



Fightback Charity

Society of Disabled Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Annual Accounts and Reports

April 2022

Trustees' Annual Report for year 2021/2022

Overview

Fightback was formed in Sunderland in 2004 as a multicultural, one-stop, holistic, user-led, not-for-profit organisation. Fightback continues to be one of the only a few projects that works with people who experience multiple disadvantages arising out of intrinsic factors, such as, disability, race, ethnicity, language, cultural barriers and immigration status.

Fightback charity provided a range of practical, social and educational services and activities to refugees, asylum seekers, failed asylum seekers and other BME and marginalised groups.

Fightback's holistic approach aims to improve the mental health and the well-being of our clients by involving, supporting and engaging marginalized and disadvantaged individuals, facilitating autonomy, building confidence, reducing social isolation, and promoting integration into the wider community and community cohesion.

In March 2020, it was clear that the Covid19 pandemic was now a significant threat to public health. On 17/ 03/ 2020, Fightback held a committee meeting and decided that as our clients have complex physical and mental health issues and are therefore considered to be vulnerable, it was necessary to temporarily suspend our coffee morning, befriending service, and drop-in to minimise the risk of transmitting the virus.

However, as all the other partner organisations within the refugee network were closing their doors, we did not feel that it was in the best interest of our clients who are already some of the most vulnerable sections of society to close our doors and leave our clients cut off, isolated and without the help and support they need. Fightback Charity stepped up to become a frontline service provider by providing essential food supplies to our existing clients, while also supporting the disabled and elderly in the local community who are having to isolate or shield due to the Corona Virus. We adapted our services in the following ways:

Practical Services

Drop in Service

In July 2020, Fightback was one of only a few organisations to reinstate our face-to-face services to provide practical help, advice and support they needed.

Fightback's holistic approach aims to reduce or remove this anxiety by engaging with, supporting, advocating, mediating and representing clients, while also providing practical information, advice, facilitating and enabling clients to deal with everyday practical issues, such as, reading, writing and

replying to letters, making appointments, paying bills, dealing with utilities, doctors, solicitors, hospitals, schools, social services, debt agencies and other service providers, applying for bank accounts, housing, driving licences, college courses, benefits, and jobs etc.

Clients often tell us that dealing with these practical everyday issues causes them the most stress in their lives because the processes, forms and criteria can be so complicated and confusing.

However, feedback from our beneficiaries has indicated that knowing they can access help with working through these practical issues, in a welcoming, non-threatening, non-judgemental atmosphere really helps. It not only reduces stress and anxiety, but provides them with understanding, skills, and autonomy to be able to cope with the everyday issues and processes that effect their lives and improves resilience and life chances.

The Table below shows the amount of people we have helped from **April 2021 to April 2022**.

Drop-in	Advice	Advocacy and Mediation	Signposting
845	782	262	50



Form Filling

Fightback Charity reads and write letters on behalf of clients with language or cognitive difficulties and fills in a variety of forms including Housing application forms, housing benefit and council tax benefit, PIP, DLA, Universal Credit, ESA forms including medical questionnaire forms, driving licence, Passports, etc. **Since April 2021 until April 2022, we have filled in 199 forms.**

Provision of Food Parcels

Covid 19 created exceptional circumstances, and highlighted the issue of food poverty in Sunderland, increasing the demand for food parcels and hygienic products from 34 to 100+ parcels a week. This has increased again due to the increase in food prices and utility costs, making everyday living expenses less affordable.

We continue to distribute much needed food parcels each week to refugees, asylum seekers, failed asylum seekers, BME groups, the destitute, and local elderly and disabled residents who have no family or friends to support them, families on low income or universal credit.

A standard Food parcel will have a mixed selection of basic meal base makers, such as, Rice, Pasta and Potatoes, a selection of difference fresh vegetables and fruit, tinned foods such as tuna, ham, corned beef, beans and tomatoes, and every day essentials, such as, eggs, milk, bread, teabags etc, with food parcels varying in size according to the size of the family, to ensure that people have enough food for at least one nutritious cooked meal per day.

