

**Friends of the Drop in for Asylum Seekers and Refugees**

**Charitable Incorporated Organisation number: 1176524**

**Trustees' Report  
and  
Financial Statement  
for the year ended  
31 March 2021**

## **Legal and Administrative Information**

Name: **Friends of the Drop in for Asylum Seekers and Refugees**

Charitable Incorporated Organisation number: 1176524

Structure: Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Directors of FODI:

Stephen Newman	
Felicity Livsey	Treasurer
Jane Nikolarakis	
Zeinab Cummings	
Tolosa Tadesse	(Resigned November 2020)
Abraham Eiluorior	
Zara Juma	
Mali Saha	(Appointed May 2020)
Fannie Ng'ambi	(Appointed November 2020)
Sally Vivyan	(Appointed March 2021)

Address: Unit 10 Bridge House  
Bridge St  
Sunderland  
SR1 1TE

Bankers: Santander Bank.

Independent Examiner: Mark Thompson MAAT  
42 Lesbury Road  
Newcastle  
NE6 5LB

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

**Report to the  
trustees of**

**Friends of the Drop in for Asylum Seekers  
and Refugees**

**On accounts for  
the year ended**

**31 March 2021**

**Charity no** 1176524

**Respective  
responsibilities of  
trustees and  
examiner**

The trustees of the organisation are responsible for the preparation of accounts; they consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 and that an Independent Examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts (under section 145 of the 2011 Act),
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act), and
- 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 Commissioners. 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 I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

**Independent  
examiner's  
statement**

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:
  - proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 130 of the Act); and
  - accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; 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 October 2021**

**Name:  
Address:**

Mark Thompson MAAT  
42 Lesbury Road  
Newcastle  
NE6 5LB

**FRIENDS OF THE DROP-IN FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES**  
**Trustees' Annual Report for year 1.4.2020 to 31.3.2021**

**Friends of the Drop-in (FODI) has the following purposes:**

We aim to improve the mental health and the well-being of the asylum-seeking and refugee community in Sunderland, lessening their social isolation and promoting their integration into the wider community, by supporting and extending the activities of the Drop In currently run on Wednesday afternoons.

We seek to provide opportunities for the clients of the Drop-In to participate in wider societal activities of a suitable nature.

We seek to extend links with the wider community giving our clients opportunities to interact with others. We seek to work in partnership with other local organisations/groups to further this aim.

**Funding:**

We have been supported for the year under review by the NHS Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group, Lloyds Bank Foundation, Sunderland Partnership Sunderland City Council, Community Foundation Tyne and Wear National Emergency Trust Covid 19 fund, Barrow Cadbury Trust Covid 19 Support fund, Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria Coronavirus Response Fund, Sunderland City Council (Covid Winter Fund), Mears Foundation, Wearside Community Development Trust, as well as most welcome donations from a range of organisations including the St Vincent de Paul Society, Brar & Co, Seaburn Rotary Club and other organisations and individuals who prefer not to be named.

We have a full-time manager, Sandra Watt, who has managed FODI COVID 19 emergency response and the development of projects and alternative services in partnership with other organisations to support asylum seekers and refugees.

**Volunteers:**

Our volunteers include both locals and clients who form a very committed team. We were fortunate to get help from those who came forward to the local authority at the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020 to help with delivery of essential supplies and to collect donations.

Long term volunteers continued to work both directly face to face with clients as well as distanced support.

We have continued to support and develop volunteer recruitment at our new services such as Sunderland Minster collection days from both the local community and new asylum seeker clients. We encourage volunteers to take on roles of responsibility becoming trustees or representing FODI on panel discussions.

**Trustees:**

We are pleased to have welcomed new trustees to the committee, which has continued to show full commitment throughout the year.

The use of virtual platforms has allowed all meetings to take place online regularly with no gaps.

**Clients:**

Sunderland had 360-400 asylum seekers at any given time throughout this period.

Dispersal continued throughout the pandemic with many clients arriving without having gone into initial hostel accommodation, so they arrived after having been in the country for only a few days. A number of families and single people were in this situation and we provided the additional support which they needed, food, clothing and equipment. Other new arrivals have been in hotels or other emergency accommodation and arrived to their dispersed accommodation with additional needs, with which we helped them.

Clients who had received both positive and negative decisions stayed in current Home Office accommodation provided by Mears throughout lockdown.

FODI clients come from over 40 countries and speak more than 25 different languages.

