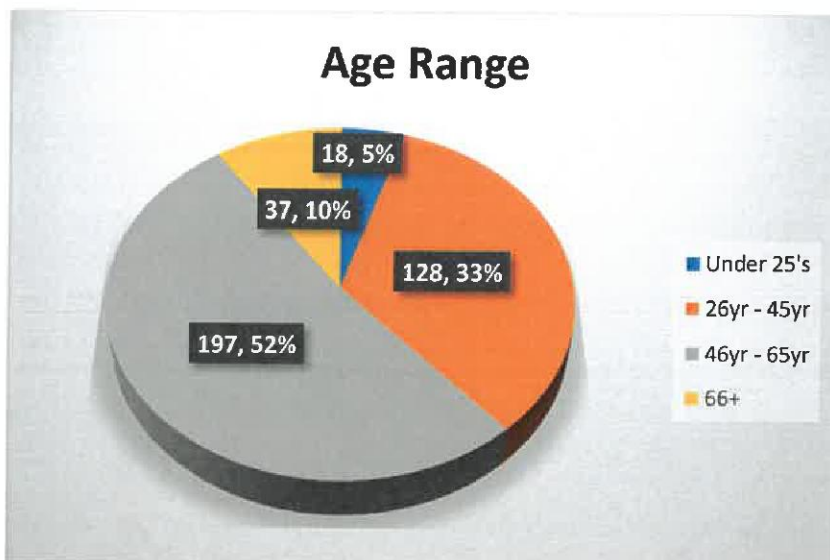
This is a significant increase on 2022 figures. We are seeing a lot more people who are struggling to make ends meet and to pay their bills etc.

There has also been a significant shift in how many women have used the services this year, this bears up the evidence of poverty and bill paying etc. as it is still mainly females who are responsible for organising the household income.

The graph below demonstrates that we are back to the levels of beneficiaries we were seeing prior to Covid, however the needs have changed. In 2019 we were still seeing quite a few people who used us as a care of address and regularly came in to check their post. This number has reduced significantly as we encouraged people to find a safer Covid-19 way to access their post. Our 2023 figures demonstrate an increase in the cost of living work that we have completed on behalf of so many families struggling to pay their basic bills.



We have also experienced a change in the age range of people accessing the services. We have seen more people in the higher age brackets, as shown in the graph below. The largest increase has been in the 46-65 age group, we have supported many people in this age group who have lost their employment and are struggling to find further work due to the changes in the accepted ways of job searching and applications. This is mostly due to the Covid-19 legacy of most applications now being done online. The people who come to us have not had any regular use of digital equipment or know how to apply for work in what is classed as current day expectations. They are also severely struggling to live on benefits when they have been used to wages and living within their means.



Case study – Male, 28

Summary of presenting issues and client's background

The client initially accessed our service due to being issued with an eviction notice from his rented property. The client had lost his job and not told his landlord. He did not know he could claim benefit straight away so is now in arrears and this was why the landlord is evicting him.

Intervention

We completed a holistic assessment to ensure we understood the various issues happening for this client and to agree a course of action that was in his best interest and that the client was comfortable with.

We completed a Darlington Borough Council housing application and have supported him to bid on properties, alongside contacting his landlord to see if we could prevent the eviction if we can put a payment plan in place.

We set him a budget plan to manage his finances and clear some of the debt he had obtained. We supported the client to complete a CV and helped him to look and apply for jobs.

We supported the client in his engagement with his landlord, explaining the difficulties he had gotten himself into with the arrears. The landlord agreed to a payment plan to clear the arrears over a period of time. We were able to confirm that benefits were now in place and that the client was actively seeking employment.

Outcomes

Landlord removed the eviction notice.

Client successfully obtained a new job, which improved his financial situation.

He also managed to clear all rent arrears that had built up.

Client's self-confidence has improved immensely along with his understanding and skill set regarding personal finances, budgets and tenancy legislation.

Case study – Female 56

Summary of presenting issues and client's background

Client was working at a care home however she was having an operation at James Cook Hospital the following day (to have a brain tumour removed). This meant that her only income would be Statutory Sick

Pay (SSP). Client lived in a property that was still mortgaged and her partner had passed away 9 months before. She had gone from two incomes going into the household to one income of SSP of £99.35 per week alongside grieving for her partner and dealing with her on going health conditions.

Intervention and engagement

We started with a basic benefit check which showed that she was also intitled to £23.08 Bereavements support and spoke about making a Personal Independent Payment (PIP) application due to her current health condition. We contacted and made an appointment with her mortgage provider about a possible mortgage holiday or maybe going interest only for a limited period. She was also getting home assessed by Occupational therapist for grab rails ramps etc but was unsure when they were coming so chased this appointment up and were able to move this forward as her operation had been brought forward due to growth of tumour. We also rang PIP and requested forms to be sent out to the client. I explained to client to gather all medical evidence together so we could complete forms as soon as they arrived.

Outcomes

The requested PIP forms arrived and we supported her in completing them. We also supported the client when she had a telephone assessment with a PIP assessor. The PIP application was successful and she was granted an enhanced amount for daily living and a standard rate for mobility. This meant we could now apply for a blue badge and a mobility bus pass, both of which she was granted. We also ensured that council tax rebate was in place. During this time her SSP had stopped so we made an Employment Support Allowance (ESA) contribution-based benefit and have asked for them to consider the severe disability element (this is still in assessment stage). Alongside all the practical support, we made the client feel safe and welcomed in our project and she was able to talk freely about how her life had changed in the last year. She still must undergo more operations however these cannot be completed until she has healed following her previous operation.

In conclusion we have secured benefits and rebates of £9,549.64 which may rise to £11,660.84 if the severe disability element of ESA is added. As well as emotional and wellbeing support during this difficult phase of her life. This is not taking into account how much her blue badge and bus pass are saving her in parking and journey costs etc.

In what ways have our 380 beneficiaries benefited from our support?

Benefits and Income

217 people gained support with their financial income. All reported an improvement in their household situation through accessing different solutions such as; an increase of, or new benefits; additional support through increments available through our charity and other organisations e.g. utility vouchers, food vouchers, discretionary payments to assist with temporary situations etc.

During 2022-2023 we raised over £800,000 in unclaimed annual benefit for our beneficiaries.

Housing

72 people gained support with their housing issues. 24 of whom moved into new accommodation from their existing home that no longer met their needs. 30 people gained new accommodation with our support, including registering and bidding on Tees Valley Homefinder and other private landlord sites and we guided 18 sofa surfers to access the right pathway into supported accommodation.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

252 people were supported with their mental health and wellbeing, which impacts all areas of our lives. 61% of them report a significant increase in their self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-worth. They have attended a range of activities and also had support through our information & advice team which has resulted in resolving stressful and difficult situations all of which were causing anxiety and stress.

Additionally, 58 of the group attended our Mindset Mentoring Course and successfully worked on their thoughts, behaviours and actions that have been holding them back from living to their true potential. This group achieved immense milestones and continue to practice self-care and use the tools they were given to continue their progress of change.

Pre-Employment

194 people also used our facilities to gain support to move towards employment or to improve their working options. 111 people improved their communication skill and IT skills through our Digital Inclusion courses and our pre-employment supported job search sessions. All of the people we supported reported an increase in their motivation and aspirations for their futures.

Who do we work alongside?

It is important to acknowledge the work that is undertaken in Darlington by a range of charities who all help to support our work with vulnerable people and provide fantastic services themselves. First Stop works well in partnership, and has links with the following agencies:

- Bike Stop
- Citizens Advice
- TV & D YMCA
- Darlington Mind
- Sunday Stop
- We Are With You
- Morrison Trust
- DBC Housing Department
- DWP
- Darlington Refuge
- St Mary's Food bank
- Food Banks
- 700 Club
- Darlington Credit Union
- Human Kind
- Groundwork
- Kings Church

Outreach in the Community

We support St Mary's Foodbank and Firthmoor Community Centre on a monthly/fortnightly basis depending on staffing compliment.

Darlington Connect

We have been proud to be part of a new connection of charities within the town who came together to look at the Cost of Living Crisis, 700 Club played a lead role in bringing everyone together and this has resulted in a new Sign Posting service that several charities man during the week to ensure the residents of the town know what support is available and can direct / refer people into the varying services.

This began with some Household Fund money from Darlington Borough Council to be distributed to residents during the winter months, which we were collectively able to help over 1,000 people in 6-8weeks. Also highly supportive is the NHS, with funding for mental health support in the community, supporting the rental and refurbishment of a shop in the town centre where we can direct people to the right support in the community they live. This will be fully up and running in the new financial year.

How do we assess outcomes and impacts?

As a Board, we strive to monitor the impact our work has on the lives of our clients. Due to the complex nature of the support offered to individuals with very complex problems, this is never easy. Our staff use various techniques to measure how successful their outcomes have been. Outreach clinic sessions and time spent on one to one meetings can be listed but ultimately success will only be measured by the individuals' own stories: those who are able to manage their own finances, those whose self-confidence has grown so that they can look for work, those who are successful in finding and holding down a job, and those who manage to find long term security of housing.

The Board continues to investigate ways of assessing the effectiveness of our methods of delivery and cooperate with the CEO in exploring ways of developing the services offered. All our grant work is collated through our Inform Database and is reported to each funder on the successes and the difficulties that people face in their lives.

We are grateful to our clients for the feedback they supply to the support workers so that we can have an indicator of how the client feels about the support he or she has been offered.

We also value the feedback we receive from our funders and partners, analysis of which helps us improve our offers of support, improve our bid writing skills and ensure we are giving our funders what they need to develop their interaction with the charity and the support they provide.

Staffing Support and Appraisal

Staff are offered regular support and an open-door policy by the CEO; they have opportunities to talk about their work and progress both formally and informally. All staff are able to have input and submit ideas into the running of our services and how they develop. FSD is fortunate to have had minimal staffing restructures for downsizing purposes and we are blessed with a staff team who have been a crucial part of our charity for some years. We do enjoy the energy that new people bring and have welcomed another team member this year to bring Digital Inclusion provision for our clients.

First Stop Thanks

Trustees

Trustee James Fenny has stepped down due to health issues and work commitments. The Board would like to thank James for his dedicated service over the last ten years. His sound advice and practical experience based on his professional and personal attributes has enhanced the Charity over that time which has included many challenges.

We wish James and his family all the best for the future.

Staff

The Trustees of First Stop wish to pay tribute to the dedication and hard work of all members of staff and volunteers who ensured those who need our services and help were able to access support throughout the year. They worked with dedication, professionalism, compassion and their wonderful sense of humour, putting everyone at ease as they worked.

A big welcome to **Paula Prest** who joined us in August as our Digital Inclusion Worker and hit the ground running, setting up lots of different courses for those struggling with IT and its many assorted software suites. We are also excited to have **Elisha McDowell** back with us after leaving to have the beautiful Cena. Elisha is back into the thick of our core services and we are enjoying her return.

Bike Stop Darlington – 2023 Report

Unfortunately, this year marked the end of Bike Stop after 11 years.

A perfect storm meant the shop could no longer remain operational. This included the loss of a contract for supporting cycling/walking from Tees Valley Combined Authority, rising costs, the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on retail (particularly the cycling sector) and a total reduction in the income received for supported work placements. The external environment is challenging for any business and especially so for a business that is a not-for-profit social enterprise, trying to train those who are vulnerable in our communities.

The closure of the shop does enable us to reflect on the amazing success we have had over the last eleven years. This is thanks primarily to our brilliant and dedicated staff, volunteers, trainee participants and customers. We also are grateful to our supporters and funders.

Thanks to Bike Stop, in the last 11 years:

- 386 disadvantaged people with mental health and other issues preventing them from gaining employment have gained work experience and training with Bike Stop.
- 15% of these remained with Bike Stop for many months/years, bringing purpose and self-worth, replacing rejection and lack of opportunity in their lives.
- 4 high quality Apprenticeships have been provided - all of which resulted in employment and transformed lives.
- 49 willing and skilled members of the public dedicated over 20,000 voluntary hours to support our trainees and pass on mechanic skills alongside our bicycle mechanic staff. Almost half of those have dedicated many years, with some giving more than 5 years and one amazing volunteer has been with us from the start, his dedication and skills have been exemplary.
- 20 young people have completed their Duke of Edinburgh volunteer hours with us and we have also worked with The Prince's Trust in some of our years.
- 258 members of the public attended maintenance sessions to learn how to look after their own bicycle.
- Over 6,000 people have benefited from a high-quality Maintenance & Repair service - to ensure they are safe on their bike.
- Over 2,600 bicycles have been sold at reasonable prices or given away.
- Over 4,000 bicycles have been saved from landfill.
- We stayed open throughout Covid-19 to continue to support people to exercise and get around safely.
- 32 NHS and key worker staff received free loans of bikes during Covid-19, so they could continue to get to work safely.
- Last year Darlington Roundtable helped us donate 20 bikes to children who might not have got a Christmas present otherwise.

Bike Stop donated a further 11 bicycles through the year to help people reduce their commuting costs and with the help of the Household Fund we were able to support a further 31 people to access a free bicycle for commuting to work and appointments.

In the coming months it is hoped that a legacy project to Bike Stop can be created, focusing on training, workshops and wellbeing. This is because First Stop is committed to providing appropriate and helpful upskilling for those left behind.

The final accounts for Bike Stop will be prepared later this year.

