



## **Fightback Charity**

Society of Disabled Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Annual Accounts and Reports

April 2023

## **Trustees' Annual Report for the Year 2022/2023**

### **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 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 well-being of our clients by involving, supporting and engaging marginalised and disadvantaged individuals, facilitating autonomy, building confidence, reducing social isolation, and promoting integration into the wider community and community cohesion.

The 'Cost of Living Crisis', the massive increases in fuel, utilities, food, and other commodities, have significantly increased the demand for our services.

### **Practical Services**

#### **Drop-in Service**

Our twice-weekly Drop-in service offers a comprehensive range of everyday practical support. Clients can come by for advice and information.

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.

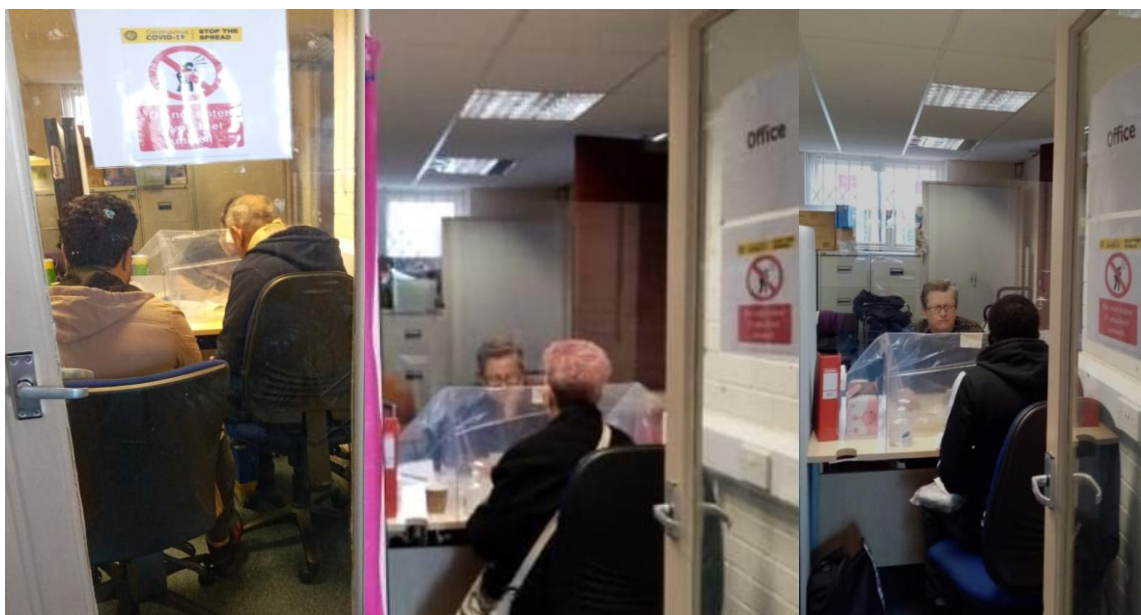
Clients often tell us that dealing with these practical everyday issues causes them the most stress in their lives because the processes, forms and criteria can be so complicated and confusing. However, feedback from our beneficiaries has indicated that knowing they can access help with working through 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 affect their lives and improves resilience and life chances.

We also provide access to phones, the internet, the use of a laptop and a printer.

The Table below shows the amount of people we have helped since our drop in was reinstated from April 2022 to April 2023

Advice	Advocacy and Mediation	Signposting
1255	267	150



## Form Filling

It is an absolute lifeline for so many of our clients who have difficulties with language, reading and writing, levels of understanding or other difficulties understanding the forms the need to complete to access support.

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 2022 until April 2023, we have filled in 203 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 'Cost of Living Crisis', the massive rises in the cost of fuel, utilities, food, and other commodities, 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.







Since April 2022 to April 2023 we have provided 5,905 Food Parcels to single people and families with children.

### **Food Parcels Referrals**

Fightback continues to receive referrals from other agencies, such as 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, mental well-being and social interaction. At Fightback we provide hygiene products to clients. Since April 2022 until April 2023 we have provided 1,550 hygienic products to our clients.





## The Social Services

Fightback holds a twice weekly '**Coffee Morning**' and '**Befriending Service**'. These social activities enable people to come together and enjoy a selection of refreshments in a safe and welcoming environment. Our aim is reducing loneliness and social isolation promoting social inclusion and promoting mental health wellbeing amongst our user groups. 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.



The **Chat Club:** gives people the opportunity to engage with others, make positive social connections and break down 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.

