



**First Step Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland**

**Charitable Incorporated Organisation**

**Registered Number: 1165062**

**Annual Report and Financial Statements**

**for the year ended 31st March 2024**

## Contents

Administrative Information .....	3
Trustees Annual Report .....	4
Charitable Objects .....	4
Our Vision .....	4
Public Benefit.....	4
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion .....	5
Achievements & Performance .....	5
Staff, Volunteers, Sessional Workers and Trustees.....	6
Building on our Strong Heritage.....	7
Future Plans .....	7
Structure Governance & Management .....	8
Statement on Reserves.....	9
Independent Examiners Report .....	10
Statement of Financial Activities .....	11
Balance Sheet .....	12
Notes to the Accounts.....	13

# Administrative Information

First Step, Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland (First Step) was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, charity number 1165062, on 6th January 2016. The organisation operates under the rules of its constitution adopted on 6th January 2016.

First Step is located within the ground floor premises of a grade II listed building in the centre of Leicester city, facing onto an area of public open space within the Town Hall Square. There are three counselling rooms and a dedicated reception area within the office space. The property is leased from Leicester City Council.

The offices are open on Mondays to Thursdays 9am – 8pm to ensure that the service can be accessed by all clients including those who are in employment.

<b>Charity Name</b>	First Step Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland
<b>Charity Registration No.</b>	1165062
<b>Registered Office &amp; Operational Address</b>	Alliance House, 6 Bishop Street, Leicester, LE1 6AF
<b>Trustees</b>	Mark Evans (Chair) Mick Studley (Honorary Treasurer) Kirandip Gill Rahoul Naik Jon Putnam (appointed May 2023) Fauna Gill (appointed July 2023) (Andrea Cave - resigned April 2023)
<b>Staff</b>	Beverley Radcliffe – CEO (appointed March 2024) Michelle Green- Emotional Support Worker & Receptionist Stuart Levers - Service Coordinator & Clinical Lead Caroline Freeman – CEO (resigned March 2024)
<b>Bankers</b>	Lloyds Bank, High Street Leicester Branch (309497)
<b>Independent Examiner</b>	Paula Wilson, MAAT 2 Hickman Road, Galley Common, Nuneaton, CV10 9NQ

# Trustees Annual Report

The Trustees present their Annual Report and independently examined financial statements for the year ending March 31st 2024.

## Charitable Objects

First Step's charitable objects were amended to better reflect the broader inclusivity of individuals engaging with First Step's services.

The proposed amendments were submitted to the Charities Commission (CC) on 23 June 2023 and given consent on 09 October 2023. A formal resolution was passed at a meeting of the Board of Trustees on 17 October 2023 and the wording adopted into the Constitution.

The updated Charitable Objects now adopted are:

- To promote and protect the physical and mental health of male-identified and non-binary persons aged 13 years and above who have experienced sexual abuse, through the provision of counselling, support, information and practical advice.
- To promote and protect the physical and mental health of the supporters of male-identified and non-binary survivors of sexual abuse, through provision of support, information and practical advice.
- To advance the education of the public in the subject of all matters related to the sexual abuse of male-identified and non-binary survivors aged 13 years and above.

## Our Vision

Our vision is for a world where survivors of sexual abuse are empowered to live life as they choose, where their experiences no longer define who they are and who they can become.

We are committed to helping to create a world in which survivors can talk freely about abuse without fear, pressure or judgement; a place where male survivors, alongside secondary survivors and supporters, can readily access the help they need. This includes therapeutic services, practical advice and support to meet their daily living needs. This help would be accessible, kind, safe, free, confidential, and based on acceptance. As a result, survivors would have a sense of hope and opportunity for their futures, embedded within a supportive community that is open, welcoming and understanding towards their experiences.