People struggled to get supplies for various reasons, such as:

- Some of our clients are homeless, destitute, have no recourse to public funds or are on the most basic of incomes.
- A number of the elderly, disabled and vulnerable people in the local tower blocks have been forced to isolate or shield and have no families or friends to help and support them at this time, therefore Fightback is helping to provide them with food.
- Asylum seekers cannot order food online as they cannot use their Aspen cards.
- The majority of our clients have either no means of support at all or have a basic income of around £39 pounds per week.
- The prices of food and utilities has increased.
- Many of our clients have complex physical and/or mental health issues and remain wary of Corona Virus.
- Families with children on low incomes, universal credit, furloughed, or became unemployed were also struggling to buy food.

Since April 2021 to April 2022, we have provided 5,466 Food Parcels to single people and families with children.

The following photos illustrate the work we are doing and the wide range of single people and families we help, including deliveries to the disabled, elderly, those who are shielding or live on the outskirts of Sunderland and are unable to travel on public transport due to the virus or lack of funds to

do so. We currently have clients throughout Sunderland and some clients in Gateshead, Newcastle, Washington, Fence Houses, Houghton-le-Spring, Hebburn, Murton and South Shields.



Food Parcels Referrals

Fightback continues to receive referral from other agencies, such as, the Red Cross, CAB, Churches, Sunderland City Council and Charities.

Provision of Hygiene Products

Many people who are locked in poverty or those who find themselves in times of crisis often experience severely restricted options. This leaves them caught between being able to heat their home, pay their rent, buy food or keep clean. Hygiene poverty can be shaming, humiliating and excluding and can result in social isolation. Hygiene poverty can lead to a lack of confidence and can negatively affect good health and mental well-being and social interaction. At Fightback we provide hygiene products everymonth to over 70 clients

Since April 2021 untill April 2022 we have provided 772 hygienic products to our clients.



Remote Practical Services

Fightback charity continued to maintain contact and provide advice, support, help and reassurance where possible remotely on a daily basis even during weekends. As a result, we were able to continue to:

- Fill in paper and online forms, including, Housing applications, housing and council tax benefits, PIP, DLA, Universal Credit, ESA forms, including medical questionnaire forms, school transfer forms, child benefit forms, PIP, Mandatory reconsiderations, Gentoo home application forms, update HC1/2 forms, driving licences, immigration forms, residence permits, references, passports and updated universal credit journals etc.
- Contact different agencies on behalf of clients, including Councils, other Charities, Solicitors, Schools, Migrant Help, utility providers etc.
- Read and create letters and send them to various places on behalf of clients remotely.
- Kept in contact and provided information, support, and advice on a range of subjects and reassurance to clients via Phone, Text, WhatsApp, video calls and Facebook.
- Deal with other issues that have arisen due to covid-19, such as, ensuring asylum children could access Free School Meals and arranging essential travel for biometric purposes.
- Signpost clients onto other services where necessary.
- Responded to texts and requests for chats to let our clients know they have someone to turn to, even if it's only to hear another voice on the other side of the phone. (This is very important for clients who have anxiety or mental health issues)

Since April 2021 until April 2022, we have dealt with 824 enquiries.

Tabletop Day

Fightback takes in donations of previously loved items and then redistributes them free of charge to anyone in need at our tabletop days. Items include clothing, toys and household items.