Bike Stop Thanks

Staff & Volunteers

It is difficult to sum up in a few words exactly what Bike Stop staff and volunteers brought to the enterprise. There was no end to their passion, enthusiasm, patience and product knowledge. Many friends were made, and many cyclists supported to be on the road and enjoying the freedom of their bicycle. Most importantly it is their dedication to training and developing all the people, young and old, who came through the doors looking for a place to belong and be understood. The achievements above are a testament to each and every one of them past and present.

The Board and CEO thank you and wish you the very best for your futures.

Financial review

a. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

b. Reserves policy

The Trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. It has established a policy that the Charity's unrestricted funds, not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets and that are cash-backed, should be adequate to cover foreseeable shortfalls in income for a sufficient period to enable the Trustees to take corrective action. At 31 March 2023, the Trustees have calculated the reserves level required to be £96,000 in light of the increased level of project expenditure planned in 2023/24, ensuring we have 6 months reserves. The management committee will continue to keep this policy, and the reserves level under review. At 31 March 2023 the actual level of free reserves is £64,897 equalling 4 months reserves. (2022: £80,000).

c. Financial review

The Statement of Financial Activities on pages 15 - 16 and the Balance Sheet on pages 17 – 18 show a healthy financial position, the main features of which are:

Unrestricted reserves of £232,277 which includes the building, restricted reserves as at 31 March 2023 are £nil.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 29 August 2023 and signed on its behalf by:


.....
William John Kilgour - Trustee

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
First Stop Darlington**

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of First Stop Darlington ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by Section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of Section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



L Harris Bsc (Hons), FCCA

Mitchell Gordon LLP
43 Coniscliffe Road
Darlington
Co. Durham
DL3 7EH

Date: 29 August 2023

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

		Unrestricted	Restricted	31/3/23	31/3/22
	Notes	fund	fund	Total	Total
		£	£	funds	funds
				£	£
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies		3,309	-	3,309	7,072
Charitable activities					
Ballinger Trust		-	20,000	20,000	-
Amazon		2,720	-	2,720	2,279
Barratt Charity Foundation		-	-	-	1,000
Big Lottery Wellbeing Fund		-	80,197	80,197	-
County Durham Community Fund		-	5,000	5,000	-
Garfield Weston Foundation		-	16,667	16,667	-
Lloyds Bank Foundation		-	-	-	32,220
Joy Welch fund		-	-	-	5,000
TEWV Resilience fund		-	6,686	6,686	5,773
Watson Hope fund		-	20,001	20,001	6,666
CDCF COL fund		-	2,477	2,477	-
Garfield Weston Pilotlight		-	618	618	-
Harrison Foundation		-	21,049	21,049	-
Health Improvement fund		-	8,560	8,560	-
Hadrian Trust		1,000	-	1,000	-
Other trading activities	3	7,420	-	7,420	18,893
Investment income	4	640	-	640	124
Total		<u>15,089</u>	<u>181,255</u>	<u>196,344</u>	<u>79,027</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds		1,064	-	1,064	135
Charitable activities					
Big Lottery		-	-	-	27,448
Ballinger Trust		-	20,000	20,000	20,000
Amazon		2,720	-	2,720	2,279
Big Lottery Wellbeing Fund		-	80,197	80,197	-
County Durham Community Fund		-	5,000	5,000	-
Garfield Weston Foundation		-	16,667	16,667	11,374
Lloyds Bank Foundation		-	-	-	37,959
General activities		34,038	-	34,038	32,953
Joy Welch fund		-	-	-	5,000
TEWV Resilience fund		-	6,686	6,686	5,773
Watson Hope fund		-	20,001	20,001	6,666
CDCF COL fund		-	2,477	2,477	-
Garfield Weston Pilotlight		-	618	618	-
Harrison Foundation		-	21,049	21,049	-
Health Improvement fund		-	8,560	8,560	-
Total		<u>37,822</u>	<u>181,255</u>	<u>219,077</u>	<u>149,587</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	31/3/23 Total funds £	31/3/22 Total funds £
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(22,733)	-	(22,733)	(70,560)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		255,010	-	255,010	325,570
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>232,277</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>232,277</u>	<u>255,010</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Balance Sheet
31 March 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	31/3/23 Total funds £	31/3/22 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	10	168,712	-	168,712	166,916
Investments	11	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
		168,713	-	168,713	166,917
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	12	11,114	-	11,114	2,266
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>134,941</u>	<u>72,866</u>	<u>207,807</u>	<u>196,595</u>
		146,055	72,866	218,921	198,861
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(13,706)</u>	<u>(72,866)</u>	<u>(86,572)</u>	<u>(37,258)</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>132,349</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>132,349</u>	<u>161,603</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES					
		301,062	-	301,062	328,520
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due after more than one year	14	<u>(68,785)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(68,785)</u>	<u>(73,510)</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>232,277</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>232,277</u>	<u>255,010</u>
FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds	17			<u>232,277</u>	<u>255,010</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>232,277</u>	<u>255,010</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

The notes form part of these financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Balance Sheet - continued
31 March 2023

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 29 August 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:


.....
William John Kilgour - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

1. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

Unrestricted Funds:

General - The free funds of the charity which are available for the general work of the charity at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted Funds:

These funds relate to grants and donations received for specific purposes as follows:

The Ballinger Charitable Trust - 1 year funding of £20,000 from April 2022 - March 2023 funding is for Core services.

The National Lottery Fund - Reaching Communities Fund - A 2-year pilot project from April 2022 - March 2024 for the introduction of a Mental Health Support Worker and the delivery of a Mindset Mentor programme to research the benefits of this approach to people who are stuck and unable to move forward in their lives.

Garfield Weston - 1 year core funding to support the charity in supporting those who are homeless, at risk of homelessness and those who are marginalised in our community. This fund is for £25,000 and runs from July 2022 to June 2023.

Watson Hope Foundation - This is a new foundation that kindly donated £20,000 per year for 3 years (2021-2024) The grant is for core funding and given due to the work and dedication of the charity in supporting people out of their worst circumstances, with opportunities, a gain of confidence and self-belief.

Tees Esk & Wear Valley NHS Trust - £9,646 for 1 year funding to deliver support and activities to those experiencing anxiety, stress and depression in addition to the cost of living crisis.

County Durham Community Foundation - £5,000 core cost funding March 2022 - February 2023 to support the core work of the charity.

County Durham Community Foundation - Poverty Hurts Fund - £9,906 to provide support to those struggling in the Cost of Living Crisis, providing help and support to maximise the income of the households of the people we are supporting.

NHS - Health Improvement Fund - £17,119 to provide mental health wellbeing services and activities between October 2022 - September 2023 to improve their overall wellbeing and improve their self-confidence and self-worth.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) '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 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments which are included at market value.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the Charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Freehold property	- not provided
Fixtures and fittings	- 33% on cost and 20% on cost
Computer equipment	- 33% on cost

Taxation

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

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

3. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Fundraising events	4,480	7,920
Management charges income	-	9,750
Covid job retention scheme	-	1,223
Room hire	<u>2,940</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>7,420</u>	<u>18,893</u>

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>640</u>	<u>124</u>

5. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Depreciation - owned assets	<u>1,260</u>	<u>759</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

6. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2022 - £nil).

Trustees' expenses

During the year, no Trustee expenses were incurred (2022 - £nil).

7. STAFF COSTS

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

	<u>31/3/23</u>	<u>31/3/22</u>
Charitable services	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

8. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	7,072	-	7,072
Charitable activities			
Amazon	2,279	-	2,279
Barratt Charity Foundation	1,000	-	1,000
Lloyds Bank Foundation	-	32,220	32,220
Joy Welch fund	5,000	-	5,000
TEWV Resilience fund	-	5,773	5,773
Watson Hope fund	-	6,666	6,666
Other trading activities	18,893	-	18,893
Investment income	<u>124</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>124</u>
Total	<u>34,368</u>	<u>44,659</u>	<u>79,027</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	135	-	135
Charitable activities			
Big Lottery	-	27,448	27,448
Ballinger Trust	-	20,000	20,000
Amazon	2,279	-	2,279
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	11,374	11,374
Lloyds Bank Foundation	-	37,959	37,959
General activities	32,953	-	32,953
Joy Welch fund	5,000	-	5,000
TEWV Resilience fund	-	5,773	5,773
Watson Hope fund	<u>-</u>	<u>6,666</u>	<u>6,666</u>
Total	<u>40,367</u>	<u>109,220</u>	<u>149,587</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(5,999)	(64,561)	(70,560)

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

8. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	261,009	64,561	325,570
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>255,010</u>	<u> </u>	<u>255,010</u>

9. INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REMUNERATION

Fees payable to the Charity's independent examination of the Charity's annual accounts £1,440 (2022: £1,440).

10. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Freehold property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST				
At 1 April 2022	165,000	10,263	13,535	188,798
Additions	-	150	3,056	3,206
Disposals	<u>-</u>	<u>(187)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(187)</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>165,000</u>	<u>10,226</u>	<u>16,591</u>	<u>191,817</u>
DEPRECIATION				
At 1 April 2022	-	9,274	12,608	21,882
Charge for year	-	242	1,019	1,261
Eliminated on disposal	<u>-</u>	<u>(38)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(38)</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>-</u>	<u>9,478</u>	<u>13,627</u>	<u>23,105</u>
NET BOOK VALUE				
At 31 March 2023	<u>165,000</u>	<u>748</u>	<u>2,964</u>	<u>168,712</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>165,000</u>	<u>989</u>	<u>927</u>	<u>166,916</u>

Included in cost or valuation of land and buildings is freehold land of £165,000 which is not depreciated.

The directors believe that there was no material change in the property value therefore no depreciation has been provided. This is due to the maintenance and upkeep of the building.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

11. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

	Unlisted investments £
MARKET VALUE	
At 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023	<u>1</u>
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2023	<u>1</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>1</u>

There were no investment assets outside the UK.

12. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/23 £	31/3/22 £
Trade debtors	14	-
Other debtors	1,150	800
Prepayments	<u>9,950</u>	<u>1,466</u>
	<u>11,114</u>	<u>2,266</u>

13. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/23 £	31/3/22 £
Bank loans and overdrafts (see note 15)	4,711	4,427
Trade creditors	3,771	890
Social security and other taxes	2,569	2,352
Pension creditor	661	535
Other creditors	28	-
Deferred income	72,866	27,342
Accrued expenses	<u>1,966</u>	<u>1,712</u>
	<u>86,572</u>	<u>37,258</u>

14. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	31/3/23 £	31/3/22 £
Bank loans (see note 15)	<u>68,785</u>	<u>73,510</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

15. LOANS

An analysis of the maturity of loans is given below:

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year on demand:		
Bank loans	<u>4,711</u>	<u>4,427</u>
Amounts falling due between two and five years:		
Bank loans - 1-5 years	<u>22,266</u>	<u>20,864</u>
Amounts falling due in more than five years:		
Repayable by instalments:		
Bank loans more than 5 years	46,519	52,646

16. SECURED DEBTS

The following secured debts are included within creditors:

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Bank loans	<u>73,496</u>	<u>77,937</u>

The above debt is secured against the building owned by the company.

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/22	Net movement in funds	At 31/3/23
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	255,010	(22,733)	232,277
	<u>255,010</u>	<u>(22,733)</u>	<u>232,277</u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Movement in funds
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	15,090	(37,823)	(22,733)
Restricted funds			
Restricted	181,254	(181,254)	-
	<u>196,344</u>	<u>(219,077)</u>	<u>(22,733)</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

17. **MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued**

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/21 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/22 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	261,009	(5,999)	255,010
Restricted funds			
Restricted	64,561	(64,561)	-
	<u>325,570</u>	<u>(70,560)</u>	<u>255,010</u>
TOTAL FUNDS			

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	34,368	(40,367)	(5,999)
Restricted funds			
Restricted	44,659	(109,220)	(64,561)
	<u>79,027</u>	<u>(149,587)</u>	<u>(70,560)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS			

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1/4/21 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	261,009	(28,732)	232,277
Restricted funds			
Restricted	64,561	(64,561)	-
	<u>325,570</u>	<u>(93,293)</u>	<u>232,277</u>
TOTAL FUNDS			

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

17. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	49,458	(78,190)	(28,732)
Restricted funds			
Restricted	225,913	(290,474)	(64,561)
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>275,371</u>	<u>(368,664)</u>	<u>(93,293)</u>

18. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

Owing to the nature of the Charity's operations and the composition of the Board of Trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the Charity has an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	31/3/23 £	31/3/22 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	3,309	7,072
Other trading activities		
Fundraising events	4,480	7,920
Management charges income	-	9,750
Covid job retention scheme	-	1,223
Room hire	<u>2,940</u>	<u>-</u>
	7,420	18,893
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	640	124
Charitable activities		
Charitable activities	<u>184,975</u>	<u>52,938</u>
Total incoming resources	196,344	79,027
EXPENDITURE		
Raising donations and legacies		
Fundraising expenses	1,064	135
Charitable activities		
Wages	134,904	104,610
Social security	6,133	4,899
Pensions	2,800	2,305
Insurance	1,525	1,786
Light and heat	2,004	2,292
Advertising	565	486
Other fees	4,508	(511)
IT costs	6,847	7,611
Governance costs	210	278
Premises costs	3,588	4,443
Client Welfare	35,320	3,861
Administration costs	8,573	5,591
Other staff costs	1,245	722
Training costs	3,600	-
Fixtures and fittings	242	191
Computer equipment	1,019	568
Mortgage	<u>4,930</u>	<u>5,243</u>
	218,013	144,375
Support costs		
Other		
Intercompany debt w/off	-	5,077

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Total resources expended	<u>219,077</u>	<u>149,587</u>
Net expenditure	<u>(22,733)</u>	<u>(70,560)</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

England & Wales - Charity number 1073822

Accounts

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03647391 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1073822



mitchell gordon

Report of the Trustees and
Unaudited Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022
for
FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Mitchell Gordon LLP
Accountants and
Statutory Auditors

Tel: 01325 368000

43 Coniscliffe Road, Darlington, Co. Durham DL3 7EH

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

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for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

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FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Trustees' Annual report for the year ended 31 March 2022

The Trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2022. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in the notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and 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 published on 16 July 2014 (as amended by Update Bulletin 1 published on 2 February 2016).