## Public Benefit

Each year, the Trustees review the Charity's objectives and activities to ensure they continue to reflect First Step's aims. In carrying out this review the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. The Trustees confirm that First Step continues to meet its objectives and carries out its activities for public benefit through the provision of the following services:

- Adult Male Counselling Services
- Emotional Support Service
- Group Work

- Advocacy & Support Service
- Young People's Service
- Specialist Prison Counselling Service

## Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

First Step is a non-judgemental and fully inclusive organisation located in one of the most ethnically diverse areas of the UK. We welcome men and boys from all ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds, sexual identities and men and boys who have additional needs due to their neurodiversity or disabilities.

Throughout this document, use of the term 'male' includes all persons that identify as male or non-binary. Whilst terms may be used interchangeably depending on the narrative and context presented in this document, they each include all persons that identify in any of these ways.

Whilst First Step is primarily a male survivor organisation, we also actively support their male and female partners, family members and friends as secondary survivors. Additionally, we have also supported the male partners of females who are the primary survivors of sexual abuse and assault, as this was an unmet need that other services within the sector could not meet.

### Key EDI Data:

- 24% of all clients stated they were from a non-white British background.
- 26% of all clients had a disability as defined by the 2010 Equality Act.
- 17% of all clients identified as being gay, bisexual or pansexual.

## Achievements & Performance

This report covers the operational and financial activities undertaken by First Step, during the year 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.

### Service Delivery

Our activities across the year increased in addition to the development and growth of existing services. Our key performance data:

- **Referrals:** We received 196 new referrals during the year, resulting in 148 formal assessments after initial client evaluation.
- **Clients Supported:** Overall, we supported 237 clients and supporters across our 6 service areas (an increase of 28%) through 1857 sessions, compared with 1697 sessions in the previous year which is an increase of 9%. This includes including 167 sessions delivered through our Prison Project, including face-to-face support which is an increase of 12% from the previous year.
- **Our Impact:** We use several outcome measurement tools to demonstrate the impact of First Step including SWEMWBS (Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Score) at intermittent stages of the clients counselling journey. 75% of our clients reported an increase in their ability to cope and that their life had improved.

## **Staff, Volunteers, Sessional Workers and Trustees.**

### **Staff (salaried):**

At the start of the year Caroline Freeman was appointed to the position of Chief Executive Officer, a role that was introduced in April 2023 to reflect the ambition and intent of the organisation to develop and grow. The CEO role incorporated core duties of the existing Service Manager role whilst a wider review of core roles and responsibilities was conducted, resulting in an organisational restructure to provide a robust platform on which First Step can continue to develop.

Caroline resigned at the end of 2023, leaving the organisation in March 2024. Beverley Radcliffe was subsequently appointed as incoming CEO and formally took up the post in March 2024.

Stuart Levers continued to fulfil the role of Service Coordinator and Clinical Lead, and Michelle Green as Emotional Support Worker.

### **Volunteers:**

Overall, at the end of March 2024 we had 15 active trainee and qualified counsellors delivering counselling sessions to our clients and supporters.

With continued funding from the Ministry of Justice we have been able to continue to pay qualified counsellors to deliver counselling sessions to our most complex adult clients and boys aged 13-17 years who are referred into the service, thus ensuring that we do not have extensive waiting lists for counselling. This has enabled us to retain counsellors after their placements have finished thus ensuring their specialist expertise in counselling male survivors of sexual abuse stays within the service.

### **Sessional Workers & External Consultants:**

- **Clinical Supervisors.** First Step ensures that all counsellors receive clinical supervision in line with BACP guidance, to maintain ethical and quality counselling practice as well as to ensure that counsellors own well-being is maintained whilst working with traumatised clients.
- **Sessional Workers.** At the end of March 2024, we had 4 sessional , qualified counsellors to deliver counselling to clients with complex needs. In addition we used the services of an external sessional worker to update our website and social media channels.
- **External Consultants:** We also use the services of an external management consultant from 3 Worlds Consulting to support us with our monitoring, reporting and evaluation processes in addition to outsourcing externally our IT, Payroll and accounting functions

### **Trustees:**

Andrea Cave resigned as a Trustee in April 2023, having served as a volunteer Trustee for six years.