**SERVICES PROVIDED DURING PANDEMIC:**

Due to Covid 19 we have provided a different service to the asylum seekers and refugees this year. We remained open throughout for support and contact. As we have not been able to run the normal Drop-In, we have operated by telephone, online, on the door step and some collection days by appointment at Sunderland Minster instead of open Drop-Ins. In addition, when we have known about them, we have visited every new arrival to Sunderland.

**FODI Emergency Response:**

FODI set up an emergency response team to take on daily crises and calls for help from our clients as well as to make fast decisions that did not need to go to the board. The asylum seeker and refugee volunteer interpreters have been a vital resource during the pandemic when people could not meet face to face and have provided this indispensable service on the telephone.

**New Arrivals:**

FODI's links with Mears Home Office Accommodation workers have been an important part of providing welcome for new arrivals and caring for particularly vulnerable individuals. When informed of new arrivals FODI staff and volunteers made many door-step visits to greet people and respond to urgent needs. In order to formalise this sharing of information so that new people were not missed whilst Drop-Ins were closed, a new project was set up by NEMP. FODI was chosen as one of only three organizations in the whole of the North East to do a six-month pilot called New Arrivals Pathway Pilot. New arrivals were asked to sign consent forms giving their contact details, enabling FODI to offer welcome and orientation. The other two organisations are STARCH in South Tyneside and Red Cross, Stockton on Tees. The pilot will run from April – September 21 and the hope is that this will become standard and be rolled out to all welcome and orientation services throughout the region.

**Volunteers:**

We have kept in touch with many of the local volunteers who helped us initially through the local council appeal. One, who returned to work some time ago, has instigated and co-ordinated donations for asylum seekers from a whole estate in Sunderland. Many other asylum seekers have come forward to help as volunteers at collection days or to act as interpreters and Covid Champions. Meanwhile, long term volunteers have offered support by phone and in person to FODI clients providing a vital, inestimable, service.

**EMERGENCY AND RECOVERY COVID FUNDING:**

The FODI manager was successful in getting both emergency Covid funding as well as project funding in specialist joint bids described below.

Covid Emergency from NET Community Foundation Tyne and Wear, Cultural Spring, Wearside Community Development Trust, Police and Crime Commissioner's fund, Sunderland City Council Strategic Advice Services, Sunderland City Council Covid winter fund, Mears Foundation and Recovery Funding from Barrow Cadbury Trust provided the following:

- Supermarket food vouchers for emergency use for 390 adults and over 100 children both new arrivals and clients in need.
- Fresh Food Bags: Funding towards costs for our partner from Roker Life - Social Chef CIC- to make up food parcels delivered by FODI volunteers to houses during lockdown. Also food parcels for a series of open collection days at Sunderland Minster attended by minimum of 60 adults each session. (Our partner Social Chef has also obtained much additional funding to assist our clients)
- Sunderland Minster Collection Days - as we were not able to provide the weekly Drop-Ins at St Mary's Parish Centre. These fortnightly collection days started in July 2020 and were carried out according to changing Covid restrictions throughout the year, only closing part of the time in the third lockdown. They have been a vital opportunity to give out donated clothes, school uniforms, kitchen equipment, baby equipment and toys. (School uniform was distributed in collaboration with the Churches Together charity. Knit for Peace sent many donated knitted items and craft materials.) The Minster sessions proved to be a hugely successful way of keeping in contact and supporting our clients - a film for our AGM regarding this emergency funding and the services provided is on our website here: FODI (fodisunderland.org)
- Art & Craft Projects for women and for families from March 20 enabled over 60 families and many single people to get art and craft materials and specialist packs with support to keep them active during lockdowns. We have continued until the present time to give out art and craft packs to new families as they arrive (over 20 additional families ). The Corona Quilt online was produced for refugee week June 2020 and can be seen here: REFUGEE WEEK 2020 – FODI (fodisunderland.org)
- Women's Group Dance In order to continue the women's group dance project we set up a women's dance class online on Zoom. We adapted as lockdown rules changed so we moved to the park in summer 2020. (See short film made for AGM.)
- Sports - funded by Barrow Cadbury Trust Covid Recovery fund - Through a successful joint bid with Young Asian Voices, we continued women's dance from Sep 20 onwards, online and in person depending on Covid restrictions, whilst YAV provided a comprehensive range of multi sports for adults and families– football, badminton, table tennis etc changing as needed for Covid rules.