The trustees are directors of the Company for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006.

Reference and Administration Information

Charity Name:	First Stop Darlington
Charity Registration number:	1073822
Company registration number:	3647391
Registered office and operational address:	32 Houndgate, Darlington, DL1 5RH
Governing document:	Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 21 September 1998 and amended by special resolution(s) dated 20/10/2011 and amended further by special resolution(s) dated 9 th February 2021

Board of Trustees

John Kilgour	(Chair)
Maire Kennan	
Alan Coultas	
James Fenny	
Bernadette Chapman	
Debra Irving	
Chris Gill	Retired 6 th August 2021
Wendy Collins	Retired 2 nd August 2021

Company Secretary

Vacancy

Independent Examiner

Mitchell Gordon LLP
43 Coniscliffe Rd
Darlington
DL3 7EH

Solicitors

Close Thornton
2 Duke Street
Darlington
DL3 7AB

Bankers

Unity Trust Bank plc, Nine Brindley Place, Birmingham, B1 2HB



TRUSTEES' REPORT

MARCH 2022

32 Houndgate, Darlington, DL1 1PD

Tel: 01325 254463 Registered Charity Number 1073822

Company Limited by Guarantee 3647391

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Trustees' Annual report for the year ended 31 March 2022

Who are we?

First Stop Darlington (FSD) is a charity in Darlington, which was set up to help people who are at risk of becoming homeless, and is an open door organisation which supports anyone who is vulnerable through poverty, or struggling with mental health and other issues that impede their access to benefits and other support systems.

Nobody is turned away; it is literally a person's first stop to getting help in a time of crisis.

The charity was founded in 1999 to support people 'in need and distress within Darlington'. Unfortunately, that need is still there, and since living through Covid19 pandemic and the resulting economic demands we are now living in a world where severe poverty is part of many people's lives. We have adapted our services to help meet these demands, increasing support to families and all on low income. We continue to find ways to adapt ensuring we provide a high quality service to as many people who need us as possible.

FSD is situated in Houndgate, in Darlington's Town Centre, where we operate a centre with an appointment service, with crisis access available every day on the ground floor and have offices and a training/activity room/meeting room on the first floor. There are laundry facilities and a kitchen for the use of clients. We offer an in-depth advice service with the use of phones and laptops so that clients can be supported to solve their problems and increase their access to benefits, housing, mental health support, employment support and other services.

Since we began in July 1999, we have worked with over 9450 vulnerable people to help them work on their issues and move forwards towards an independent life. We have provided, in total, a range of support services to over 11,800 people over the years, with the addition of various outreach events.

How are we constituted?

First Stop Darlington is a company limited by guarantee, No 3647391, governed by its Articles and Memorandum of Association. It is registered charity No 1073822 with a core membership of 12 people.

The directors of FSD are the Board of Trustees and are elected by the membership. In 2021-2022, the board had 6 members serving on the Board, none of whom are related to each other.

The Board has an appointed Chair with a vacant Vice Chair position at present. The Articles of Association require that one third of the directors/trustees retire each year by rotation; retiring trustees are eligible for re-election.

Currently we do not have a treasurer; instead the trustees all undergo training in the field of financial management of charities and are jointly carrying out the responsibilities of treasurer. We continue to seek to fulfil this post in the mid-term.

The role of the trustees is to further the objectives of FSD through taking part in formulating and regularly reviewing strategic aims, ensuring that policy and practice are in keeping with its aims and that FSD functions within the legal and financial requirements of a charitable company and strives to achieve best practice.

There were 7 Board meetings during the year, 5 held virtually to ensure the trustees upheld all Covid-19 Guidance. During the year, risk management, HR and Financial meetings were also held, all feeding into the full Board meetings.

The board regularly considered the Risk Register, which identifies risk factors and their impact on the charity. Measuring risk factors and identifying actions to mitigate those risks informs the development of the board's strategy. The charity holds a staff and Board strategy review meeting every year in addition to other meetings.

to consider any gaps in service, changes to need etc., ensuring we remain in tune with our beneficiaries. The team preps for these meetings with various clients, making sure we represent their voices within the process.

Trustees act in a voluntary capacity and did not receive any remuneration or reimbursement of expenses. The Trustees have considerable interaction with the paid team and take a keen interest in the workings of the charity to help their understanding of the needs of the beneficiaries.

FSD employs a CEO whose responsibility is the general management of all FSD projects, management of staff and volunteers, building management and leading the team in procuring funding. The CEO attends Board meetings and reports to The Board on finance and operational matters.

The CEO is Tracy Freeman and there are 5 other members of staff.

Grant giving funding bodies are our main source of income, supplemented by fund raising efforts by Friends of FSD, and personal donations. This year we have begun to bring fundraising events back into the calendar since Covid rules have been relaxed to their lowest level since Covid emerged.

Our thanks for 2021-22 funding go to Lloyds Bank Foundation, Ballinger Trust, Garfield Weston Trust, Watson Hope Foundation, County Durham Community Foundation, Joy Welsh Trust and NHS TEWV MH Trust whose grants over the year have made the work of FSD possible.

FSD has a Social Enterprise, Bike Stop Darlington (BSD), set up in 2012 providing training, volunteering opportunities and work experience for the clients of FSD and other vulnerable people within the Borough of Darlington, especially those furthest from the job market. Our CEO provides overall direction and strategic support. BSD is managed by its own board, and produces its own accounts. These are available on request.

Our aims and how we work

First Stop Darlington provides a Wellbeing and Work Hub in the town centre of Darlington and houses a range of practical, free facilities and activities designed to help people navigate from poverty and all its trappings, through to employment with decent wages that helps lift people out of poverty and achieving long lost goals.

The aims of the organisation are:

- To ensure that confidential, impartial information, advice and support is provided in ways that empower local people to make informed decisions about their life choices and in a way that is sensitive to their needs.
- To support local people to help themselves move forward out of life's difficulties and onwards towards independence.
- To promote positive mental health among service users, including Mindset and Mindfulness work.
- To provide activities around prevention of poor mental health, addiction behaviours and to promote a healthy sense of well-being and increased self-worth.
- To provide IAG services regarding benefit claims, benefit issues, money issues, expenditure, poverty, housing issues, relationships, access to services etc.
- To provide one to one support while people are working through their issues, sharing problem solving skills and increasing self-esteem and self-confidence to make behavioural changes in their lives.
- Support people to broaden their CV, increase skills through volunteering and courses, improving their job opportunities.
- To work in partnership with other likeminded organisations to deliver wrap around services.
- To highlight the problem of poverty and its associated issues.
- To provide accurate statistical information on poverty issues to inform service planning and delivery.

The Centre is open to the public every weekday to provide impartial confidential information, advice, guidance, support, and onward referral to our clients.

- of which were Mental Health related,
- 89 people needed support from our pre-employment service.

The biggest age group was that of working age people, with 88% of people on benefits, 7% were working when they registered with us and 5% achieved jobs through our assistance.

Outcomes

As a result of the direct support that our clients received from the team 1336 issues were resolved and our clients have achieved many things, especially in their improvement of stress and anxiety and in their ability to demonstrate increased resilience and earlier detection of when things need to be addressed. Our clients achieved growth and significant impact over 644 outcomes, some of which are highlighted below:

- Help to clear debt through easy to pay and clear budgets.
- Secure a home
- Prevent evictions
- Gain greater understanding and skills towards improving their future life options
- Significantly increase their self-confidence and self-worth.
- Become employment ready
- Access housing, council tax and other appropriate benefits relating to their situation.
- Increased their understanding and ability to manage their contract with the Benefit Agency
- Learned new techniques to lessen the impact that anxiety and stress causes in their lives.

Specific support provided by the team has included

- Help with money problems and help to set up initial payment plans. Referral to CAB or Credit Union for specialist support where needed.
- Help to access crisis payments and also Social Fund payments from CAB
- Support to appeal against decisions regarding their right to sickness benefits
- Support to access the benefit system for new applications
- Support to keep benefits in place regarding accessing their journal and carrying out tasks set by DWP
- Help to find accommodation with no funds for a bond.
- Worked closely with the Housing Department of the Local Authority to assist in placements of vulnerable people.
- Support to reduce their anxiety and stress responses to difficult situations and life events.
- Mindfulness tools to use in everyday life that manages anxiety/stress and to improve wellbeing.
- Help to source ID for job applications and housing applications.
- Provide a quiet space and equipment to attend interviews over Zoom.
- Support to understand the job market and how to engage in meaningful job searching
- Support to write relevant C.V.'s
- Secure employment for those closer to the jobs market
- Support for initial engagement with Employment agencies

A Case Study:

Male, 23

Summary of presenting issues and clients background

Client initially accessed our service due to being issued with a section 21 eviction notice from his rented property. Client had lost his job and got into rent arrears.

Intervention

We completed a holistic assessment to ensure we understood the various issues for this client and to agree a course of action that was in his best interests and that the client was comfortable with.

We completed a Darlington Borough Council, housing application and have supported him to bid on

There are four Project Support Staff, 1 Administrative officer and the CEO. The CEO works directly with clients during holidays and staff illness, ensuring there is full cover for our services.

Who do we help?

We have an Instant Access policy and offer appointments with support staff on the same day of presentation or within 24 hours, should they present at time of closure. This is a crucial part of the relationship that we build with people, if they are brave enough to reach out for help, then we must be attentive enough to begin helping as fast as we can.

We support vulnerable people and families who are experiencing severe poverty. Issues such as housing or benefit problems initially presented by clients but they may frequently hide other issues such as debt, hunger, poor hygiene, anxiety & stress and often relationship troubles. Our support workers use various tools in their work, such as Trauma Informed Care approach and Mindfulness and are skilled in taking a holistic approach with clients to help them feel at ease and gain the confidence needed to discuss difficult issues.

Our clients are often

- cash poor
- struggling to manage on their low income
- experiencing anxiety, stress and other related mental health issues
- under threat of eviction due to arrears or no accommodation of their own
- sofa surfing and/or swapping between houses throughout each week and have no permanent address
- have poor prospects of obtaining paid employment
- unable to escape out of poor living conditions without financial and legal support.

Our clients may have experienced at least 3 of the following:

at risk of homelessness; low income and/or zero hour contracts; fuel poverty; hunger; socially excluded; poverty; debt; unemployment; mental ill health; mental illness; low self-esteem; lack self-confidence; low or no self-worth; addiction/s; offending behaviour; young offenders; anti-social behaviour; teen parents; leaving care young adults; eviction from family home; domestic abuse victims; domestic violence perpetrators; relationship breakdown; self-harm; violent behaviour; sex offenders; child abuse; sexual abuse; survival sex; bereavement; removal of child/children from family home; coping with removal of baby/babies at birth.

Our services were available in the following formats:

- Pre-booked appointments between 9.30am – 12.30pm – (minimum 6 appointments per day)
- Daily accessed appointments between 1.30pm – 4.30pm – (minimum 6 appointments per day)
- Coffee and 'catch up' sessions for those accessing our mental health support worker
- Weekly Gardening Club
- Outreach sessions for appointments in the community x 2 sessions per week. (9 appointments)

Outputs

In 2021 – 2022 we were privileged to work and support people with the following:

- 231 clients asked for our help during the pandemic. 75% of our clients identified as male, 24% as female and 1% as bi-gender. Our biggest age bracket was working age people with only 8 people at retirement age.
- 152 people came to us seeking help with benefit and monetary issues
- 43 people were homeless, identifying as sofa surfing, no fixed abode or rough sleeping.
- 69 people were supported to secure their housing and prevent an eviction
- 87 people saw improvement in their health issues that were impacting their ability to move on. 88%

properties. We also set him a budget plan to manage his finances and clear some of the debt he had obtained. We supported the client to complete a CV and support him to look for and apply for jobs. We supported the client to write a letter to a private landlord, explaining the difficulties he had got himself into with arrears in his current property and how he had managed to clear these over a period of time, in the hope that he will accept the client as a tenant.

Outcomes

- Client successfully obtained a new job, which improved his financial situation.
- He also managed to stick to the budget plan we did and clear all rent arrears he had built up.
- Made a positive move on to another private rented property.
- We supported the client to have a month's rent repaid as he had actually overpaid by the time he left the previous property and landlord was not going to return this credit.
- Completed a change of address for his council tax and ensured he was in receipt of the reduction for single occupancy.

We continue to support this client with smaller tasks when he feels he needs support but he is doing well and his self-confidence has improved immensely along with his understanding and skill set regarding personal finances, budgets and tenancy legislation.

Male 42

Summary of presenting issues and clients background

Client initially accessed the service as he needed to upload his tenancy agreement to his new Universal credit claim. It became evident that his partner would also need to do the same and that their claims needed to be joined up.