### **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.





## **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 20 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

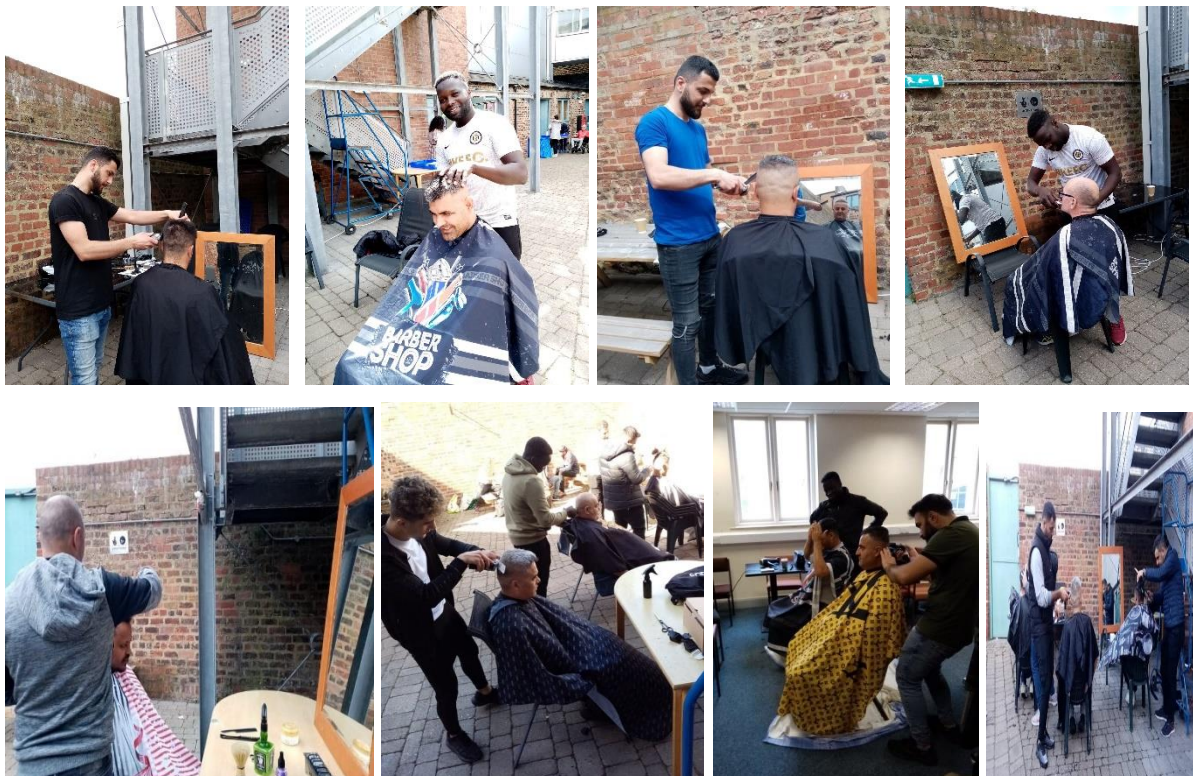
participation at every level and to take up various roles within the project, such as, acting as trustees and using their skills and competencies for the benefit of the whole project.

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.





As part of '**Refugee Week**' Fightback extended its usual Thursday coffee morning and provided Lunch for our clients.

Thank you to all of our volunteers, Dominos Pizza in Sunderland who provided the food, and all those who attended. The weather was glorious and the children and adults alike really enjoyed their ice creams afterwards.