- Emergency Clothes for New Arrival Single Men in Hotels - FODI also responded to an urgent request for emergency clothing for single men who had just arrived in the country and were put in hotels in Newcastle - some having not even a change of clothes. We were also able to provide indoor and outdoor games for those with absolutely no possessions and nothing to do. Following a grant from Mears Foundation, we continued to provide new basic clothes for new arrivals – especially men - as we get limited suitable donations for single young men.
- Phone Top Ups - Were funded initially by the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to provide much needed digital phone top ups for our desperate clients who needed to access zoom sessions and be able to WhatsApp their friends and family.
- Christmas Unable to hold any party or celebration, we instead gave gift vouchers to 117 children (partly funded by Seaburn Rotary club) and delivered fresh food from Social Chef and hampers from Feeding Families.

#### **ADDITIONAL PROJECTS AND COLLABORATIONS**

- Sunderland Minster Collection Days and new Drop-In -We have built a successful new relationship with Sunderland Minster who have supported us throughout the pandemic, to provide welcoming collection days for FODI clients as we were unable to use our usual Drop-In space. FODI will continue to run a Drop-In type social and collection event there once every two weeks in addition to our regular Drop-In which we hope to reopen later in 2021.
- Bikes - Where possible, when there has not been full lockdown, FODI has continued to work on donated bikes and give them out to adults and children desperate for a way of getting around the city. This has become more important as MEARS have started to house more single people further out of the city. Funding from Quakers of Britain for the project was extended.
- BSBT In-Kind Support The FODI manager was successful with an In-kind support bid to Building Stronger Britain Together, from whom we had previously received funding for our work in schools on challenging extremist views through education. The bid was for MC Saatchi to make films and develop for a new website. They agreed to do rebranding of the FODI logo but not website. They made films of refugees telling their stories, to be used in schools when asylum seekers cannot attend. Unfortunately the films have not been released for FODI use.
- Collaborating with other asylum seeker services and connecting communities at SCC through fortnightly meetings.
- Justice Together Initiative The FODI manager was part of North of England Law Centre planning for their bid to provide a fairer and more extensive reach for immigration services throughout the NE. FODI has an established working relationship with NE Law Centre. The successful bid offers an extended outreach with FODI for the next two years to provide immigration advice from Sunderland, as there are no immigration solicitors in the city.
- Destitute Clients in the Washington House FODI continued to give financial support to 4 destitute clients who live in the Washington house which is maintained through Action Foundation.
- Sunderland University Medical Students FODI was assigned six second year medical students on community placement. Unfortunately, due to Covid much of the training offered was online but the students were given opportunities to join the Drop-In and meet some of our clients. Feedback was positive, despite the limited access.
- PhD study During 2021 we hosted a PhD student who conducted ethnographic research on FODI's work with asylum seekers and refugees. This forms the basis of a study on leadership practice at asylum seeker and refugee charities.
- University Students' FODI documentary Two MA students from Sunderland University made a documentary about FODI called 'Changing'. They looked at the history of FODI, its role in Sunderland and interviewed asylum seekers about how they interact with FODI and why they had to come to the UK to seek sanctuary.
- SBMEN Covid Champions Project FODI was one of five partners from SBME network who bid to Sunderland City council for a targeted Covid Champions project where a worker and volunteers would share key messages with our communities and encourage people to get the vaccine. We received funding for six months (until September 2021) for a part time worker and recruited a refugee from Sunderland to work in the community. We successfully recruited 8 Covid Champion from January to March, who could pass on messages in their first language to their own communities. We organised an outreach pop up vaccine session where 97 people were vaccinated in March 2021.

## **SOCIAL ISOLATION**

Throughout the entire pandemic we have made it our mission to combat social isolation for our clients. However, the many lockdowns have meant that people have suffered due to long periods indoors unable to contact others. We have provided links to ESOL and many online art and dance activities. In addition to activities described previously, we have provided board games, craft lessons and materials for single HMOs. We also give gym and swim tickets to our clients to help improve their physical and mental well-being. However, as a front line charity, we know that we have not been able to reach all of our clients and many are still feeling isolated and/or anxious about mixing with others.

We also set up a number of WhatsApp groups to help people keep in touch with each other and with us.