Jon Putnam and Fauna Gill were both appointed as volunteer Trustees, joining the organisation in May 2023 and July 2023 respectively.

Following election into their respective roles at the previous year's AGM, Mark Evans agreed to continue in the role of Chair and Mick Studley agreed to continue in the role of Honorary Treasurer.

## **Building on our Strong Heritage**

First Step began as a survivor led community initiative set up by a small group of committed volunteers led by two male survivors. It has grown into a professionally run Charitable Incorporated Organisation with our own centre and specialist staff team.

We are the only organisation that solely supports male survivors of SA in the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland area, and across the East Midlands region. In fact, there are only seven primarily male survivor organisations in the whole of the UK. We strive to work closely with these organisations and are actively developing new partnership projects with them in order to strengthen the male survivor sector to meet the needs of men and boys. Locally, we work in close collaboration with services across the SV sector that provide support to female only survivors, Quetzal and Jasmine House - Leicester Rape Crisis and co-gendered providers of services including FreeVA, Juniper Lodge-SARC and Trade Sexual Health.

With a specialisation in therapeutic counselling, our work has evolved over the years to include a range of therapeutic support pathways for adult male survivors; a unique service for children and young people aged 13 years and above; therapeutic and peer support for secondary survivors (i.e. the friends and family of people who have experienced sexual abuse); and projects, such as our specialist counselling provision in HMPs Leicester and Stocken.

## **Future Plans**

As part of our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year activities, we held a stakeholder strategy day in March 2023 involving the staff team, volunteers, service users and the Board of Trustees and other key stakeholders in the organisation.

During the day we focused on the organisation's vision, mission and aims, and envisaged how First Step could build on its strong foundation and credentials for excellence to address the shifting landscape of needs among male survivors.

We imagined a world in which all boys and men affected by sexual abuse and assault get the support they need to live their lives to the full. We challenged ourselves to look at new ways of helping survivors and their supporters, considering the changing landscape around us and to understand what is needed from us now in 2023, and beyond. We thought about how the holistic support we offer relates to the counselling we know is so desperately needed, and how we can further develop this as we continue to grow.

Key goals and aspirations First Step has aligned itself to include:

- Support activities to enable us to reach more male survivors of sexual violence and sexual abuse (SV/SA), including outreach to marginalised groups, young people and within different ethnic and religious sectors of our communities
- Increase the number of Service Users we can support, accommodate clients with increasingly complex needs so they can take back control and live their best life
- Extend our reach into the prison service to build on successful pilot project funded by the NHS and subsequent continuation of the service funded by the Department of Health.
- Continue to attract and secure the best possible counselling services so our clients receive the best possible support.
- Help children and young people affected by SV/SA to build positive and healthy lives, overcome their own stigma and barriers and help ease the pain they have endured.

- Enable those directly affected by SV/SA and their supporters to take back control and live healthier lives.
- Continue to review and develop robust safeguarding policies and procedures to minimise the risk and harm to vulnerable adults, children and young people.
- Working with funders that are committed to supporting the work we do, maintain a stable financial position to ensure sustainable delivery and development of services to meet current and future needs

Building our longer term strategic plan for development will remain a focus for the coming year, and future years, underpinned by a funding strategy that will enable us to both continue and develop the great work we do, reach more people in need of support, educate others on all matters related to the sexual abuse of men, and extend the public benefit we deliver to society as a whole.

## **Structure Governance & Management**

First Step, Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, charity number 1165062, on 6th January 2016. The organisation operates under the rules of its Constitution adopted on 6th January 2016.

Overall strategic management and governance of the charity is the responsibility of the board of Trustees who are elected by members. Day to day operational activity is managed and carried out by paid staff and volunteers.

One third of Trustees retire by rotation every year and can stand for re-election with no limit on terms. Existing trustees can co-opt additional Trustees but these must stand for election at the next AGM.