They were currently living in a private rented accommodation, the accommodation was in very serious disrepair, resulting in them not being able to use the upstairs rooms and were sleeping in the living room with their three children, one of which was new-born.

Client was also struggling with his mental health due to an older child from a previous relationship committing suicide whilst in prison.

Intervention

Discussion held with client and his partner about sourcing more suitable housing due to living in poor conditions. They agreed to complete a Compass application, also contacted private sector tenancy about their current living conditions. Private sector tenancy worked with the client and his partner to assess their current home and made contact with their landlord to make improvements to the property. We supported them to provide the relevant documentation to support their Compass application but also supported them to gather more evidence from GP, health visitor and private sector tenancy to try and secure a higher band on Compass to make them more of a priority for housing due to the seriousness of the damp and disrepair of their current property. Discussions were also had around client's current mental health and options available to him.

Outcomes

Over the course of 8 visits we achieved the following:

- Current tenancy agreement was uploaded to their Universal credit claim to ensure they were getting the housing payment.
- Advised client to go on the sick due to his current mental health, he was then granted limited capability which maximised their benefits by approx. £150 a month.
- Private sector housing working alongside client and partner to ensure the landlord makes the necessary improvements to their current property to ensure it is safe.
- Secured band 1 on Compass housing, meaning they are a priority for housing.
- We purchased a birth certificate for their new-born as this was needed as evidence towards their Compass application and they could not afford this at the time.
- Supported client's partner to bid on properties on a weekly basis.
- Gave information to enable them to access food banks and a baby bank, as well as information about The Bread and Butter Thing service.

- Referred family to receive support from a family befriending scheme who will help provide monetary support when they move property as well as practical help to move.
- Sourced and funded counselling for client in regards to the death of his son, these sessions are currently ongoing. The inquest into the death of his son has been delayed, we will continue to offer any support needed.

How many people have we been able to support?

Benefits

105 clients so far have needed support in sorting out benefit issues with 21 new claimants, 49 stabilised their benefit income and 62 overall improved their financial situation. All reported an increase in their understanding of their claim and their responsibilities to keep the claim in place.

A further 47 people needed support with debt and poverty issues, each were supported to improve their access to essential food and help with utility bills. Budgeting skills were increased, priority payments were established and we continue to work with these clients towards employment or improved employment options.

Housing

111 people so far have needed support with 242 housing issues. Of the people who sought help, 26 private rented clients are now understand their tenancy rules and are no longer in trouble with their landlord and 35 people have improved their housing status, moving from temporary or emergency accommodation into their own accommodation. 41 people received advice and guidance on their rights and guidance to resolve their issues, including difficulty with neighbours, noise abatement, hoarding and environmental issues.

Mental Health

87 people have presented for support with their health issues with mental health impacting 77 of those people. They were supported to reduce their stress and anxiety; this was done through a range of tools and 1-1 support and encouragement.

Pre-Employment

89 clients have used our facilities to search for employment so far this year. Of those clients we supported 51 to increase their IT skills, moving them closer to meeting work requirements. 38 reported an increase in their motivation and aspirations towards employment, all were supported to access employment agencies. 12 clients who have significant barriers, improved their communication skills. We also facilitated 10 interviews in our centre, with 5 gaining new employment from this.

Who do we work alongside?

It is important to acknowledge the work that is undertaken in Darlington by a range of charities who all help to support our work with vulnerable people and provide fantastic services themselves. First Stop works well in partnership, and has links with the following agencies:

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Bike Stop | • Morrison Trust | • 700 Club |
| • Citizens Advice | • DBC Housing Department | • Darlington Credit Union |
| • TV & D YMCA | • DWP | • Human Kind |
| • Darlington Mind | • Darlington Refuge | • Groundwork |
| • Sunday Stop | • Grange Road Baptist Church | • Kings Church |
| • We Are With You | • Food Banks | |

Outreach in the Community

We are pleased to be back in our communities, building up sessions again after the long gap for Covid restrictions. We currently provide sessions in Firthmoor Community Centre and St Mary's Food Bank, we will be increasing venues as we move through the year.

How do we assess outcomes and impacts?

We use regular monitoring of individual cases and interact with our clients about how successful their outcomes have been. Outreach clinics are monitored in how many clients take up our services if their first contact is made after a formal contact at an outreach clinic, but again a lot of the contact is, by nature, informal for some time until the individual is ready to trust and feel comfortable.

The Board continues to investigate ways of assessing the effectiveness of our methods of delivery and cooperate with the CEO in exploring ways of developing the services offered. All our grant work is collated through our Inform Database and is reported to each funder on the successes and the difficulties that people face in their lives.

Case studies illustrate how complicated the measure of success can be when considering the multiplicity of problems with which our clients present. Clients are required to provide support workers with feedback, at the level at which they feel comfortable and this can be used as an indicator of how the client feels about the support he or she has been offered.

We also value the feedback we receive from our funders, analysis of which helps us improve our offers of support, improve our bid writing skills and ensure we are giving our funders what they need to develop their interaction with the charity and the support they provide.

Staffing Support and Appraisal

Staff are offered regular support and an open-door policy by the CEO; they have opportunities to talk about their work and progress both formally and informally and to also have input and ideas into the running of our services and how they develop. FSD is fortunate to have had minimal staffing restructures for downsizing purposes and we are blessed with a staff team who have been a crucial part of our charity for some years. We do enjoy the energy that new people bring and have welcomed another team member this year to train in the role of Mental Health Support Worker. We have all benefited from having a younger member in our team. At the end of this financial year the Trustees identified a need to research and adopt a salary pay scale. This is to support the further development of staff as they increase their skills and involvement in leading and supervising new areas of work.

First Stop Thanks

Trustees

We said goodbye to 2 wonderful Trustees as they moved on to other opportunities in their busy lives. Chris Gill had served for a number of years providing a steady hand and a wealth of knowledge in Risk Management, Partnership Development, Political understanding and funding

Staff

The trustees of First Stop wish to pay tribute to the dedication and hard work of all members of staff and volunteers who ensured those who need our services and help were able to access support throughout the year. They worked with dedication, professionalism, compassion and their wonderful sense of humour, putting everyone at ease as they worked.

A big welcome to **Jessica Wells** who joined us in January as our Mental Health Support Worker, ready to set up our new services with The National Lottery Funding in April 2022. She just jumped in and got on with everything, she is a great addition to our team and we are already gaining as a team through the skills and experience she brings with her.

Bike Stop Darlington – 2022 report

The Social Enterprise owned by First Stop Darlington is now approaching its 10th birthday.

Bike Stop Darlington is an active cycling hub whose main activities are to sell bikes and accessories from a town centre shop, provide cycle related training and to promote the health and environmental benefits of cycling. Whilst it was created primarily as a platform for training and work experience BSD provides meaning, support and training to transform lives. It also creates a whole range of other social, environmental and economic outcomes.

Since 2012 BSD has become very well established; generating significant outcomes and becoming a firm part of Darlington Town Centre. The building blocks are now in place for BSD to achieve growth and development in order to secure its long-term financial sustainability, contribute more to support the excellent work of First Stop Darlington and ultimately create substantially more positive impact.

The aftermath of Covid-19 continued to impact on our ability to host work placements over the last year but this is changing and thanks to Badur Foundation we will soon be taking on a new apprentice.

We have also found other ways to support people who need it in our local community this year, including:

Support for those suffering significant mental illness – supporting 42 people at a local psychiatric hospital to engage in healthy activity through supported bike rides.

Promoting wellbeing through guided walks – supporting over 500 people to get out of the house and into the fresh air and mix with people again.

Increasing mental wellbeing through a ‘men’s shed’ group – offering 72 people the chance to meet up and work on bikes together - sharing skills and meeting new people.

Fixing bikes for those who most need it – helping 15 people who need their bikes to get to work, and are on low pay, to keep their bikes on roadworthy and maintained.

Supporting everyone to afford a bike – through the sale of reasonably priced new and recycled bikes, as well as supporting 35 people with interest free finance to purchase a bike in three instalments.

We remained open to support the local community throughout the entire time of Covid restrictions providing accessibility in 2021/22 to our:

- Service & Repair centre [repaired 705 bikes]
- Recycled Bikes [recycled 245 bikes]
- Recycled Bikes [sold 172 bikes]
- New Bikes [sold 89 bikes]
- Maps and Cycling/Walking information and advice

As BSD's approach its 10th anniversary it is clear that the successes and longevity are not possible without Tracy Freeman, Rob Archer (Shop Manager) and all the other amazing staff members, volunteers, Board members, funders and other supporters who have helped during this time.

It is also clear that the coming 12 months will not be without challenges, including the loss of a key contract for the organisation, the cost of living crisis and ongoing supply chain issues in the cycling world.

Bike Stop Thanks

Staff

This year we said goodbye to Duncan as he retired after more than 9 years as our Head Mechanic. Duncan was here at the start and was instrumental in helping Tracy Freeman set up the shop and plan our first years of operation. We wish him well in his retirement in whatever he decides to do and wherever he may wander.

Financial review

a. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

b. Reserves policy

The Trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. It has established a policy that the Charity's unrestricted funds, not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets and that are cash-backed, should be adequate to cover foreseeable shortfalls in income for a sufficient period to enable the Trustees to take corrective action. At 31 March 2022, the Trustees have calculated this level to be £130,000 in light of the increased level of project expenditure planned in 2022/23. The management committee will continue to keep this policy, and the reserves level under review. At 31 March 2022 the actual level of free reserves is £80,000 (2021: £95,156).

c. Financial review

The Statement of Financial Activities on page 12 and the Balance Sheet on page 13 show a healthy financial position, the main features of which are:

Unrestricted reserves of £255,010 including the building, restricted reserves as at 31 March 2022 are nil.

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
First Stop Darlington**

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of First Stop Darlington ('the Company')
I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



L Harris
BSc (Hons), FCCA
Mitchell Gordon LLP
43 Coniscliffe Road
Darlington
Co. Durham
DL3 7EH

5 September 2022

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

**Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	31/3/22 Total funds £	31/3/21 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies		7,072	-	7,072	10,606
Charitable activities					
Big Lottery		-	-	-	99,993
Ballinger Trust		-	-	-	20,000
Amazon		2,279	-	2,279	-
Barratt Charity Foundation		1,000	-	1,000	-
County Durham Community Fund		-	-	-	2,865
Darlington Borough Council		-	-	-	10,000
Garfield Weston Foundation		-	-	-	25,000
The Henry Smith Charity		-	-	-	7,000
Homeless Link		-	-	-	21,505
Lloyds Bank Foundation		-	32,220	32,220	25,211
Joy Welch fund		5,000	-	5,000	-
TEWV Resilience fund		-	5,773	5,773	-
Watson Hope fund		-	6,666	6,666	-
Other trading activities	3	18,893	-	18,893	17,025
Investment income	4	124	-	124	379
Total		34,368	44,659	79,027	239,584
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds		135	-	135	80
Charitable activities					
Big Lottery		-	27,448	27,448	81,026
Ballinger Trust		-	20,000	20,000	-
Amazon		2,279	-	2,279	-
County Durham Community Fund		-	-	-	2,865
Garfield Weston Foundation		-	11,374	11,374	13,626
The Henry Smith Charity		-	-	-	6,898
Homeless Link		-	-	-	22,175
Lloyds Bank Foundation		-	37,959	37,959	25,211
General activities		32,953	-	32,953	17,108
Joy Welch fund		5,000	-	5,000	-
TEWV Resilience fund		-	5,773	5,773	-
Watson Hope fund		-	6,666	6,666	-
Total		40,367	109,220	149,587	168,989
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(5,999)	(64,561)	(70,560)	70,595
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		261,009	64,561	325,570	254,975

The notes form part of these financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	31/3/22 Total funds £	31/3/21 Total funds £
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>255,010</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>255,010</u>	<u>325,570</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

**Balance Sheet
31 March 2022**

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	31/3/22 Total funds £	31/3/21 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	9	166,916	-	166,916	165,852
Investments	10	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
		166,917	-	166,917	165,853
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	11	2,266	-	2,266	6,605
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>180,594</u>	<u>16,001</u>	<u>196,595</u>	<u>260,834</u>
		182,860	16,001	198,861	267,439
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	12	<u>(21,257)</u>	<u>(16,001)</u>	<u>(37,258)</u>	<u>(29,804)</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>161,603</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>161,603</u>	<u>237,635</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES					
		328,520	-	328,520	403,488
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due after more than one year	13	<u>(73,510)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(73,510)</u>	<u>(77,918)</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>255,010</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>255,010</u>	<u>325,570</u>
FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds	16			255,010	261,009
Restricted funds				<u>-</u>	<u>64,561</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>255,010</u>	<u>325,570</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

The notes form part of these financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Balance Sheet - continued

31 March 2022

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 5 September 2022 and were signed on its behalf by:

John Kilgou
.....
Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

1. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

Unrestricted Funds:

General - The free funds of the charity which are available for the general work of the charity at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted Funds:

These funds relate to grants and donations received for specific purposes as follows:

Lloyds Bank Foundation - A 3 year fund secured from April 2019 £84,561 divided across 3 years. The funding is to move First Stop and Bike Stop forward strategically to ensure we can provide further services and future proof the organisation for some time to come.