## **MOVE ON**

During the first lockdown no one was allowed to move accommodation even if they had had a positive decision. After this time those who stayed had a long wait for the normal Move On assistance. We have maintained a good relationship with Sunderland Council Housing Options team throughout. We have liaised with them to develop a Move On checklist to assist our clients. Due to the difficulties of getting accommodation these people have needed intensive help. As a result of this we have also forged a new working partnership with another case work community project, Pallion Action Group, to assist with securing private accommodation if that is the only option. This has been a new and very positive liaison for FODI and our clients.

FODI has provided very practical assistance to clients through volunteers and the manager for their Move On steps. This has ranged from basic case work to practical equipment/ furniture etc.

## **CHALLENGES FACING FODI**

**SERVICES:** It will remain a continuing challenge to adjust and develop our services, especially Drop-Ins, in line with government guidelines but as we have constantly delivered throughout this difficult year, the FODI team are ready and committed as ever.

## **CLIENTS:**

Keeping in touch with everyone is a huge issue and there are a number of people who only want minimal contact initially but may later need help when crises arise.

Trying to help clients understand that many appointments with their lawyers or GP, for example, will now be by telephone rather than face to face. For our clients, this is an added burden because typically they want to be seen face to face and also it is harder to communicate on the telephone, even with an interpreter, possibly resulting in

## **COVID KEY MESSAGES AND VACCINE**

As described above this is a huge task for all of the FODI team, workers and volunteers to try and keep clients up to date with the rules and to encourage people to have the vaccine. Large numbers of our clients are refusing to have the vaccine either from fear or because of disinformation circulating online and often shared within their own cultural community. We will continue with this challenging work throughout 2021

## **CHANGE IN LEVEL AND NATURE OF DEMANDS**

During the last year we have experienced more clients wishing for emergency support especially in terms of food and basic essentials. Our clients have also had huge issues with lack of internet which was a significant disadvantage throughout the pandemic when all free wifi places such as libraries, shopping centres etc were shut. We campaigned to ask the Home Office and MEARS for this but they were unwilling to provide it. ( Even though this is now an essential part of life.) Action Foundation were very responsive for their ESOL students. Eventually, by lockdown 3, the schools responded with hardware and wifi.

The level of demand remains the same, with people often very needy when they first arrive and then gradually becoming more able to cope. Most are very appreciative of the support we give them, but we cannot always meet all of their demands.

There has been an increase in referrals from mental health organisations but this was to be expected due to the pandemic and associated fears compounded by delays to asylum interviews and decisions, creating widespread low levels of depression.

The challenges for the immediate future will be dealing with large numbers of refused asylum seekers who are still being supported by the system but will be made homeless when the government restrictions on evictions are lifted. We will have to try to increase our donations from the community to support them.

The massive change to the asylum system as proposed in the New Plan for Immigration is a challenge. It is difficult to predict how this will affect our services.

Trying to sustain emergency-type funding for new arrivals and others in severely restrained circumstances when Covid Emergency funding has ended. FODI will have to continue to look for small grants to assist clients and make more referrals to food banks etc.

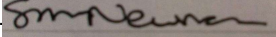
Large numbers of our clients have long term fears about Covid, the vaccine, mixing with people, distrust of the system, long term depression and some have long Covid symptoms. We will continue to work closely with all statutory services such as the GP alliance and mental health services as well as our role in partnership with public health and the CCG.

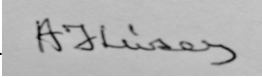
Information on our activities can be found on our website and a Facebook account, (both maintained by our volunteers and our member of staff) to ensure that what we can give information, news, etc. to a wider audience.

There have been no serious incidents.

**In organising and running these activities, we have borne in mind the duties set out in the Commission's public benefit guidance and believe we have complied with these.**

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Stephen Newman, chair.....

Felicity Livsey, treasurer.....