Methods of recruitment and appointment of Trustees are set out in the Constitution and the Trustee Recruitment Policy and Procedure. This includes identifying the additional skills and/or capacity required by the board and proactively seeking suitable candidates through networks and advertising on websites such as Reach Volunteering. Short-listed candidates are interviewed to explore their fit to the ethos and values of the organisation and to clarify the skills, experience and capacity they can add to the board.

All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed are set out in note 7 to the accounts.

The Board of Trustees meet every two months, with the CEO providing an operational report and attending the meeting. The agenda for every meeting includes a standing item of Financial Updates and any additional information can be requested by the external accountant.

At the start of 2023-2024 period the board of Trustees comprised of five permanent members. During the year one Trustee stepped down in April 2023. Recruitment was ongoing through this period with two additional trustee being appointed in May and July 2023.



# Statement on Reserves

## The Charity's policy on reserves

The Trustees believe the minimum level of reserves should be the equivalent of three months operating costs calculated and reviewed annually.

On 31st March 2024, free reserves (unrestricted funds) amounted to £58,528 representing five months of annual expenditure.

Signed on behalf of the charity's Trustees:

Signed:



M Evans, Chair

Date: 12 December 2024

# Independent Examiners Report

## Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of First Step Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland for the year ended 31 March 2024

I report on the accounts of First Step, Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages 11 to 15.

### 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 section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 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 the 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 you as 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 2011 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 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: 

Date: 12 December 2024

Paula Wilson, MAAT

# Statement of Financial Activities

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

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2024 Total Funds	2023 Total Funds
	Note	£	£	£	£
<b>Incoming resources</b>					
Grants	2	-	209,184	209,184	262,966
Other Income		881	-	881	5,346
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>881</b>	<b>209,184</b>	<b>210,065</b>	<b>268,312</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>					
Salaries, NI	6	-	101,595	101,595	74,330
Sessional Workers		-	840	840	14,462
Staff Wellbeing		-	1,153	1,153	-
Rent & Room Hire		-	13,000	13,000	13,000
Training		-	5,093	5,093	7,118
Volunteer Expenses		-	3,970	3,970	5,858
Staff Expenses		-	3,040	3,040	296
Insurance		-	1,379	1,379	1,348
Promotion		-	241	241	3,134
IT & Comms		-	7,791	7,791	8,244
Office Costs		-	6,817	6,817	6,727
Client Hardship Fund & Client Activities		-	837	837	614
Professional fees (clinical)		-	13,465	13,465	17,578
Trustee Expenses	7	-	893	893	664
Consultancy and Evaluation		-	2,742	2,742	6,000
Accounts & Independent Examination	8	-	362	362	350
Service User Activities & Resources		-	-	-	8,235
Paid Counsellors Adult		-	23,391	23,391	13,906
Paid Counsellors CYP		-	5,445	5,445	9,908
Paid Counsellors Prison		-	36,387	36,387	-
Miscellaneous Expenses		-	55	55	50
Professional Fees		-	2,619	2,619	1,351
Events		-	1,072	1,072	6,719
Prison Project		-	-	-	41,713
Bank Charges		-	96	96	113
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>232,284</b>	<b>232,284</b>	<b>241,717</b>
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing) resources</b>		<b>881</b>	<b>(23,100)</b>	<b>(22,219)</b>	<b>26,595</b>
Transfers between funds	5	-	-	-	-
Funds b/f	5	57,647	105,378	163,026	136,430
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>58,528</b>	<b>82,278</b>	<b>140,806</b>	<b>163,026</b>

# Balance Sheet

Balance sheet at 31 March 2024

	Note	£	2024 £	£	2023 £
<b>Current assets</b>					
Cash at bank and in hand		137,592		160,442	
Debtors		-		-	
Prepayments	3	3,564		3,490	
Total current assets			141,156		163,932
<b>Liabilities</b>					
Creditors:					
amounts falling due within one year	4		(350)		(906)
Net Current Assets					
<b>Net Assets</b>			<b>140,806</b>		<b>163,026</b>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>					
Unrestricted income funds	5		58,528		57,647
Restricted income funds	5		82,278		105,378
<b>Total funds</b>			<b>140,806</b>		<b>163,026</b>

These financial statements are accepted on behalf of the charity by:

Signed  
M Evans, Chair

Dated: 12 December 2024

# Notes to the Accounts

## 1. Accounting Policies

### Basis of the preparation of the accounts

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 and with the Charities Act.