Social Provisions

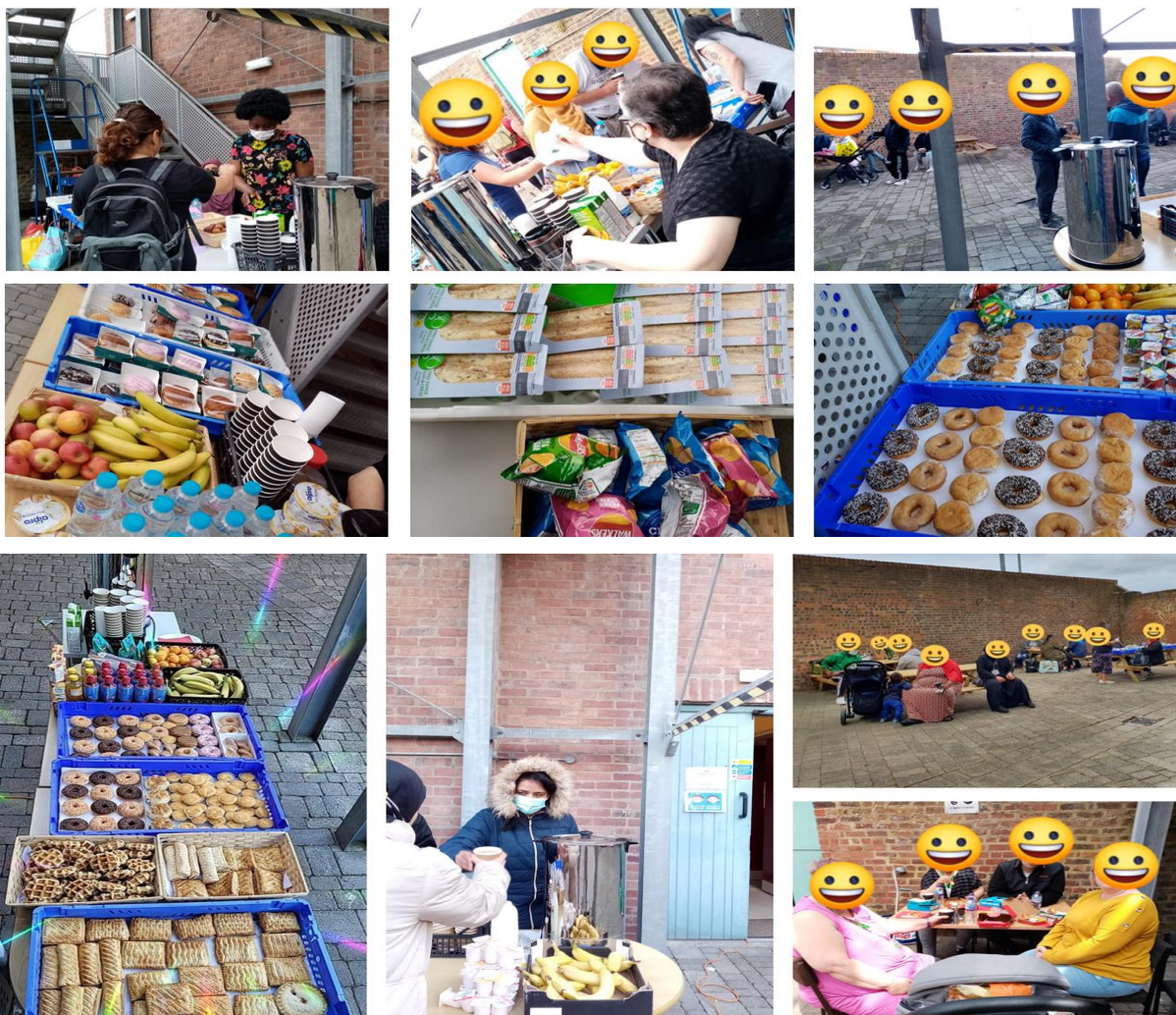
Coffee Morning and Befriending Services

As lock down was clearly having a negative impact on the mental health wellbeing of many of our clients we sort permission to use the large courtyard outside in July 2020 in order to reinstate our coffee morning to help to try and in-still a sense of normality to promote mental health wellbeing amongst our user groups.

This was vitally important as the aim of the coffee morning is to reduce social isolation and promote social inclusion. It also enables our clients to enjoy a range of hot and cold refreshments, such as, tea, coffee, drinking chocolate, dilute juice, fresh fruit, sandwiches, cheese and crackers, cakes, crisps, nuts, biscuits, toast, and soups, ensuring that some of our isolated clients can have hot food as this maybe the only hot food they have that day.

Throughout the summer and winter months our activities have remained outside to ensure we minimised the impact of spreading covid infections. Many families and single parents with children attended our coffee morning illustrating that people needed to socialize.

We have received positive feedback from our clients who are so happy to be able to get out again in a safe and relaxed atmosphere.