## Friends of the Drop in for Asylum Seekers and Refugees

### Income & Expenditure Account

	Notes	Unrestricted £	2020-21 Restricted £	Total £	2019-20 Total £
<b>Receipts</b>	<b>4</b>				
Grants			82277	82277	35410
Donations & Sundry Income		3776	80	3856	5184
Reimbursed Income		120		120	809
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>3896</b>	<b>82357</b>	<b>86253</b>	<b>41403</b>
<b>Payments</b>					
Salaries			27113	27113	26138
Payroll Charges			145	145	120
Client Activities		550	2389	2939	8183
Client Travel			867	867	6765
Clothing			546	546	0
Creche				0	3585
Freelance Work			4240	4240	4050
Volunteer Expenses			235	235	1112
Food		1203	4965	6168	2462
Hardship Payments		2455	6099	8554	3065
Rent & Room Hire			8602	8602	10322
Other General Running Costs			187	187	823
Electricity			223	223	498
Telephone & Internet		14	799	813	568
Insurance			331	331	331
Accountancy			484	484	475
Legal & Professional				0	0
<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>4222</b>	<b>57225</b>	<b>61447</b>	<b>68497</b>
Surplus/Deficit for the period		-326	25132	24806	-27094
<b>Funds as at 1 April 2020</b>		<b>21227</b>	<b>20629</b>	<b>41856</b>	<b>68950</b>
<b>Total Funds at 31 March 2021</b>		<b>20901</b>	<b>45761</b>	<b>66662</b>	<b>41856</b>

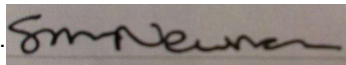
# Friends of the Drop in for Asylum Seekers and Refugees

## Balance Sheet at 31 March 2021

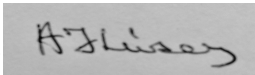
	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Monetary Assets</b>			
Cash at Bank and in Hand		66662	41856
<b>Total Cash Balances</b>		<b>66662</b>	<b>41856</b>
<b>Assets less Liabilities</b>		<u><b>66662</b></u>	<u><b>41856</b></u>
<b>Represented by</b>	<b>5</b>		
Unrestricted Funds		20901	21227
Restricted Funds		45761	20629
<b>Total Funds</b>		<b>66662</b>	<b>41856</b>

The financial statements were approved by the following members of the Management Committee :

Stephen Newman, chair.....



Felicity Livsey, treasurer.....



Date... 12 October 2021

# Friends of the Drop in for Asylum Seekers and Refugees

## Notes to the accounts 2021

### (1a) Basis of accounts

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 2015) – Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006

FODI 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 note(s).

### (1b) Legal Status

Friends of the Drop in for Asylum Seekers registered with The Charities Commission 4 January 2018, registered no. 1176524, as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

### (2) Trustees and Staff

One member of staff is employed. Total salary costs £27,713

### (3) Costs of independent examination

The cost for the independent examination of accounts for the year will be £300

### (4) Grants received in year

2020-21

Lloyds Foundation	25000
Clinical Commissioning Group SUNDERLAND	15197
Barrow Cadbury Trust (Covid-19 Support Fund)	13200
Community Foundation Tyne and Wear National	
Emergency Trust Covid Fund	10000
Sunderland City Council	10000
Sunderland Partnership SCC (Womens Group)	4600
Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria	
Coronavirus Response Fund	1500
Sunderland City Council (Covid Winter Fund)	1500
Mears Foundation	1000
Wearside Community Development Trust	1000
Co Durham Community Foundation (BSBT- Building Stronger Britain Together)	-720 (Unspent grant returned)

**Total Grants Received**

**82277**

### (5) Funds Analysis:

	Balance April 20	Income	Expend	Balance March 21
Barrow Cadbury Trust (Covid-19 Support Fund)		13200	2344	10856
Community Foundation Covid Fund		10000	10000	0
Mears Foundation		1000	607	393
PCC		1500	1500	0
Sunderland City Council (Covid Winter Fund)		1500	1449	51
Wearside Community Development Trust		1000	1000	0
Sunderland City Council	0	10000	10000	0

Sunderland Partnership SCC (Womens Group)	-781	4600	1940	1879
Lloyds Foundation	4314	25000	19513	9801
Co Durham Community Foundation (BSBT)	720	-720		0
City of Sanctuary/Seedbed	284		10	274
Clinical Commissioning Group (1)	2301	15197	50	17448
Clinical Commissioning Group (Project Development)	12006		8098	3908
Quakers	1865		714	1151
Regional Refugee Forum	-80	80		0
<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>20629</b>	<b>82357</b>	<b>57225</b>	<b>45761</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>21227</b>	<b>3896</b>	<b>4222</b>	<b>20901</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>41856</b>	<b>86253</b>	<b>61447</b>	<b>66662</b>

**(6) Barrow Cadbury Trust (Covid-19 Support Fund)**  
**Analysis of Expenditure for the financial period:**

Paid to Young Asian Voices for client sporting activities	1354
Fee paid to facilitator for Women's Group dance classes	800
Travel paid to clients to enable their attendance at Women's Group dance classes	40
FODI administration costs	150
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>2344</b>