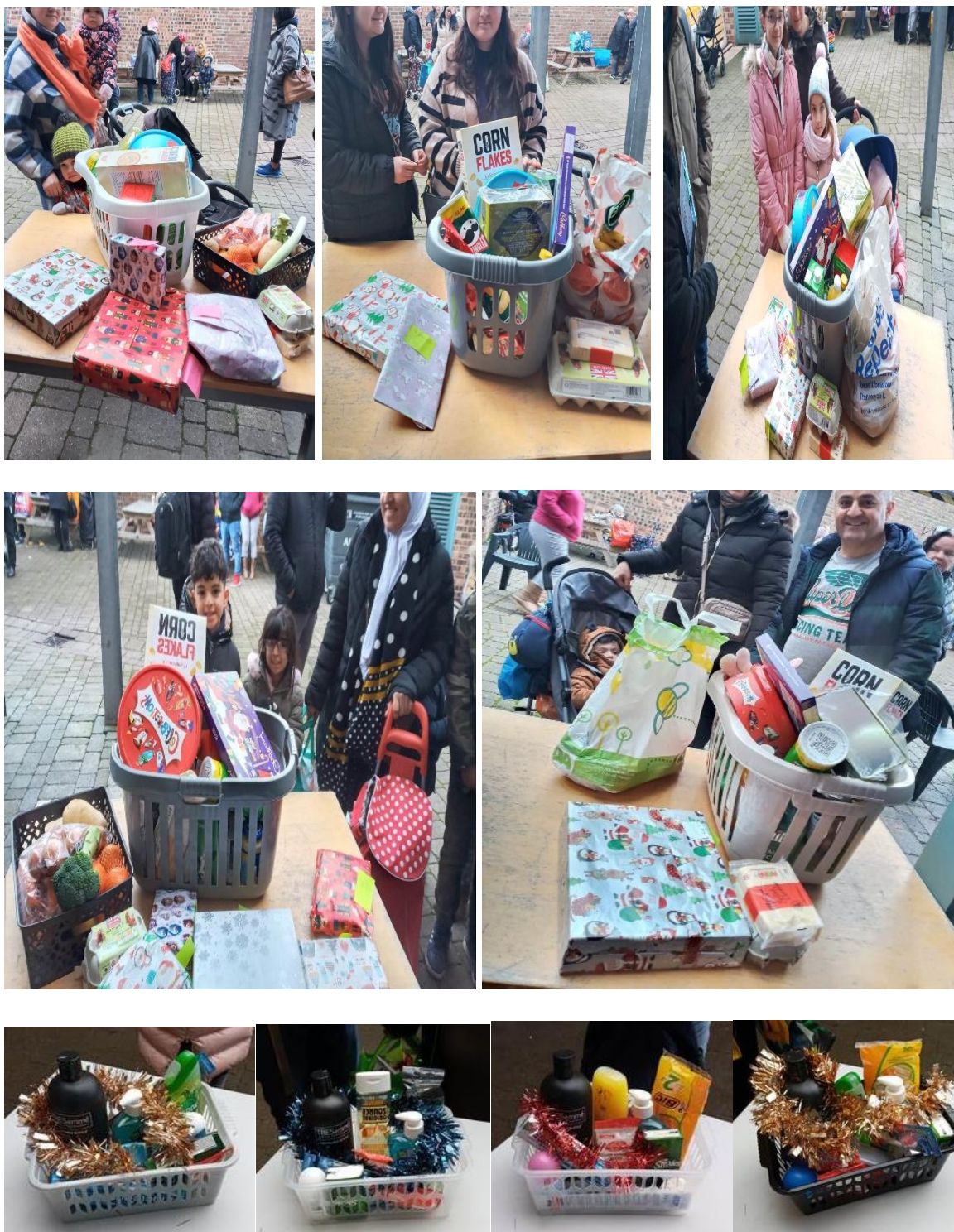
## **Christmas Hampers**

In December 2022, we provided 170 Christmas Food Hamper to family and single in need. This heartfelt initiative aimed to bring joy and warmth to those facing challenges during the holiday season, ensuring that they could experience the spirit of Christmas. We also made the holidays special for 168 children by providing each of them with a thoughtful gift, ensuring that the magic of the season reached the younger members of the community as well.









## 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.

## **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**

- Jill Franklin Trust
- City of Sunderland Council
- Barbour Trust
- Community Foundation
- Groundwork
- Souter Charitable Trust
- Cash Philanthropy Donation
- Lloyds Bank Foundation
- 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.



## **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.
- Sunderland University for their kind donations of food, toiletries and cleaning products.

## **Business Information**

### **Committee Members**

Chairperson: Diana Lambton

Secretary: Sabina Bain

Treasurer: 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

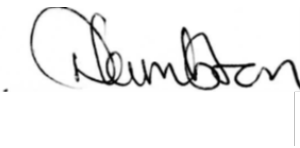
Units 4-6. Eagle Building High Street East Sunderland SR1 2AX.

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', is written over a faint horizontal line.

Diana Lambton

19 December 2023



## **Fightback**

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

You have approved the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 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

19 December 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Murray', is positioned to the right of the accountants' address.