Remote Befriending

Fightback adapted its befriending service to maintain contact through remote means to provide ongoing help, support, and reassurance via, phone, text, WhatsApp, Facebook, Messenger and Zoom.

- Keep contact with the clients who had a Covid19 to provide them firstly with reassurance and moral support, but also advice on breathing techniques, eating, drinking and medications that help them to recover quickly.
- Responded to texts and requests for chats to let our clients know they have someone to turn to, even if it's only to hear another voice on the other side of the phone. (This is very important for clients who have anxiety or mental health issues)
- Deliver food parcels and hygienic product to clients who were shielding or isolating due to Covid19.
- Visited our elderly clients from behind the window or at a distance to give them food parcels and make sure they were okay.
- Help clients with getting their prescriptions.

Chat Club

Our 'Community Chat Club' gives people the opportunity to engage with other people, make positive social connections, make friends, have refreshments and breakdown barriers.

We provide a safe, friendly, relaxed environment where clients can talk about everyday life, their hopes, fears, plans for the future and mental health without being judged. They can share experiences, information, and strategies for coping with life's ups and downs, connect with others who understand what they are going through, and be heard. This service is designed to build self-esteem, self-worth, and self-awareness, promote autonomy, and increase motivation.

Educational Services

Job Skill Support

Fightback provides advice on how to look for jobs and apply for them online, creating and updating CV's, advice on approaching an employer with you CV or where to look for advertised vacancies.

We also provide guidance on updating Universal Credit journals and fulfilling job search requirements. This service increases skills, promotes autonomy, enables clients to take advantage of employment opportunities when they arise, prevents clients who are already economically and socially disadvantaged from being sanctioned by the DWP, and increases positive life chances.

Volunteers and Volunteering Opportunities

We have 15 dedicated volunteers on rotation who organise and run our weekly coffee morning, befriending service and drop-in services, collecting, packing, distributing and delivering food parcels. Fightback is a continuously evolving user led project that actively encourages user participation at every level and to take up various roles within the project, such as, acting as trustees and using their skills and competencies for the benefit of the whole project.

Whether it is simply giving their time to help organise and run the coffee morning, befriending, or drop-in service, provide or enhance their clerical skills and IT support, use their bilingual or multilingual skills to act as an interpreter or assemble and distribute food parcels. User participation through volunteering is essential as it helps us to continue to provide a wide range of services that are responsive to the needs of the users themselves. Also, providing our clients/users with volunteering opportunities also helps them to gain new or enhance transferable skills which they can then use to secure paid employment, college or university courses and Fightback is always happy to provide volunteers with references.