### Incoming resources

All material incoming resources have been included on a receivable basis – i.e. they are included if the date receivable falls within the period covered by these accounts.

### Resources expended

These have been analysed using a natural classification.

## 2. Grants & donations

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Big Lottery	19,392	38,420
Ministry of Justice – Core	49,472	94,212
Ministry of Justice – CSA	-	28,674
Ministry of Justice – Uplift	-	25,531
Ministry of Justice – Rape	3,309	9,926
Leicester Police	3,475	46,203
Henry Smith	-	20,000
New MOJ – Aug to Mar – 8 months Adult	24,505	-
New MOJ – Aug to Mar – 8 months CYP	18,911	-
OPCC	29,450	
Home Office	35,670	
Lloyds Bank Foundation	25,000	
	<b>209,184</b>	<b>262,966</b>

## 3. Prepayments

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
LCC Rent	3,250	3,250
Insurance	314	240
	<b>3,564</b>	<b>3,490</b>

#### 4. Creditors

	2024 £	2023 £
Pension	-	556
Accounts & IE	350	350
	<b>350</b>	<b>906</b>

#### 5. Movements in Funds

	Opening balance 01.04.23 £	Incoming resources £	(Resources expended) £	Transfers between fund £	Closing balance 31.03.24 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	57,647	881	-	-	58,528
	<b>52,647</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>58,528</b>
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Henry Smith	20,000	-	(20,000)	-	-
National Lottery	52,338	-	(6,475)	-	45,863
National Lottery 2023/24	-	19,392	(19,392)	-	-
Ministry of Justice - Core	1,976	-	-	-	1,976
Ministry of Justice - CSA	21,325	-	(126)	-	21,199
Ministry of Justice - Uplift	1,697	-	-	-	1,697
Ministry of Justice - Rape	-	-	-	-	-
Leicestershire Police	8,041	-	(8,041)	-	-
MOJ - Core Apr - July	-	49,472	(46,979)	-	2,493
MOJ - Rape Apr - July	-	3,309	(3,309)	-	-
New MOJ - Aug - Mar Adult	-	24,505	(27,810)	3,305	-
New MOJ - Aug - Mar CYP	-	18,911	(15,606)	(3,305)	-
OPCC	-	29,450	(29,401)	-	49
Home Office	-	35,670	(37,962)	-	(2,292)
Leicestershire Police (Prison)	-	3,475	(3,475)	-	-
Lloyds Bank Foundation	-	25,000	-	-	25,000
DoH Suicide Prevention	-	-	(11,723)	-	(11,723)
MOJ - Core Aug-Mar (new)	-	-	(1,987)	-	(1,987)
	<b>105,377</b>	<b>209,184</b>	<b>(232,284)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>82,276</b>
	<b>163,026</b>	<b>210,065</b>	<b>(232,284)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>140,806</b>

## 6. Staff Costs and Numbers

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages	101,595	74,330
	<b>101,595</b>	<b>74,330</b>

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

The average weekly number of employees during the year was 2.6 full time equivalent (2023: 2.2).

## 7. Trustees' remuneration, benefits and expenses

Two trustees received out of pocket expenses of £893.43, (2023: £663.62) during the year.

## 8. Independent examination and accountancy services

During the period, the cost of the examination and accountancy services was £350.

## 9. Glossary of terms

Creditors:	These are amounts owed by the charity, but not paid during the accounting period.
Debtors:	These are amounts owed to the charity, but not received in the accounting period.
Prepayments:	These are services that the charity has paid for in advance, but not used during the accounting period.
Restricted funds:	These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.