

THE TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31.03.23 FOR STEPPING STONES COMMUNITY ORGANISATION, 75 RAYMOND STREET, HANLEY, STOKE ON TRENT, ST1 4DP. PLEASE SEE THE CHARITIES DATA BASE UPDATE 2011 FOR THE NAMES OF TRUSTEES.

The constitution for the charity was adopted on 10/10/2011 and amended on 01/12/2011.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE CHARITY

For the benefit of the public in Stoke on Trent, in particular but not exclusively members of the Black and Minority Ethnic communities by:

- a. The advancement of education and training
- b. To advance in life and help young people by the provision of recreational and leisure time activities provided in the interest of social welfare, desire to improve their conditions of life and develop their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as mature and responsible individuals.

The charity is managed by three holding trustees and two to four elected trustees elected every three years by AGM. The next elections were held on April 2022. The committee meets on the 28<sup>th</sup> of every month to discuss business of the charity. The nursery demonstrated consistent growth and development, providing an environment where new children had the opportunity to make substantial progress across all seven domains of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). In order to facilitate effective communication and engagement with families, the nursery implemented a robust progress-reporting system accessible via the Tapestry platform. Furthermore, both staff and volunteers underwent specialized training programs tailored to enhance their proficiency in delivering the EYFS curriculum. The effectiveness of these training initiatives was consistently monitored and supervised by the management team, ensuring continuous improvement.

The senior leadership team also actively engaged in leadership development programs, resulting in a notable enhancement of their leadership skills. These investments in leadership capacity yielded positive outcomes for the organization, contributing to a more effective and impactful operation.

In addition to the educational aspects, the nursery was committed to providing comprehensive support to families. This support included the provision of homework packs, short courses, and regular accessibility to the nursery's resources. To further enhance the

learning environment, the nursery's library underwent refurbishment and reorganization, making it more accessible and conducive to learning for both children and families.

The commitment to fostering continued learning at home was maintained by consistently providing weekly home activity packs. These packs were carefully curated and included not only previously identified resources but also new and diverse educational materials.

Additionally, the nursery remained a crucial hub of communication for countless families seeking support in various areas, including mental health, domestic abuse, and feelings of isolation and loneliness. The outdoor spaces proved invaluable in providing safe environments for individuals to engage in open and confidential discussions, facilitating the sharing of experiences and the seeking of necessary support.

Partnerships with feeder schools not only flourished but also paved the way for a more seamless transition for children moving from the nursery to their respective schools. This collaborative effort not only strengthened educational pathways but also enriched the overall learning experience for these young learners. Furthermore, our unwavering dedication in partnership with the NHS teams in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has yielded significant recognition. We are delighted to share that our contributions were formally acknowledged in the NHS White Paper.

In addition to those accomplishments, our team played a pivotal role in raising awareness about breast and bowel cancer, effectively engaging with the community within a safe and supportive environment.

Moreover, our commitment to supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged families remained unwavering. We distributed food packs, 300 hygiene packs, and continued to organize 6 community meals and 6 cook-and-eat sessions. Building upon this success, we continued to provide 400 food packs and hygiene packs, ensuring a sustained lifeline for those in need.

Of particular concern within this context was the predicament faced by women and pubescent young girls who found themselves struggling to meet their basic personal hygiene needs. The economic impact of the pandemic exacerbated this issue, making the cost of essential items like sanitary pads and underwear prohibitively high for many. Stepping Stones observed a stark increase in the demand for assistance in this area since the onset of

the pandemic, and this need continued to grow. It was imperative that we continued to address this critical issue to ensure that these vulnerable individuals could maintain their dignity and health.

In parallel, we noted a concerning trend of an increasing number of children presenting with speech and language delays. This trend persisted and required sustained attention and action. In response, our dedicated team diligently worked to devise innovative approaches that empowered our staff to implement early intervention strategies in close collaboration with parents and other relevant professionals. Our commitment extended beyond academic development, as we worked closely with partners and parents to ensure that no child was left behind in their education. We also focused on addressing the specific needs of children displaying symptoms of autism, providing them with tailored support to foster inclusive and comprehensive educational opportunities. Stepping Stones remained resolute in its mission to ensure that every child, regardless of their circumstances, had access to the tools and support they needed to thrive and succeed.