The Ballinger Charitable Trust - Originally a 3 year grant to support core work of the charity, providing practical financial support to enable the charity to further their work with vulnerable people experiencing poverty, disadvantage in opportunities and limited life chances. Year 3 was agreed with the funder to delay until April 2021 (£20,000).

The National Lottery Fund - Reaching Communities Fund - A 3 year grant to provide support and guidance to local people who have a range of issues and barriers that are preventing them from moving forward in their lives. Particularly supporting people to prevent evictions, reducing homelessness, reducing poverty, increasing and improving people's confidence, self-esteem and self-worth, reducing stress and anxiety brought on by their issues and improving peoples aspirations and life goals. Year 3 (£109,083) is secured until end Feb 2021, however, due to Covid lockdowns and reduced staff hours an underspend was created, the funder agreed to carry forward the service until the end of June 2021.

Garfield Weston - 1 year core funding to support the charity to support those who are homeless, at risk of homelessness and those who are marginalised in our community. (July 2020 - June 2021 £25,000).

Watson Hope Foundation - This is a new foundation that kindly donated £20,000 per year for 3 years (2021-2024) The grant is for core funding and given due to the work and dedication of the charity in supporting people out of their worst circumstances, with opportunities, a gain of confidence and self-belief.

Tees Esk & Wear Valley NHS Trust - 10 month funding to deliver some activities to support people experiencing anxiety and stress related to Covid-19 or worsened by Covid lockdowns. Working in community settings and our own centre to support people to gain understanding and control over what is happening to them and how to overcome and manage anxiety and panic attacks.

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) '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 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments which are included at market value.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Change in accounting policy

During the year the company has adopted a policy of deferring income when it can be matched against specific expenditure in future periods.

Excess surplus last year was a result of income recognised where related expenditure has been included this year.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Freehold property	- not provided
Plant and machinery	- 33% on cost
Fixtures and fittings	- 33% on cost and 20% on cost
Computer equipment	- 33% on cost

The property held is maintained regularly throughout the year and for this reason the trustees do not believe it is appropriate to depreciate the property.

Taxation

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

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

3. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Fundraising events	7,920	1,629
Management charges income	9,750	9,500
Covid job retention scheme	<u>1,223</u>	<u>5,896</u>
	<u>18,893</u>	<u>17,025</u>

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>124</u>	<u>379</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022**

5. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Depreciation - owned assets	<u>759</u>	<u>1,813</u>

6. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2021 - £nil).

Trustees' expenses

During the year, no Trustee expenses were incurred (2021 - £nil).

7. STAFF COSTS

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

	31/3/22	31/3/21
Charitable services	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

8. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	10,606	-	10,606
Charitable activities			
Big Lottery	-	99,993	99,993
Ballinger Trust	-	20,000	20,000
County Durham Community Fund	-	2,865	2,865
Darlington Borough Council	10,000	-	10,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	25,000	25,000
The Henry Smith Charity	-	7,000	7,000
Homeless Link	-	21,505	21,505
Lloyds Bank Foundation	-	25,211	25,211
Other trading activities	17,025	-	17,025
Investment income	<u>379</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>379</u>
Total	38,010	201,574	239,584
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	80	-	80
Charitable activities			
Big Lottery	-	81,026	81,026
County Durham Community Fund	-	2,865	2,865
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	13,626	13,626
The Henry Smith Charity	-	6,898	6,898
Homeless Link	-	22,175	22,175

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

8. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
Lloyds Bank Foundation	-	25,211	25,211
General activities	17,108	-	17,108
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	17,188	151,801	168,989
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
NET INCOME	20,822	49,773	70,595
Transfers between funds	<u>(568)</u>	<u>568</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds	20,254	50,341	70,595
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	240,755	14,220	254,975
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>261,009</u>	<u>64,561</u>	<u>325,570</u>

9. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Freehold property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST				
At 1 April 2021	165,000	9,235	12,740	186,975
Additions	<u>-</u>	<u>1,028</u>	<u>795</u>	<u>1,823</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>165,000</u>	<u>10,263</u>	<u>13,535</u>	<u>188,798</u>
DEPRECIATION				
At 1 April 2021	-	9,083	12,040	21,123
Charge for year	<u>-</u>	<u>191</u>	<u>568</u>	<u>759</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>-</u>	<u>9,274</u>	<u>12,608</u>	<u>21,882</u>
NET BOOK VALUE				
At 31 March 2022	<u>165,000</u>	<u>989</u>	<u>927</u>	<u>166,916</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>165,000</u>	<u>152</u>	<u>700</u>	<u>165,852</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

16. **MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued**

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/20 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31/3/21 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	240,755	20,822	(568)	261,009
Restricted funds				
Restricted	14,220	49,773	568	64,561
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>254,975</u>	<u>70,595</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>325,570</u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	38,010	(17,188)	20,822
Restricted funds			
Restricted	201,574	(151,801)	49,773
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>239,584</u>	<u>(168,989)</u>	<u>70,595</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1/4/20 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31/3/22 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	240,755	14,823	(568)	255,010
Restricted funds				
Restricted	14,220	(14,788)	568	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>254,975</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>255,010</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

16. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	72,378	(57,555)	14,823
Restricted funds			
Restricted	246,233	(261,021)	(14,788)
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>318,611</u>	<u>(318,576)</u>	<u>35</u>

17. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

Owing to the nature of the Charity's operations and the composition of the Board of Trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the Charity has an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length.

18. SUBSIDIARIES DISCLOSURES

Management charges of £9,750 was charged during the year (2021: £9,500).

An outstanding balance of £5,077 was written off during the year (2021: £nil) reducing the balance between the parent and subsidiary at the year end to £nil (2021: £5,077).

19. INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REMUNERATION

Fees payable to the Charity's independent examination of the Charity's annual accounts £1,200 (2021: £1,500).

20. DEFERRED INCOME

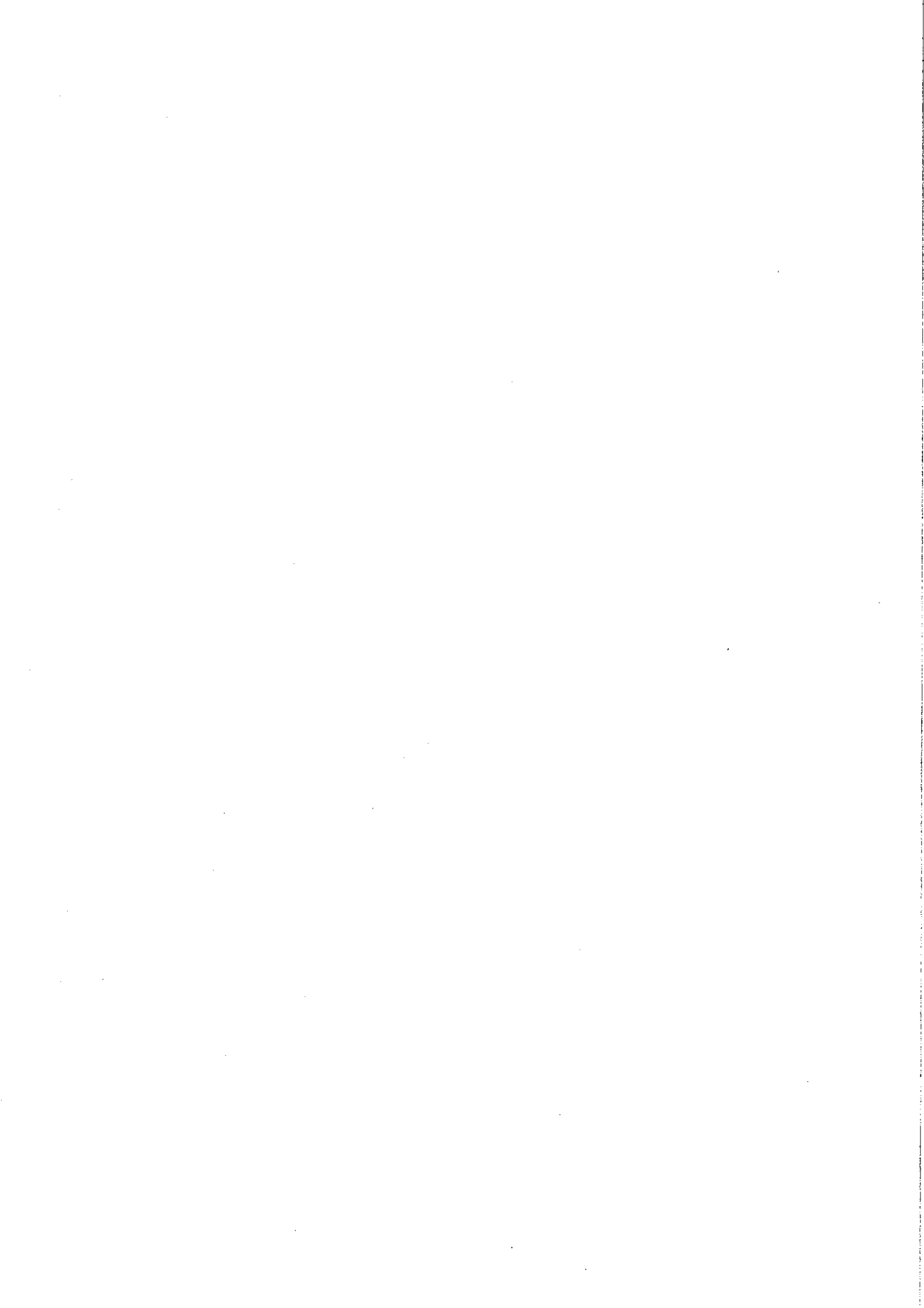
	At 1/4/21 £	Released £	Restricted £	At 31/3/22 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	13,620	(2,279)	-	11,341
Restricted funds				
Watson Hope Foundation	-	-	13,334	13,334
Tees Esk & Wear Valley NHS Trust	-	-	2,667	2,667
TOTAL DEFERRED INCOME	<u>13,620</u>	<u>(2,279)</u>	<u>16,001</u>	<u>27,342</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	31/3/22 £	31/3/21 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	7,072	10,606
Other trading activities		
Fundraising events	7,920	1,629
Management charges income	9,750	9,500
Covid job retention scheme	<u>1,223</u>	<u>5,896</u>
	18,893	17,025
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	124	379
Charitable activities		
Charitable activities	<u>52,938</u>	<u>211,574</u>
Total incoming resources	79,027	239,584
EXPENDITURE		
Raising donations and legacies		
Fundraising expenses	135	80
Charitable activities		
Wages	104,610	116,875
Social security	4,899	1,456
Pensions	2,305	2,398
Insurance	1,786	1,900
Light and heat	2,292	2,175
Advertising	486	185
Other fees	(511)	8,807
IT costs	7,611	8,994
Governance costs	278	1,706
Premises costs	4,443	5,939
Client Welfare	3,861	3,105
Administration costs	5,591	6,433
Other staff costs	722	1,648
Fixtures and fittings	191	102
Computer equipment	568	1,711
Mortgage	5,243	5,475
Intercompany debt w/off	<u>5,077</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>149,452</u>	<u>168,909</u>
Total resources expended	<u>149,587</u>	<u>168,989</u>
Net (expenditure)/income	<u>(70,560)</u>	<u>70,595</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements



FIRST STOP DARLINGTON

England & Wales - Charity number 1073822

Accounts

Registered number: 03647391
Charity number: 1073822

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

UNAUDITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Trustees	John Kilgour, Chair Maire Kennan, Vice Chair Chris Gill James Fenny Bernadette Chapman Alan Coultas Debra Irving Wendy Collins
Company registered number	03647391
Charity registered number	1073822
Registered office	32 Houndgate Darlington Co Durham DL1 5RH
Company secretary	Vacancy
Accountants	Clive Owen LLP Independent Examiner 140 Coniscliffe Road Darlington Co Durham DL3 7RT
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank plc 4 Brindley Place Birmingham B1 2JB
Solicitors	Close Thornton 2 Duke Street Darlington Co Durham DL3 7AB

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements of the Charity for the 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The Trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Since the Charity qualifies as small under section 382 of the Companies Act 2006, the Strategic Report required of medium and large companies under the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013 has been omitted.

Objectives and activities

a. Who are we?

First Stop Darlington (FSD) is a charity in Darlington, which was set up to help people who are at risk of becoming homeless, and is an open door organisation which supports anyone who is vulnerable through poverty, or struggling with mental health and other issues that impede their access to benefits and other support systems.

Nobody is turned away; it is literally a person's first stop to getting help in a time of crisis.

The charity was founded in 1999 to support people 'in need and distress within Darlington'. Unfortunately, that need is still there, and since the onset of the Covid19 pandemic in February of this year, the expectation is that there will be greater need than ever as we move through to the next year. 2020 marks 21 years of FSD's work in Darlington.

FSD is situated in Houndgate, in Darlington's Town Centre, where we operate a drop-in centre on the ground floor and have offices and a training room/meeting room on the first floor. There are shower and laundry facilities and a kitchen for the use of clients. We offer an advocacy service and the use of phones and laptops so that clients can access benefits and other services.

Since we began in July 1999, we have worked with over **9,338** vulnerable people to help them work on their issue and move forwards towards an independent life. We have provided a range of support services to over 11,500 people over the years, through various outreach events.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Objectives and activities (continued)

b. Our aims and how we work

First Stop Darlington is based in the town centre of Darlington and houses a range of practical, free facilities and activities designed to help people navigate the benefit system and if applicable, become ready for employment, with the aim of enabling people to access secure housing.