Other Services

Free Hair Cuts

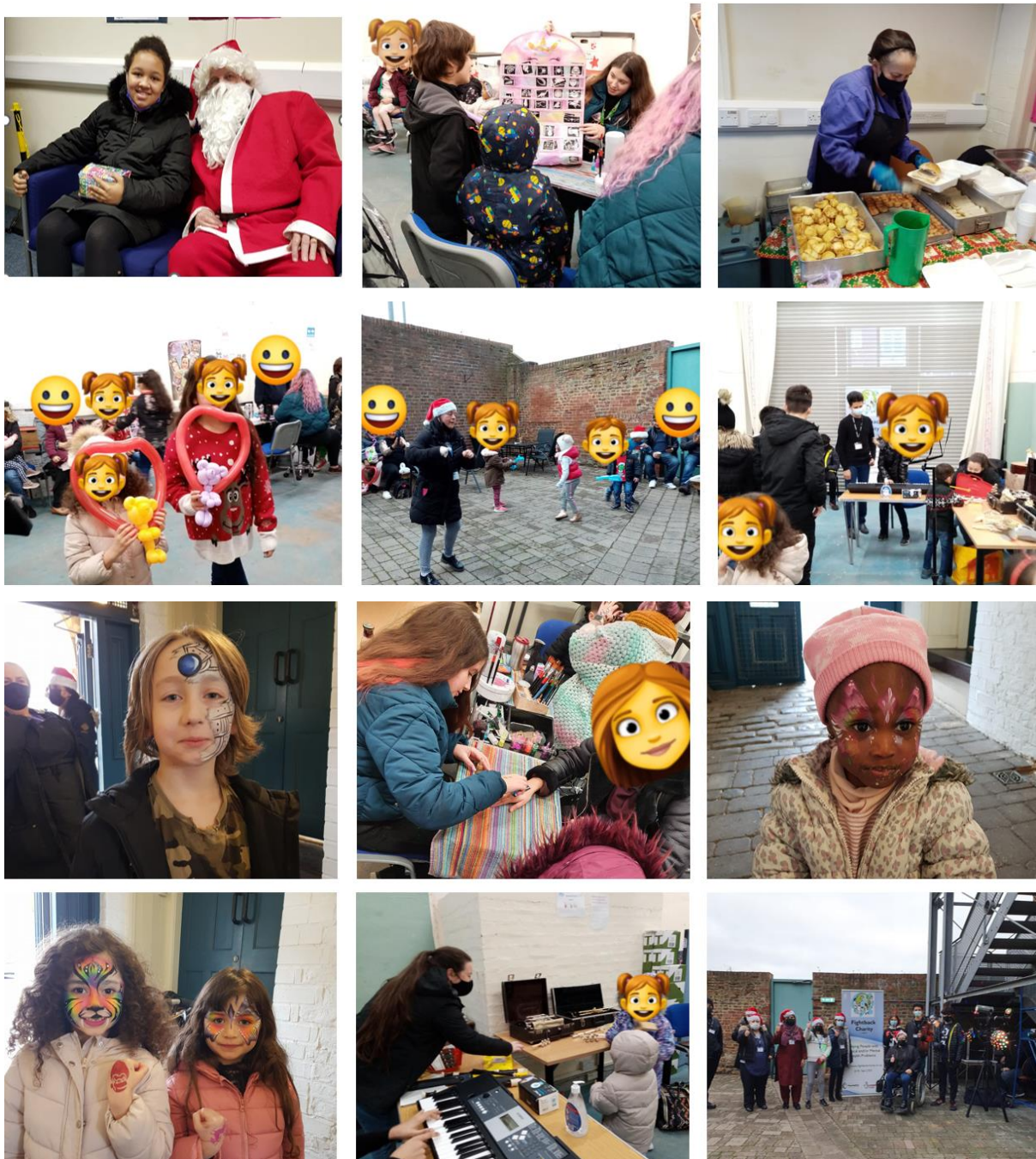
As our clients have many challenges to face, one of them often being low self-esteem. A haircut can have a great effect on someone's self-esteem, by giving them a real boost and feel good about themselves. We continued to provide free haircuts for our clients.



Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) and Christmas party

In December 2021 Fightback held two family fun days in conjunction with Sunderland Council and the Education Authority (out of school meals) to provide children with activities and a hot meal. 165 children and their families attended. Additionally, each child engaged in fun educational activities, got to see Santa, and received a present. While the parents were provided with 12 days of Christmas Food Hamper, providing enough fresh fruit, veg and other foods to make a breakfast, and main meal for a family of 4 for 12 days. We have been asked to provide similar events during the summer or in the winter break, illustrating our success at being able to support families with children with out of school activities.





Working in Partnership

Although many other organisations closed down to the general public and their clients during Covid-19, Fightback maintained contact with these agencies and engaged in regular updates, urgent case referrals and collaborations behind the scenes via Zoom and Teams meetings. Many of these other organisations have now reopened and we continue to work closely with various charities, organisations and agencies, such as, NERS and the wider Connect network, MEARS, FODI, City of Sanctuary, ICOS, Action Foundation and Sunderland City Council.

Medical Placement

Fightback has been working with Sunderland University and have had three year 6 medical students assigned to our Charity as part of their community placements.

The students have visited our organisation on a few occasions and observed our activities, interacted with volunteers, did some background research and interviewed Fightback Charity's staff.

The students also spoke to other clients/ service users, to gain insight into the experiences of refugees, asylum seekers and minority ethnic groups.

British Empire Medal

In June 2021 Fightback charity received the fantastic news that our manager Matti had been awarded a BEM for charitable service in Sunderland, Tyne and Wear. Matti said: "It's been team work though - without our team of fantastic volunteers, our trustees, our funders, we wouldn't have been able to provide support during the pandemic and beyond.