We also focused on addressing the specific needs of children displaying symptoms of autism, providing them with tailored support to foster inclusive and comprehensive educational opportunities. Stepping Stones remained resolute in its mission to ensure that every child, regardless of their circumstances, had access to the tools and support they needed to thrive and succeed.

After conducting extensive consultations with the community, with a special focus on empowering disadvantaged women, several impactful projects and skill development initiatives were identified. These initiatives were aimed at addressing community needs and fostering inclusivity. As a result, we introduced new services such as:

1. **Women's Empowerment Workshops:** We organized workshops tailored to women's specific needs, covering topics like financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and leadership development. These workshops aimed to equip women with essential skills and knowledge to enhance their economic and social well-being.
2. **Community Skill-building Programs:** To empower disadvantaged communities, we initiated skill-building programs that offered training in areas such as vocational skills, digital literacy, and job readiness. These programs provided community members,

including women, with valuable skills to improve their employability and overall quality of life.

3. **Sustainable Agriculture and Gardening Projects:** We launched community gardens and sustainable agriculture initiatives, where women played a central role. These projects not only promoted self-sufficiency in food production but also provided opportunities for women to learn about sustainable farming practices and generate income through selling surplus produce.
4. **Women's Networking and Support Groups:** To create a supportive environment, we established women's networking and support groups. These gatherings provided a platform for women to share experiences, offer mentorship, and build social connections, fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment.
5. **Entrepreneurship Incubator:** We introduced an entrepreneurship incubator program specifically designed for women entrepreneurs. This program offered training, mentorship, and access to resources to help women start and grow their own businesses, contributing to economic empowerment.
6. **Community Social Events:** In addition to skill development, we organized community-wide social events, including coffee mornings and social gatherings. These events aimed to strengthen community bonds, encourage social interaction, and provide a platform for individuals, particularly women, to engage and connect.

By implementing these initiatives, we sought to empower disadvantaged communities and elevate the skills and opportunities available to women, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and thriving community for all.

Our commitment to the well-being of our community has been exemplified by the continued success of our sports programs. We have consistently offered badminton sessions tailored for men and young people, leading to significant positive impacts on their mental health.

1. **Mental Health Benefits for Men:** The regular badminton sessions have provided a vital outlet for men to relieve stress, improve mood, and enhance their mental well-being. Engaging in physical activity has been shown to reduce anxiety and depression, promoting a more positive outlook on life.

2. **Empowering Young People:** Our dedication to young people's development is reflected in our badminton program. By actively participating in these sessions, young individuals have gained confidence, improved their self-esteem, and developed valuable life skills. These positive experiences have had a profound impact on their mental health and overall sense of well-being.
3. **Sporting Achievements:** Our commitment to sports excellence has yielded remarkable results. Our badminton team not only secured victory in the Division 2 league but also actively participated in prestigious nationwide tournaments, showcasing our dedication to athletic success.
4. **Coach Development:** To further support the growth of our badminton community, we have successfully nurtured two Badminton England Level 1 coaches. Our future goals include facilitating the development of Level 2 coaches, ensuring that the expertise and mentorship available to our members continue to expand.

By fostering a thriving badminton community, we have not only achieved sporting success but have also made a substantial positive impact on the mental health and well-being of men and young people within our organization. Our commitment to their holistic development remains unwavering, ensuring that they continue to benefit from the physical, emotional, and social advantages of our programs.

Our thriving mother and toddler group has emerged as a vibrant and essential hub for families with young children. It has not only attracted a consistent attendance of families but has also emphasized the significance of mothers socializing while engaging in meaningful activities with their toddlers.

- **Building Strong Connections:** This gathering of mothers and toddlers has not only facilitated new friendships but has also nurtured a robust support network. Mothers have found camaraderie and shared experiences, creating a sense of belonging within the community.
- **Empowering Child Development:** The activities thoughtfully curated for children have proven instrumental in fostering their holistic development. These engaging

experiences have enabled toddlers to acquire essential skills while having fun and interacting with their peers.