The aims of the organisation are:

- To ensure that confidential, impartial information, advice and support is provided in ways that empower local people to make informed decisions about their life choices and in a way that is sensitive to their needs.
- To support local people to help themselves move forward out of a life's difficulties and onwards towards independence.
- To promote positive mental health among service users, including Mindset and Mindfulness work.
- To provide diversionary activities around prevention of poor mental health, offending, addiction behaviours and to promote a healthy sense of well-being.
- To work in partnership with other likeminded organisations to deliver wrap around services.
- To highlight the problem of poverty and its associated issues.
- To provide accurate statistical information on poverty issues to inform service planning and delivery.
- To assist the Borough in reducing the numbers of rough sleepers in Darlington and the surrounding areas and to assist people who are inappropriately housed.

The Centre is normally open to the public every weekday to provide impartial confidential information, advice, guidance, support, and onward referral to our clients but in March 2020, the Covid19 pandemic caused a radical change to working practices and the provision of services we were able to provide. Due to lock-down, the Centre closed its doors in the third week of March, and staff continued to work from home, delivering support via a free helpline and online service. The centre opened again on 1st June 2020.

There are four Project Support Staff, 1 Administrative officer and the CEO. The CEO works directly with clients during holidays and staff illness, ensuring there is full cover for our services.

Covid-19 Challenges & Changes

We learnt a lot in changing our service to an appointment only service, which went against our normal approach of an open access provision with up to 12 people in the service at any one time. We and over 88% of those clients who needed our help found that using an appointment basis was far more productive and helpful. We acknowledged that we were able to carry out deeper and wider topics to fruition than those we tackled at the same time as having an open door policy. We were also pleased and surprised at how well so many of our complex clients managed the transition and attend their appointments etc. Though we acknowledge that some of our most complex clients could not cope with any Covid guidelines and wanted full access as previously had, this we were not able to do but each person was offered an appointment on the same day they presented.

Those that really needed it returned, those that were not ready to work on their issues, continued to present ad hoc with the same requests. We gave out what we had but were not able to assist unless they were ready to attend an appointment and let us help them to work on some of their difficulties in the time we could allocate as our building is small and only allowed for 2 clients inside at any one time in compliance with Covid guidance. We have helped as many as we could, often with people being helped outside the building while 2 clients were already inside. We have worked closely with the Housing Solutions team and found many people the additional housing support they needed and have made significant inroads with the DWP in resolving benefit issues. Those who are too chaotic and complex for a structured approach have been listened to and guided to the best of our ability to the limited resources that were available during lockdowns and beyond.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Objectives and activities (continued)

What Did We Learn?

In the previous financial year, using our regular delivery model of an open-door access service and no pandemic, we supported 590 clients with 1,859 issues (average 3.15 issues per person) resolved in total. This year, under full Covid-19 Guidelines and 3 full lockdown periods where people needed to stay home unless it was an essential requirement, we supported 251 people and resolved 1,474 issues (average 5.87 issues per person). This is a significant rise in completed and resolved issues per person, which we feel is fully down to the change in delivery model to appointment only. The limitations of only being able to work with 2 people at a time within the building limited the number of people we saw, alongside a reduction in people being allowed out of their homes but the rise in issues resolved per person evidences the need to change our delivery model for the future.

When Covid-19 outbreaks are contained/reduced and our country is allowed to return to normal or near normal interactions and we have a full complement of staff again, we will seek further funding to enhance our provision and increase to the following:

- Pre-booked appointments between 9.30am – 12.30pm – (6 appointments per day)
- Daily accessed appointments between 1.30pm – 4.30pm – (6 appointments per day)
- Coffee and 'catch up' sessions 2 x afternoon per week for those who are not yet ready to work through their issues. (6 people per session)
- Outreach sessions for appointments in the community x 3 sessions per week. (9 appointments)
- Mindful sessions 1-2 times per week (4 people per session)

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Objectives and activities (continued)

c. Who do we help?

We have an instant Access policy and offer appointments with support staff on the same day of presentation or within 24 hours, should they present at time of closure. This is a crucial part of the relationship that we build with people, if they are brave enough to reach out for help, then we must be attentive enough to begin helping as fast as we can.

We support vulnerable people and families who are experiencing severe poverty. Issues such as housing or benefit problems initially presented by clients but they may often hide other issues such as debt, hunger, poor hygiene, anxiety & stress and often relationship troubles. Our support workers use various tools in their work, such as Trauma Informed Care approach and Mindfulness and are skilled in taking a holistic approach with clients to help them feel at ease and gain the confidence needed to discuss difficult issues.

Our clients are often

- o cash poor;
- o experiencing anxiety, stress and other related mental health issues;
- o under threat of eviction due to arrears or no accommodation of their own;
- o sofa surfing and/or swapping between houses throughout each week and have no permanent address;
- o have poor prospects of obtaining paid employment;
- o unable to escape out of poor living conditions without financial and legal support.

Our clients are likely to have experienced at least 3 of the following:

Homeless or at risk of homelessness; low income and/or zero hour contracts; fuel poverty; hunger; socially excluded; poverty; debt; unemployment; mental ill health; mental illness; drug and/or alcohol addiction; gambling; offending behaviour; young offenders; anti-social behaviour; teen parents; leaving care young adults; eviction from family home; eviction from accommodation; domestic abuse victims; domestic violence perpetrators; relationship breakdown; self-harm; violent behaviour; sex offenders; child abuse; sexual abuse; survival sex; bereavement; removal of child/children from family home; coping with removal of baby/babies at birth or from the family home.

Covid has had a huge impact on everyone and most certainly on those with the lowest incomes and people who already live with poor mental health, anxieties and stresses. Living through a pandemic has had varying effects on everyone; those who were already struggling in life are significantly affected mentally, financially, emotionally and physically. We have worked through the pandemic, after an initial 6 week lockdown, where we quickly learnt that our clients were not using the Freephone numbers and needed us to be present to get the help they needed. We assessed the risk and opened our project on a one-to-one appointment basis only, ensuring we kept rigid Covid hygiene and other face, space and hands rules into every action of the team and our clients.

This helped us to offer a close replication of our normal services, certainly from an emotional support approach and enabled us to work with 251 people safely over the remainder of the financial year.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Objectives and activities (continued)

d. Outputs

In 2020 – 2021 through the pandemic year:

- In 2020-21, 251 clients asked for our help during the pandemic. 73% of our clients identified as male, 36% as female and 1% as bi-gender.
- 126 people came to us seeking help with benefit issues.
- 103 people needed help to resolve housing issues.
- 72 people had health issues that were impacting their ability to move on 75% of which were Mental Health related.
- 55 people came to us for pre-employment support.

Biggest age group is that of working age people – 97% of our clients and only 5% of whom were working when they registered with us. A further 6% found employment through us during the pandemic.

13% of our clients that visited over the pandemic were 25 and under.

2% that visited were over 65 years. The remaining 85% were all between 26 and 64 years old.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Achievements and performance

a. Outcomes

As a result of the direct support that our clients received from the team 1,474 issues were resolved and our clients have achieved many things, especially in their improvement of stress and anxiety and in their ability to demonstrate increased resilience and earlier detection of when things need to be addressed. Some of their outcomes are below:

- Avoid or set up plans to clear debt
- Secure a home
- Gain greater understanding and skills towards improving their future life options
- Significantly increase their self-confidence and self-worth.
- Become employment ready
- Access housing, council tax and other appropriate benefits relating to their situation.
- Increased their understanding and ability to manage their contract with the Benefit Agency
- Learned new techniques to lessen the impact that anxiety and stress causes in their lives.

Specific support provided by the team has included:

- Support to reduce their anxiety and stress responses to difficult situations and life events.
- Mindfulness tools to use in everyday life that manages anxiety/stress and to improve wellbeing.
- Help with money problems and help to set up initial payment plans. Referral to CAB or Credit Union for specialist support where needed.
- Help to access crisis payments and also Social Fund payments from CAB
- Support to appeal against decisions regarding their right to sickness benefits
- Support to access the benefit system for new applications
- Support to keep benefits in place regarding accessing their journal and carrying out tasks set by DWP
- Help to source ID for job applications and housing applications.
- Help to find accommodation with no funds for a bond.
- Worked closely with the Housing Department of the Local Authority to assist in placements of vulnerable people.
- Support to understand the job market and how to engage in meaningful job searching
- Support to write relevant C.V.'s
- Support for initial engagement with Employment agencies
- Secure employment for those closer to the jobs market

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Achievements and performance (continued)

b. Case Study:

June 2020

Client is a 58-year-old single male, homeowner with a mortgage, who lost his current job due to Covid-19 situation, although he has been told he may be taken on again if things pick up.

The gentleman was referred by Job Centre who were not open and at the end of March 2021, are still not allowing access to the public.

First we supported him to re activate his universal credit claim as he has no access to computers or the internet at home.

We then supported him to update and tidy up his last C.V. and upload to a few job sites including Amazon who are currently a big new employer in the town.

Over the next month or so, we supported client to complete Amazon application and as his application progressed to upload documents, and attend Amazon 'Chime' interviews.

Once we had built up a relationship client opened up about his Mam passing away from cancer 5 weeks previously and that his Dad was in ill health. We supported him to get in touch with solicitors, as he needed to try to help Dad sort his finances and affairs.

By the middle of August, he had passed all Amazon and DBS checks and was just awaiting a start and induction date.

Sadly, on 3rd September client informed us that his father had also sadly passed away. However, client was determined to continue with his Amazon application. We very much took this at client's pace and would allow him to talk about parents if he wanted or to just be focused on Amazon and any tasks he needed to complete.

On 8th September we opened project early at 8.00am, so the client could complete his 3 hour 'Chime' induction with Amazon and was signed up for his first shift the following Thursday.

He passed his probationary period and is still working with Amazon today.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Achievements and performance (continued)

c. How many people have we been able to support?

Benefits and Debt

126 clients needed support in sorting out 404 issues with the benefit system and monetary worries, 80 people improved their financial situation, 99 gained a greater understanding of their claim and the benefit system, 66 of whom were able to manage their claim without further assistance.

Housing

103 people needed support with 254 housing issues. Of the people who sought help, 49 reduced their sofa surfing or rough sleeping and were supported in partnership with the Housing department to gain accommodation. There was Government protection from eviction during the pandemic, which has meant that very little prevention work was required, (33 people) unfortunately that protection has now ended and we are beginning to see a rise in evictions. 16 private rented clients gained a greater understanding of their tenancy and expected behaviours.

Mental Health Outcomes

72 people were supported with their mental health problems, living in poverty and homelessness are 2 key triggers for people to experience poor mental health. 54 people were supported to reduce their stress and anxiety; this was done through a range of tools and one to one support and encouragement to attend. 18 people felt their mental health condition was improving too, with the added bonus of 22 of the 72 reporting an improvement in their addiction management and their physical condition through our support to access specialist appointments.

Pre-Employment

In the last year, 55 clients were supported to improve their employment opportunities. 28 of them reporting an improvement in their motivation. During the pandemic, it was difficult for those furthest from the job market to move closer due to so many services being locked down and only working online, it was extremely hard for those who needed assistance to learn how to use IT equipment and search online. However, we were able to support people on a one-to-one basis, though minimal in comparison to our usual numbers, we still were able to support 40 people to improve their employment skills through increased IT and communication abilities. We helped set up 10 interviews with 7 people gaining employment.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Achievements and performance (continued)

d. Who do we work alongside?

It is important to acknowledge the work that is undertaken in Darlington by a range of charities who all help to support our work with vulnerable people and provide fantastic services themselves. First Stop works well in partnership, and has links with the following agencies:

- Bike Stop
- Citizens Advice
- TV&D YMCA
- Human Kind
- Sunday Stop
- We Are With You
- Morrison Trust
- DBC Housing Department
- DWP
- Darlington Mind
- Grange Road Baptist Church
- Food Banks
- 700 Club
- Darlington Credit Union
- Foundations
- Darlington Refuge
- Kings Church
- Groundwork

Partnership Working Developments

Towards the end of the year we have spent time working closely with some of our likeminded charitable and voluntary sector organisations who are keen to support our families and individuals who are experiencing severe poverty and are currently furthest from the jobs market. This has led to the beginnings of a new partnership to deliver wraparound service to those who need the support and specialism of a few different agencies to give them the best chance for change and increase in their income for them and their family.

We are currently sourcing some pilot funding to work in partnership with:

Morrison Trust, Tees Valley & Darlington YMCA, Darlington Credit Union, Bike Stop Darlington, Firthmoor Community Centre and Redhall Community Centre.

A Memorandum of Understanding with partners, joint policies and a good delivery model are all part of our workload as we step into the new financial year and beyond.

Outreach in the Community

The pandemic meant that we were no longer able to deliver our services in the community centres within our most deprived wards, this was Government guidance and legalities put in place during the Pandemic.

We are anxious to get back into our communities as soon as is viable. In the meantime, we offered a free phone advice line, offered appointments in our town centre meeting space and over Zoom for anyone with existing equipment and internet access.

We have also continued dialogue with the community centres wherever possible, passing information, sharing resources etc. to support as many of them as we can.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Achievements and performance (continued)

e. How do we assess outcomes and impacts?

We use regular monitoring of individual cases and interact with our clients about how successful their outcomes have been. Outreach clinics are monitored in how many clients take up our services if their first contact is made after a formal contact at an outreach clinic, but again a lot of the contact is, by nature, informal for some time until the individual is ready to trust and feel comfortable.