**Fightback  
Income and Expenditure Account  
for the year ended 31 March 2023**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Total Funds 2022 £
<b>Incoming resources</b>	15,588	63,144	78,732	103,136
<b>Resources expended</b>				
Wages, salaries and other staff costs	-	18,715	18,715	29,313
Travel, volunteer expenses & consumables	5,920	1,000	6,920	7,490
Rent, rates, power and insurance costs	909	8,386	9,295	8,906
Telephone, fax, stationery and other office costs	2,906	-	2,906	2,621
Food parcels	2,112	31,009	33,121	41,156
Bank, credit card and other finance charges	104	89	193	153
Accountancy, legal and other professional fees	62	578	640	505
Other business expenses	1,168	371	1,539	3,688
	13,181	60,148	73,329	93,832
<b>Surplus</b>	2,407	2,996	5,403	9,304
Balance brought forward	69,549	11,103	80,652	71,348
Balance carried forward	71,956	14,099	86,055	80,652

**Fightback**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**as at 31 March 2023**

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Current assets</b>			
Bank/building society balances		86,665	81,225
Cash in hand		49	-
		<u>86,714</u>	<u>81,225</u>
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade creditors		<u>659</u>	<u>573</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		86,055	80,652
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>86,055</u>	<u>80,652</u>
<b>Accumulated fund</b>			
	Unrestricted	Restricted	
Balance at start of period	69,549	11,103	71,348
Net surplus	3 2,407	2,996	5,403 9,304
	<u>71,956</u>	<u>14,099</u>	<u>86,055</u> <u>80,652</u>

**Fightback**  
**Notes to the Accounts**  
**for the year ended 31 March 2023**

**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 £	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Incoming resources</b>				
Fundraising	15,588	63,144	<u>78,732</u>	<u>103,136</u>
<b>Wages, salaries and other staff costs</b>				
Wages and salaries	-	13,549	13,549	19,601
Pensions	-	1,359	1,359	2,027
PAYE & NI	-	3,807	3,807	7,685
<b>Building Capabilities</b>				
	-	18,715	<u>18,715</u>	<u>29,313</u>
<b>Travel, volunteer expenses and consumables</b>				
Volunteer general expenses	5,920	1,000	<u>6,920</u>	<u>7,490</u>
<b>Rent, rates, power and insurance costs</b>				
Rent	909	7,710	8,619	7,805
Rates	-	412	412	276
Property insurance	-	264	264	825
	<u>909</u>	<u>8,386</u>	<u>9,295</u>	<u>8,906</u>
<b>Telephone, fax, stationery and other office costs</b>				
Telephone and fax & stationery	766	-	766	568
Stationery and printing	1,017	-	1,017	722
Software	1,123	-	1,123	1,331
	<u>2,906</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,906</u>	<u>2,621</u>
<b>Food parcels</b>				
Food parcels	2,112	27,620	29,732	39,213
Toiletries for failed asylum seekers	-	3,389	3,389	1,943
	<u>2,112</u>	<u>31,009</u>	<u>33,121</u>	<u>41,156</u>
<b>Bank, credit card and other finance charges</b>				
Bank charges	104	89	<u>193</u>	<u>153</u>
<b>Accountancy, legal and other professional fees</b>				
Accountants fees	-	578	578	505
Other legal and professional	26	-	26	-
Interpreter	36	-	36	-
	<u>62</u>	<u>578</u>	<u>640</u>	<u>505</u>
<b>Other business expenses</b>				
Other sundry costs	1,045	371	1,416	2,066
Christmas Celebrations	123	-	123	1,622
	<u>1,168</u>	<u>371</u>	<u>1,539</u>	<u>3,688</u>



**Fightback**  
**Notes to the Accounts**  
**for the year ended 31 March 2023**

**3 Restricted funds**

	Balance as at 1 April 2022 £	Incoming £	Transfer Between Funds £	Outgoing £	Balance as at 31 March 2023 £
Big Lottery Fund Grant	7,337	34,419	-	27,768	13,988
Greatham Hospital	-	-	-	-	-
Jill Franklin Trust	3,395	15,600	-	18,995	-
Community Foundation	-	7,000	-	7,000	-
Community Foundation	-	3,500	-	3,389	111
Community Foundation	-	1,000	-	1,000	-
Together For Children	371	-	-	371	-
Groundwork UK -On	-	500	-	500	-
Groundwork UK -Te	-	1,125	-	1,125	-
	<u>11,103</u>	<u>63,144</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>60,148</u>	<u>14,099</u>



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

Charity Name  
Fightback

On accounts for the year  
ended

30/04/2023

Charity no  
(if any)

1168874

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

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

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:

31/01/2024

Name:

Miss Darna Leng MAAT

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

Association of Accounting Technicians

Address:

46 Fordlance Place

Sunderland
SR4 6UR

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.