Royal honour for Sunderland charity worker's service during covid pandemic

A Sunderland charity worker has been honoured by the Queen for her work during the Covid pandemic.



Funding

National Lottery Community Fund

In Nov 2021, the, National Lottery Community Fund kindly donated funding for five years to cover the costs of our accommodation, rental, salary of our existing part-time manager and accountancy charges.

Fundraising 2021-2022

- National Lottery Grant Uplift
- Jill Franklin trust
- City of Sunderland Council
- Barbour Trust donated
- Souter Charitable Trust
- Community Foundation the Watkin Family Fund
- Community Foundation P&G
- Community Foundation Grigor McClelland
- Cash Philanthropy Donation
- PayPal Philanthropy Donation
- Sunderland police constabulary for providing outdoor heaters and gazebos to help keep out coffee morning clients dry during the winter months.
- Sunderland City Council provided Fightback with £600 Tesco Care Package Vouchers for the purchase of hygiene products to distribute to our clients.
- Fightback is currently being supported by Sunderland City Council with Fareshare donations which help us to provide a wide range of food products in our food parcels.
- In kind direct has gifted Fightback clothes, which we redistribute amongst the local community.

Thank You for your Support.

- To all of our funders for their kind generosity
- Greggs (Union street Sunderland), who provides unsold pastries for our coffee mornings.
- Tesco for donating unsold food.
- Sunderland City Council for financially supporting us with Food share contributions towards our weekly food bank.
- SVP Charity for their kind donations
- Sunderland Police Constabulary Community Officers.
- Northumbria Fire Brigade.
- Chris Howson, Sunderland University Chaplin
- Fightback charity trustees, staff and volunteers.

Business Information

Committee Members

Chairperson: Diana Lambton

Secretary: Sabina Bain

Treasure: Claudia Conteh

Committee Member: Monique Gorvel

Committee Member: Naghey Amine Masola

Committee Member: Mohammad Azizi

Committee Member: Mahmood Sharif Rahim

Committee Member: Janet Nalweysio

Committee Member: Daniel Pearce

Committee Member: Ali Mirzaei

Accountants

Accountability

Nautilus House, Durham Rd, Birtley, Chester-le-Street DH3 2PA

Bankers

4 Brindley Pl, Birmingham B1 2JB

Address

Fightback (Society for Disabled Refugees and Asylum Seekers)

Registered Charity; Charity number: 1168874

Units 4-6. Eagle Building High Street East Sunderland SR1 2AX.

Phone: 01915652707

Fightback

Approval statement

I approve these accounts which comprise the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet and the related notes. I acknowledge my responsibility for the accounts, including the appropriateness of the accounting basis as set out in note 1, and for providing all the information and explanations necessary for their compilation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Lambton', written in a cursive style.

Diana Lambton

30 September 2022

Fightback

Accountants' report to the members on the unaudited accounts to Fightback

You have approved the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet and the related notes. In accordance with your instructions, we have compiled these unaudited accounts from the accounting records and information and explanations supplied to us.

Accountability
Accountants



Nautilus House
Durham Road
Birtley
County Durham
DH3 2PA

30 September 2022

**Fightback
Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 31 March 2022**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2021 £
Incoming resources	29,883	73,253	103,136	154,757
Resources expended				
Wages, salaries and other staff costs	-	29,313	29,313	23,171
Travel, volunteer expenses & consumables	475	7,015	7,490	7,376
Rent, rates, power and insurance costs	-	8,906	8,906	8,403
Telephone, fax, stationery and other office costs	2,100	521	2,621	2,650
Food parcels	1,226	39,930	41,156	41,524
Bank, credit card and other finance charges	60	93	153	144
Accountancy, legal and other professional fees	-	505	505	558
Other business expenses	1,617	2,071	3,688	3,191
	<u>5,478</u>	<u>88,354</u>	<u>93,832</u>	<u>87,017</u>
Surplus	<u>24,405</u>	<u>(15,101)</u>	<u>9,304</u>	<u>67,740</u>
Balance brought forward	45,144	26,204	71,348	3,608
Balance carried forward	69,549	11,103	80,652	71,348