The Board continues to investigate ways of assessing the effectiveness of our methods of delivery and cooperate with the CEO in exploring ways of developing the services offered. All our grant work is collated through our Inform Database and is reported to each funder on the successes and the difficulties that people face in their lives.

Case studies illustrate how complicated the measure of success can be when considering the multiplicity of problems with which our clients present. Clients are required to provide support workers with feedback, at the level at which they feel comfortable and this can be used as an indicator of how the client feels about the support he or she has been offered.

Due to the changes in our delivery model we have had longer interaction with individuals without interruptions. As the numbers of clients has been lower, this has allowed for greater time to reflect on what has worked and what they felt could be better. This has been a welcome addition to our appointments and has helped build the individuals' engagement and interest in the charity and what other services we provide.

We also value the feedback we receive from our funders, analysis of which helps us improve our offers of support, improve our bid writing skills and ensure we are giving our funders what they need to develop their interaction with the charity and the support they provide.

Staffing Support and Appraisal

Staff are offered regular support and an open-door policy by the CEO; they have opportunities to talk about their work and progress both formally and informally and to also have input and ideas into the running of our services and how they develop. FSD is fortunate to have had minimal staffing restructures for downsizing purposes and we are blessed with a staff team who have been a crucial part of our charity for some years. We do enjoy the energy that new people bring and have welcomed another team member this year to train in the role of Project Support Worker. We have all benefited from having a younger member in our team. At the end of this financial year the Trustees identified a need to research and adopt a salary pay scale. This is to support the further development of staff as they increase their skills and involvement in leading and supervising new areas of work.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Achievements and performance (continued)

f. Bike Stop Darlington

The Social Enterprise owned by First Stop Darlington celebrated its 8th year of trading and has grown since opening its doors in November 2012. The enterprise provides training and work experience to people who need some additional support to improve their opportunities to gain employment. We have supported people from a wide range of backgrounds and with varying degrees of vulnerabilities and have gained extensively through meeting and working alongside so many different people of all ages from 14 upwards.

This work requires funding, both grants and income, we gain income by recycling donated bicycles, which are sold at reasonable prices to low income households. They also upcycle and restore vintage and high-end bicycles for sale at higher prices to support the work of the organisation, this now includes a range of new bicycles, including e-bikes. The recycling and upcycling provides products for our trainees and work placements to work upon, learning the skills of bicycle mechanics, which in turn supports the income of the enterprise.

Due to demand by customers, we sell new bicycles too and have added electric bicycles to our product range. We have a range of options for people to purchase from us including a traditional saving scheme, this helps support those who prefer or need to pay for their purchase over a number of weeks all at 0% and at a level of saving that is up to the individual's budget. We supported in the region of 20 families through this scheme enabling them to gain access to cycling for their families without which this may have been out of their reach.

During Covid restrictions we were unable to carry through some of the successes that we have enjoyed in previous years, such as work placements and training due to the small size of our venue and the guidelines on safe distancing etc., however we have achieved so many other successes for Bike Stop to be proud of: We remained open to support the local community throughout the entire time of Covid restrictions providing accessibility to our:

Service & Repair centre [repaired 840 bikes]
Recycled Bikes [recycled 155 bikes]
Recycled Bikes [sold 131 bikes]
New Bikes [sold 96 bikes]
Maps and Cycling/Walking information and advice

And.....

NHS/Key Worker Free Bike Loans, we provided our fleet of loan bikes x 17 and received grant monies to provide a further number of bikes/helmets/locks x 20 bikes. We were able to loan out 37 bikes over a period of Apr-Sep enabling NHS and Care Key Workers to both commute and use for leisure. The feedback received was fantastic, the majority have been new to cycling and a number went onto continue cycling after they had returned the bikes.

Increased level of women entering the cycle market, the numbers of women riders in proportion to men increased noticeably. 2019-2020 saw for every 10 adult bikes sold it was 9 : 1 in favour of men to women. Whereas during 2020-2021 the proportion of men's to women reduced to 2 : 1

Reeves Commercial sponsored a young individual [19yrs] to complete his Business Administration apprenticeship qualification with Bike Stop. David came to us as a quiet, polite young man and lacking in confidence. However, over the 18mth apprenticeship he has improved his vocational skills, attained good operational skills and demonstrated initiative, enthusiasm and drive to achieve. He successfully completed the programme and became a real asset in the business.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Achievements and performance (continued)

Supported our volunteer cohort during this difficult year, 3 x mental health issues, and 8 x retired volunteers whilst in the working environment. Also maintained contact when they were restricted from attending the business, as there were a number living in isolation. It was so pleasing as restrictions began to relax that every volunteer returned and could visibly see their self-fulfilment arriving back to the environment they feel part of.

Supported two individuals to complete their 3-month placement working towards potential employment. They came to us a long-term unemployed in need of structure, self-confidence, vocational skills, work ethics and an ability to work in a team. They demonstrated at the end of their placement an ability to work independently, and as part of a team, developing good vocational and transferrable skills. Enhanced the content of their CV's.

Supported NQA Foodbank by donating 20 child's bikes as Christmas presents to families who were struggling during this period of Covid.

Supported commuters who needed to keep their bikes on the road by providing priority services to those who needed their bikes for work.

Bike Stop Thanks

Dave a valued mechanic with Bike Stop came to us over 6yrs ago as a client in need of support, worked his way through to a volunteer, then being employed as a P/Time mechanic and achieving the Cytech L2 qualification. Ultimately, Dave became a highly knowledgeable mechanic, respected by the team and customers alike. More importantly, Dave had a natural ability to support and teach others who came through our doors in need of support. We are extremely proud of Dave as he has now moved onto a busy high turnover quality competitor local to him and has grown yet again in stature. Surely a great example of achieving and driving a life-changing pathway.

g. Thanks

Staff

The trustees of First Stop wish to pay tribute to the dedication and hard work of all members of staff and volunteers, who chose to work during the pandemic and lockdown restrictions to ensure those who needed our services could still find the help they needed. They did this with dedication, professionalism, compassion and their wonderful sense of humour, putting everyone at ease as they worked.

During the year we said goodbye to Sue Archer who has been with us for over 10years and provided a wealth of support and care for those who needed help and provided a successful range of Job Club services for those entering the world of job searching for the first time. We wish her well in her new adventures.

Happy news arrived in Elisha's announcement of the birth of her beautiful new baby Cena, we wish them well and much rest and recuperation during her Maternity Leave and look forward to her return in October 2021.

A big welcome to Liam Hamilton who joined us in the middle of a pandemic and brilliantly just jumped in and got on with everything, he is a great addition to our team and we are excited to see what advances or enhancement he brings when we are finally able to spread our wings and leave Covid restrictions behind.

Funder Gratitude

At First Stop we are always eternally thankful to every one of our funders and donators both individuals and Trusteeships, Foundations and others. This year we are paying additional thanks to the Joy Welch Educational Charitable Trust who have supported us annually for many, many years. This wonderful Trust has made the decision to close and have distributed the last of their funding to the many that they have supported and shared ups and downs with over the decades. We are proud that we were one of them and we thank you and salute you for all your hard work, dedication and commitment to making so many people's lives so much richer and fuller through your unwavering support.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Financial review

a. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

b. Reserves policy

The Trustees have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. It has established a policy that the Charity's unrestricted funds, not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets and that are cash-backed, should be adequate to cover foreseeable shortfalls in income for a sufficient period to enable the Trustees to take corrective action. At 31 March 2021, the Trustees have calculated this level to be £130,000. The Trustees are confident that this level of reserves is prudent in the light of pressures on income sources. The management committee will continue to keep this policy, and the reserves level under review. At 31 March 2021 the actual level of free reserves is £95,156 (2020: £73,244).

c. Financial review

The Statement of Financial Activities on page 18 and the Balance Sheet on page 19 show a healthy financial position, the main features of which are:

An in year surplus on unrestricted funds of £20,822, which has increased our unrestricted reserves to £261,009, restricted reserves as at 31 March 2021 are £64,561.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Structure, governance and management

a. How are we constituted?

First Stop Darlington is a company limited by guarantee, No 3647391, governed by its Articles and Memorandum of Association. It is registered charity No 1073822 with a core membership of 12 people.

The directors of FSD are the Board of Trustees and are elected by the membership. In 2020-21, the board had 8 members serving on the Board, none of whom are related to each other.

The Board has appointed a Chair and Vice Chair, who are listed at the beginning of this report. The Articles of Association require that one third of the directors/ trustees retire each year by rotation; retiring trustees are eligible for re-election.

Currently we do not have a treasurer; instead the trustees all undergo training in the field of financial management of charities and are jointly carrying out the responsibilities of treasurer. We continue to seek to fulfil this post in the long-term.

The role of the trustees is to further the objectives of FSD through taking part in formulating and regularly reviewing strategic aims, ensuring that policy and practice are in keeping with its aims and that FSD functions within the legal and financial requirements of a charitable company and strives to achieve best practice.

There were 5 Board meetings during the year all held virtually to ensure the trustees upheld all Covid-19 Guidance. During the year, they continued to work on FSD's future strategy and explore ways of communicating and raising the profile of FSD including exploring ways of recruiting new volunteers to support the charity at board level and to develop marketing and fund raising.

The board regularly considered the Risk Register, which identifies risk factors and their impact on the charity. Measuring risk factors and identifying actions to mitigate those risks informs the development of the board's strategy. The charity's strategy, considered in detail at the annual review, is regularly monitored, and procedures were put in place to ensure that the charity acts effectively to deal with external and internal risk factors.

Trustees act in a voluntary capacity and did not receive any remuneration or reimbursement of expenses. The Trustees have considerable interaction with the paid team and take a keen interest in the workings of the charity to help their understanding of the needs of the beneficiaries.

FSD employs a CEO whose responsibility is the general management of all FSD projects, management of staff and volunteers, building management and leading the team in procuring funding. The CEO attends Board meetings and reports to The Board on finance and operational matters.

The CEO is Tracy Freeman and there are 5 other members of staff.

Grant giving funding bodies are our main source of income, supplemented by fund raising efforts by Friends of FSD, and personal donations. This year the main fundraising events planned for 2020 all had to be postponed because of Covid19, and our fundraising efforts have been adversely affected.

Our thanks go to The National Lottery Fund, Garfield Weston Trust, Lloyds Bank Foundation, Henry Smith Trust, Homeless Link, County Durham Community Foundation, Amazon, Harrison Foundation and the Ballinger Trust whose grants over the year have made the work of FSD possible. We are also grateful to have been eligible for some of the Government Covid Grant Schemes, such as Furlough and Rent/Rates Grant.

Friends of First Stop, which is a group of supporters and trustees, who, in their own time, work to raise funds for FSD have not met during the Covid Lockdown and have not been able to raise any funds towards costs this year.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

Structure, governance and management (continued)

FSD has a Social Enterprise, Bike Stop Darlington (BSD), set up in 2012 providing training, volunteering opportunities and work experience for the clients of FSD and other vulnerable people within the borough of Darlington, especially those furthest from the job market. BSD is managed by its own board, and produces its own accounts. These are available on request.

b. Risk Management

In 2018, First Stop Darlington undertook a full review of our operational risk strategy and our risk register will continue to be reviewed by the full Management Committee on a regular basis, an example of which is the commitment of all the Trustees to undergo training on Financial Management.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

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

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial . Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity 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 Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees on 14 September 2021 and signed on their behalf by:



John Kilgour
Chair

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of First Stop Darlington ('the Charity')

I report to the charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and Basis of Report

As the Trustees of the Charity (and its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent Examiner's Statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Dated: 14 September 2021

AW Lockett Bcom BFP FCA DChA

Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
Clive Owen LLP
140 Coniscliffe Road
DARLINGTON
Co Durham
DL3 7RT

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	Total funds 2020 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	4	10,606	-	10,606	8,558
Charitable activities	5	10,000	201,574	211,574	174,359
Other trading activities	6	1,629	-	1,629	9,809
Investments	7	379	-	379	223
Other income	8	15,396	-	15,396	-
Total income		38,010	201,574	239,584	192,949
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		80	-	80	857
Charitable activities		17,108	151,801	168,909	182,235
Total expenditure		17,188	151,801	168,989	183,092
Net income					
Transfers between funds	19	20,822 (568)	49,773 568	70,595 -	9,857 -
Net movement in funds		20,254	50,341	70,595	9,857
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		240,755	14,220	254,975	245,118
Net movement in funds		20,254	50,341	70,595	9,857
Total funds carried forward		261,009	64,561	325,570	254,975

The notes on pages 21 to 36 form part of these financial statements.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 03647391

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	13	165,852	167,510
Investments	14	1	1
		<u>165,853</u>	<u>167,511</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	15	6,605	17,534
Cash at bank and in hand		260,834	218,097
		<u>267,439</u>	<u>235,631</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	(29,804)	(66,094)
Net current assets		<u>237,635</u>	<u>169,537</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>403,488</u>	<u>337,048</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	17	(77,918)	(82,073)
Net assets excluding pension asset		<u>325,570</u>	<u>254,975</u>
Total net assets		<u><u>325,570</u></u>	<u><u>254,975</u></u>
Charity funds			
Restricted funds	19	64,561	14,220
Unrestricted funds	19	261,009	240,755
Total funds		<u><u>325,570</u></u>	<u><u>254,975</u></u>

The Charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 03647391

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 14 September 2021 and signed on their behalf by:


John Kilgour
Chair

The notes on pages 21 to 36 form part of these financial statements.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

1. General information

First Stop Darlington is company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales. The members of the company are the Trustees named on page 1. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £10 per member of the Charity. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 1 of these financial statements. The nature of the charity's operations and activities are to provide impartial, confidential information, advice, guidance, support and onward referral to those who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless or those who are socially excluded.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - 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 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

First Stop Darlington meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include certain items at fair value. The trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £.