- Trips to Local Gems: Our group has also ventured on exciting trips to local places of interest. These outings have not only provided enriching experiences for both mothers and children but have also significantly enhanced the positive mental health benefits.

By placing a strong emphasis on the importance of socialization and meaningful engagement for mothers and toddlers, our group continues to serve as a valuable resource for our community. It promotes the well-being of both mothers and children while strengthening the bonds within our community.

Collaborating closely with esteemed partners such as the NHS, Local Authority, and other dedicated professionals has translated into a significantly elevated standard of service for our local community. This fruitful alliance has enabled us to make a more profound and meaningful impact on the well-being and welfare of our community members.

Our comprehensive educational program, encompassing a range of academic services such as tutoring, an accredited JCQ exam centre, Arabic language instruction, and culturally enriching sessions, has yielded remarkable success. This success is exemplified by a substantial rise in the number of young individuals attaining two additional qualifications, namely proficiency in the Arabic language at the IGCSE level and achieving success at the GCSE level. This educational attainment underscores the pivotal role that education plays in equipping our youth with valuable qualifications, thereby enhancing their academic and professional prospects.

Every day, our team and organization are evolving, driven by a vision of continuous growth and progress. To turn this vision into reality, we are eager to secure additional funding. This funding will empower us to forge new pathways and create essential roles that will propel our organization to new heights, ensuring that we not only thrive but also inspire positive change and transformation in the days ahead.

Stepping Stones Community Organisation  
75 Raymond Street, Hanley, Stoke on Trent, ST1 4DP  
T: 01782 499430 E: [info@steppingstones.uk.com](mailto:info@steppingstones.uk.com)

Receipts and Payments Account April 2022-March 2023

**Receipts**

Stoke on Trent City Council	£44,653.00
Reaching Communities (National Lottery)	£19,142.00
(balance carried forward)	
Childcare Grant Payment Services	£137,464.00
Fees and contributions	£10,185.00
Exam Fees	£3468.00
Unrestricted Funds Carried Over	£21,414.00

**Total Receipt** **£236,326.00**

**Expenditure**

Rent (Inclusive of water rates, business rates and insurance.	£36,900.00
Resources	£28,600.00
Garden maintenance	£1034.00
Utilities	£10,360.00
Sundries	£6,500.00
Sessional Staff	£36,448.00
Assessment administration	£2050.00
Phone & Broadband	£850.00
Food & Hygiene Packs	£15,000.00
Community Meals	£12,000.00
Refurbishment	£26,200.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£175,942.00</b>

**Multi-Media Project Breakdown:**

**Magazine Element**

Magazines	£7800.00
Stationery	£1200.00
Refreshments	£872.00
Volunteer expenses	£890.00
Project Workers	£11,120.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£21,882 .00</b>

**Total Expenditure****£197,824.00**

Balance carried over to April 2023

£38,502.00

Restricted Funds

£12,400.00

Unrestricted Funds

£26,102.00

Date

Electronically Signed

03/10/2023

F Rahman

03/10/2023

S Jahangir

03/10/2023

A Sajed

03/10/2023

R Hossein

03/10/2023

O Salah



Report to the trustees/  
members of

Charity Name Stepping Stones Community  
Organisation

On accounts for the year  
ended

March 2023

Charity no  
(if any)

1145346



## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Set out on pages

3 and 4

**Respective  
responsibilities of  
trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent  
examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent  
examiner's statement**

- In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention
1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
    - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
    - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
  2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joynal Abedin'.

Date:

30/11 /2023

Name:

Joynal Abedin

**Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):**

Business owner with over 15years experience of financial accounting, management accounting, business finance, payroll and understanding markets and marketing.

**Address:**

31 Station Road, Sheffield, S35 2XE

**Section B**

**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material problems.

**Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.**

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Date	Electronically Signed
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03/10/2023	S Jahangir
03/10/2023	A Sajed
03/10/2023	R Hossein
03/10/2023	O Salah

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