**Fightback
Balance Sheet
as at 31 March 2022**

	Notes		2022 £	2021 £
Current assets				
Bank/building society balances		81,225	71,269	
Cash in hand		-	79	
		<u>81,225</u>	<u>71,348</u>	
Net current assets			80,652	71,348
Net assets			<u>80,652</u>	<u>71,348</u>
Accumulated fund		Unrestricted Restricted		
Balance at start of period		45,144 26,204	71,348	3,608
Net surplus	3	24,405 (15,101)	9,304	67,740
		<u>69,549 11,103</u>	<u>80,652</u>	<u>71,348</u>

Fightback
Notes to the Accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2022

1 Accounting basis

The accounts have been compiled on a basis that enables surpluses to be calculated in accordance with UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice and that provides sufficient and relevant information to enable the completion of a tax return if necessary.

2 Income and Expenditure account analysis

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 £	2021 £
Incoming resources				
Fundraising	29,883	73,253	<u>103,136</u>	<u>154,757</u>
Wages, salaries and other staff costs				
Wages and salaries	-	19,601	19,601	15,036
Pensions	-	2,027	2,027	1,750
PAYE & NI	-	7,685	7,685	6,313
Building Capabilities				
Training & Development & Networking	-	-	-	72
	-	29,313	<u>29,313</u>	<u>23,171</u>
Travel, volunteer expenses and consumables				
Consumables for citizenship classes	-	-	-	-
Volunteer expenses for classes	-	-	-	-
Volunteer teacher expenses	-	-	-	-
Volunteer general expenses	475	7,015	<u>7,490</u>	<u>7,376</u>
Rent, rates, power and insurance costs				
Rent	-	7,805	7,805	6,175
Rates	-	276	276	276
Property insurance	-	825	825	318
Expensed equipment	-	-	-	1,634
	-	8,906	<u>8,906</u>	<u>8,403</u>
Telephone, fax, stationery and other office costs				
Telephone and fax & stationery	381	187	568	1,040
Stationery and printing	388	334	722	512
Software	1,331	-	1,331	1,098
	2,100	521	<u>2,621</u>	<u>2,650</u>
Food parcels				
Food parcels	79	39,134	39,213	36,298
Cash donations to failed asylum seekers	-	-	-	20
Toiletries for failed asylum seekers	1,147	796	1,943	5,206
	1,226	39,930	<u>41,156</u>	<u>41,524</u>
Bank, credit card and other finance charges				
Bank charges	60	93	<u>153</u>	<u>144</u>
Accountancy, legal and other professional fees				
Accountants fees	-	505	<u>505</u>	<u>558</u>
Other business expenses				
Other sundry costs	1,140	926	2,066	65
COVID-19 Related costs	-	-	-	2,131
Christmas Celebrations	477	1,145	1,622	995
	<u>1,617</u>	<u>2,071</u>	<u>3,688</u>	<u>3,191</u>

Fightback
Notes to the Accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2022

3 Restricted funds

	Balance as at 1 April 2021 £	Incoming £	Transfer Between Funds £	Outgoing £	Balance as at 31 March 2022 £
Big Lottery Fund Grant	6,187	31,032	-	29,882	7,337
Greatham Hospital	-	1,000	-	1,000	-
Jill Franklin Trust	1,771	24,000	-	22,376	3,395
James Knott Trust	-	5,000	-	5,000	-
Groundwork (One Stop Bag Levy)	-	1,000	-	1,000	-
Postcode	17,233	-	-	17,233	-
Together For Children	-	9,721	-	9,350	371
Disability Action	1,013	1,500	-	2,513	-
	<u>26,204</u>	<u>73,253</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>88,354</u>	<u>11,103</u>



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
Fightback

On accounts for the year
ended

30/04/2022

Charity no
(if any)

1168874

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 30 / 04 / 2022.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 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.

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.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Date:

24/01/2023

Name:

Mr Christopher Younger MAAT

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

Association of Accounting Technicians

Address:

1 Burnway, Albany

Washington
Ne37 1BG

Section B**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

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