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

2.2 Income

All income is recognised once the Charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably. Any general purpose grants whose use is restricted by the grantor to some future accounting period are accounted for as deferred income until the restriction has been satisfied. Donations are allocated to the relevant funds on donors instructions and recorded in the accounts on an accruals basis. Gifts of services, such as rent reductions, are valued at the cost saving to the charity.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.3 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the Charity to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the Charity's objectives, as well as any associated support costs.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

2.4 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

2.5 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £500 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition should be included in the measurement of cost.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method. The building has been depreciated to an amount which the trustees believe to be the current value of the building and is reviewed annually. Land is not depreciated.

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Office equipment	- 33% - 50% straight line
Other fixed assets	- 33% - 50% straight line

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.6 Investments

Fixed asset investments are a form of financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction cost and subsequently measured at fair value at the Balance Sheet date, unless the value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment. Investment gains and losses, whether realised or unrealised, are combined and presented as 'Gains/(Losses) on investments' in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Investments in subsidiaries are valued at cost less provision for impairment.

2.7 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

2.8 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

2.9 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the Charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts, discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities as a finance cost.

2.10 Financial instruments

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

2.11 Pensions

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme and the pension charge represents the amounts payable by the Charity to the fund in respect of the year.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.12 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

3. Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions:

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

Critical areas of judgement:

Depreciation - Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset. An estimate of the useful economic life of assets is detailed in the depreciation accounting policy.

4. Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	<i>Total funds 2020 £</i>
Donations	10,606	10,606	8,558
<i>Total 2020</i>	8,558	8,558	

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

5. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	Total funds 2020 £
Ballinger Trust	-	20,000	20,000	20,000
Big Lottery	-	99,993	99,993	105,229
The Henry Smith Charity	-	7,000	7,000	21,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	25,000	25,000	-
Lloyds Bank Foundation	-	25,211	25,211	27,130
County Durham Community Fund	-	2,865	2,865	-
Homeless Link	-	21,505	21,505	-
Darlington Borough Council	10,000	-	10,000	-
Joy Welch Trust Fund	-	-	-	1,000
Total 2021	10,000	201,574	211,574	174,359
<i>Total 2020</i>	<i>1,000</i>	<i>173,359</i>	<i>174,359</i>	

6. Income from other trading activities

Income from fundraising events

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	Total funds 2020 £
Fundraising events	1,629	1,629	9,809
<i>Total 2020</i>	<i>9,809</i>	<i>9,809</i>	

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

7. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	<i>Total funds 2020 £</i>
Investment income	379	379	223
<i>Total 2020</i>	223	223	

8. Other incoming resources

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	<i>Total funds 2020 £</i>
Management fees	9,500	9,500	-
Covid job retention scheme	5,896	5,896	-
	15,396	15,396	-

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £	<i>Total funds 2020 £</i>
Charitable activities costs	168,909	168,909	182,235
<i>Total 2020</i>	182,235	182,235	

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

9. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2021 £	<i>Total funds 2020 £</i>
Staff costs	120,728	129,107
Depreciation	1,813	1,864
Other staff costs	1,648	4,048
Other fees	8,807	3,983
Insurances	1,900	1,532
Premises costs	8,114	7,872
Administration	6,433	6,523
IT Support	8,995	7,867
Advertising & publications	185	130
Client training and activities	-	2,400
Client Support	3,105	9,379
Loan interest	5,475	5,734
Governance costs	1,706	1,796
	<u>168,909</u>	<u>182,235</u>

Direct costs were £168,909 (2020: £182,235) of which £17,108 (2020: £8,473) was unrestricted and £151,801 (2020: £173,762) was restricted.

10. Independent examiner's remuneration

	2021 £	<i>2020 £</i>
Fees payable to the Charity's independent examiner for the independent examination of the Charity's annual accounts	<u>1,500</u>	<u>1,500</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

11. Staff costs

	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	116,874	117,437
Social security costs	1,456	9,284
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	2,398	2,386
	120,728	129,107

The average number of persons employed by the Charity during the year was as follows:

	2021 No.	2020 No.
Provision of charitable services	6	6

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

12. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2020 - £NIL).

During the year ended 31 March 2021, no Trustee expenses have been incurred (2020 - £NIL).

13. Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold property £	Office equipment £	Other fixed assets £	Total £
Cost or valuation				
At 1 April 2020	165,000	12,585	9,235	186,820
Additions	-	155	-	155
At 31 March 2021	165,000	12,740	9,235	186,975
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2020	-	10,329	8,981	19,310
Charge for the year	-	1,711	102	1,813
At 31 March 2021	-	12,040	9,083	21,123

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

13. Tangible fixed assets (continued)

	Freehold property £	Office equipment £	Other fixed assets £	Total £
Net book value				
At 31 March 2021	<u>165,000</u>	<u>700</u>	<u>152</u>	<u>165,852</u>
At 31 March 2020	<u>165,000</u>	<u>2,256</u>	<u>254</u>	<u>167,510</u>

Included in freehold property is land of £10,000 (2020 - £10,000) which is not depreciated.

Freehold property was revalued by the trustees with the support of a professional valuation.

The Charity has adopted a policy of revaluation for tangible fixed assets. Had these assets been measured at historic cost, the carrying values would have been as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Freehold property	<u>189,328</u>	<u>189,328</u>

14. Fixed asset investments

	Investments in subsidiary companies £
Cost or valuation	
At 1 April 2020	1
At 31 March 2021	<u>1</u>
Net book value	
At 31 March 2021	1
At 31 March 2020	<u>1</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

14. Fixed asset investments (continued)

Principal subsidiaries

The following was a subsidiary undertaking of the Charity:

Name	Holding
Bike Stop Darlington Limited	100%

The financial results of the subsidiary for the year were:

Name	Aggregate of share capital and reserves £	Profit/(Loss) for the period £
Bike Stop Darlington Limited	19,445	18,452

15. Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Due within one year		
Amounts owed by group undertakings	5,109	13,993
Other debtors	952	280
Prepayments and accrued income	544	3,261
	<u>6,605</u>	<u>17,534</u>

16. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Bank loans	4,149	3,889
Trade creditors	566	849
Other creditors	4,967	5,710
Accruals and deferred income	20,122	55,646
	<u>29,804</u>	<u>66,094</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

16. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year (continued)

	2021	<i>2020</i>
	£	£
	2021	<i>2020</i>
	£	£
Deferred income at 1 April 2020	53,072	<i>45,979</i>
Resources deferred during the year	13,620	<i>53,072</i>
Amounts released from previous periods	(53,072)	<i>(45,979)</i>
	13,620	<i>53,072</i>
	13,620	<i>53,072</i>

17. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year

	2021	<i>2020</i>
	£	£
Bank loans	77,918	<i>82,073</i>
	77,918	<i>82,073</i>
	77,918	<i>82,073</i>

The Charity Bank mortgage is the main funding source for the charity's purchase of its new premises at 32 Houndgate Darlington. The mortgage is repayable over 20 years, starting from 12 April 2014 and ending on 12 March 2034. The amount repayable in 2021/22 is £4,149 (2020: £3,889), leaving £19,555 (2020: £18,327 payable in 2-5 years and £58,363 (2020: £63,746) payable after 5 years. The mortgage is secured against the building.

18. Financial instruments

	2021	<i>2020</i>
	£	£
Financial assets		
Financial assets measured at fair value through income and expenditure	260,834	<i>17,534</i>
	260,834	<i>17,534</i>
	260,834	<i>17,534</i>
Financial liabilities		
Financial liabilities measured at fair value through income and expenditure	101,295	<i>145,999</i>
	101,295	<i>145,999</i>
	101,295	<i>145,999</i>

Financial assets measured at fair value through income and expenditure comprise trade debtors, other debtors, prepayments and accrued income.

Financial liabilities measured at fair value through income and expenditure comprise trade creditors, other creditors, bank loans, accruals and deferred income.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

19. Statement of funds

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2021 £
Unrestricted funds					
General Funds - all funds	240,755	38,010	(17,188)	(568)	261,009
Restricted funds					
The Henry Smith Charity	-	7,000	(6,898)	(102)	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	25,000	(13,626)	-	11,374
Lloyds Bank Foundation	5,739	25,211	(25,211)	-	5,739
Ballinger Charitable Trust	-	20,000	-	-	20,000
Homeless Link	-	21,505	(22,175)	670	-
County Durham Community Fund	-	2,865	(2,865)	-	-
Big Lottery	8,481	99,993	(81,026)	-	27,448
	<u>14,220</u>	<u>201,574</u>	<u>(151,801)</u>	<u>568</u>	<u>64,561</u>
Total of funds	<u><u>254,975</u></u>	<u><u>239,584</u></u>	<u><u>(168,989)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>325,570</u></u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

19. Statement of funds (continued)

Unrestricted Funds:

General - The free funds of the charity which are available for the general work of the charity at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted Funds:

These funds relate to grants and donations received for specific purposes as follows:

The Henry Smith Charity - A 3 year grant to support the core work of FSD by providing a salary for a Homeless Support Worker post to help support the 700+ people who use our drop-in service and are homeless or at severe risk of homelessness. Year 3 (£28,000), ended in June 2020.

Lloyds Bank Foundation - A new 3 year fund has been secured from April 2019 £84,561 divided across 3 years. The funding is to move First Stop and Bike Stop forward strategically to ensure we can provide further services and future proof the organisation for some time to come.

The Ballinger Charitable Trust - 3 year grant to support core work of the charity, providing practical financial support to enable the charity to further their work with vulnerable people experiencing poverty, disadvantage in opportunities and limited life chances. Year 2 commenced April 19 (£20,000).

Big Lottery Fund - Reaching Communities Fund – A 3 year grant to provide support and guidance to local people who have a range of issues and barriers that are preventing them from moving forward in their lives. Particularly supporting people to prevent evictions, reducing homelessness, reducing poverty, increasing and improving peoples confidence, self-esteem and self-worth, reducing stress and anxiety brought on by their issues and improving peoples aspirations and life goals. Year 3 (£109,083) is secured until end Feb 2021, however, due to an underspend as a result of Covid, the funder has agreed to carry forward the underspend until the end of June 2021.

Garfield Weston – 1 year core funding to support the charity to support those who are homeless, at risk of homelessness and those who are marginalised in our community. (July 2020 – June 2021 £25,000).

Homeless Link – Covid Support Fund - 6 month funding, May 2020-Oct 2020 (£21,505) to provide for any additional set up and support to those struggle the most in our communities, to enable us to reach out and provide our services to our clients and those who were being hit the hardest in the first 6 months of the pandemic.

A net transfer of £568 was made between restricted and unrestricted general fund following the fulfilment of the original grant.

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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

19. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	<i>Balance at 1 April 2019</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>	<i>Transfers in/out</i>	<i>Balance at 31 March 2020</i>
	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds					
General Funds - all funds	228,907	18,590	(8,330)	1,588	240,755
Joy Welch Trust Fund	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
	<u>228,907</u>	<u>19,590</u>	<u>(9,330)</u>	<u>1,588</u>	<u>240,755</u>
Restricted funds					
The Henry Smith Charity	-	21,000	(21,000)	-	-
Lloyds Bank Foundation	-	27,130	(21,391)	-	5,739
Ballinger Charitable Trust	-	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
Big Lottery Fund	16,211	105,229	(111,371)	(1,588)	8,481
	<u>16,211</u>	<u>173,359</u>	<u>(173,762)</u>	<u>(1,588)</u>	<u>14,220</u>
Total of funds	<u><u>245,118</u></u>	<u><u>192,949</u></u>	<u><u>(183,092)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>254,975</u></u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

20. Summary of funds

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2021 £
General funds	240,755	38,010	(17,188)	(568)	261,009
Restricted funds	14,220	201,574	(151,801)	568	64,561
	<u>254,975</u>	<u>239,584</u>	<u>(168,989)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>325,570</u>

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2020 £
General funds	228,907	19,590	(9,330)	1,588	240,755
Restricted funds	16,211	173,359	(173,762)	(1,588)	14,220
	<u>245,118</u>	<u>192,949</u>	<u>(183,092)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>254,975</u>

21. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £
Tangible fixed assets	165,852	-	165,852
Fixed asset investments	1	-	1
Current assets	215,878	51,561	267,439
Creditors due within one year	(42,804)	13,000	(29,804)
Creditors due in more than one year	(77,918)	-	(77,918)
Total	<u>261,009</u>	<u>64,561</u>	<u>325,570</u>

FIRST STOP DARLINGTON
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

21. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2020 £</i>	<i>Restricted funds 2020 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2020 £</i>
Tangible fixed assets	167,510	-	167,510
Fixed asset investments	1	-	1
Current assets	168,959	66,672	235,631
Creditors due within one year	(13,642)	(52,452)	(66,094)
Creditors due in more than one year	(82,073)	-	(82,073)
Total	<u>240,755</u>	<u>14,220</u>	<u>254,975</u>

22. Related party transactions

Owing to the nature of the Charity's operations and the composition of the Board of Trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transaction may take place with organisations in which the Charity has an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length.