

# BEEN THERE / TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024



WISH I WAS  
MORE LIKE...



THE HEALING POWER OF  
**SHARED EXPERIENCE**



## 00 CONTENTS

Chair's Update	01
The Healing Power of Shared Experience	02
How Been There Works	03
Volunteers	04
Helping Younger People	05
Mentoring Gold Standard	06
Multiplying Our Reach Through Partners	07
A Word From Our Founder	08
Financial Report	09
Important Information	10



“It is easy to forget Been There only started 3 short years ago. It is remarkable the progress the charity has made. It all started from our founder Tessa’s own lived experience of how difficult it is to go through a mental health crisis on your own. She found out the hard way – and was determined to help others by introducing them to people who have Been There and come out the other side. This led her to establishing Been There and launching a flurry of activity - recruiting a small army of Been There mentors, creating with the leading clinician Thomas Midgley a bespoke training programme, establishing best practice safeguarding, oversight and crisis management protocols and delivering a mentoring service which is constantly nourishing itself with data and experience. All of this has been achieved while funds have been raised in the background. We are very lucky to have Tessa at our helm.

**Last year we set ourselves two objectives to expand the effectiveness of Been There:**

- 1. Deliver the gold standard in mentoring**
- 2. Build partnerships to expand our reach.**

We have made great progress in both areas. The feedback from the people we help and the Mentors themselves has been outstanding. One of the statistics that makes me most proud is that nearly three quarters (73%) say that talking with their Mentor gives them hope for the future. Hope is such an important ingredient for someone going through a tough time. We are also delighted our first partnerships are now underway. Partners are attracted by Been There’s total focus on mentoring, leaving them to concentrate on their core service be that clinical, supportive or educational. The combination of Expert Therapy with the reassurance of someone who has Been There is particularly powerful. With every partnership our pot of knowledge deepens bringing benefits to all.

*If we have a frustration, it is that we know how useful Been There is in improving patient outcomes, but we do not have enough funding to help everyone. This is especially true for young adults. Currently we only help people over 18 years of age. But we know there is a huge demand from those under 18. In the year ahead, we are committed to helping these younger audiences. This brings extra demands in safeguarding, management and cost but we are convinced it is important we create a safe and positive alternative to toxic places and lonely experiences on social media.*

A further development for 2024 is to expand our specialist area beyond body image and eating disorders. We believe Been There can support almost all mental health challenges faced by people up and down the land – through tailored training and mentor governance. For example, anxiety and depression adversely affect so many people in the UK. We are seeking to partner with clinics, NHS and charities in this important area to help improve mental well being.

*There is so much to be done. We remain passionate about making a difference to more people. With every extra pound we raise and each additional partner we support, we bring the healing power of shared experience to more people and help them thrive again.”*

**- Joel Stanier, Trustee Chair**

## 02 THE HEALING POWER OF SHARED EXPERIENCE



TRUSTEE REPORT 2024

Been There was set up in 2020 in response to Tessa Peters's personal experience - struggling with an eating disorder. Tessa had a body image issue which turned into an eating disorder and suffered for years before finally finding the decisive help she needed. This came from an empowering source – someone she could relate to, someone who understood her, someone who had Been There.

Through the vital support of her Mentor, Tessa no longer felt alone and ashamed. She had the strength to get her life back on track.

Having experienced the power of having someone by her side, Tessa vowed to give more people the same chance she had.

Tessa calls this **THE HEALING POWER OF SHARED EXPERIENCE**.

We should never underestimate how challenging it is for someone to overcome a mental health condition. It can be exhausting, frustrating and scary. The low moments can be truly low. But we know how sharing the ups and downs with someone who has been there can transform the healing process.

### *Mentee data points*



**82%** agree that speaking to their Mentor makes it easier to cope with what they are dealing with

**64%** feel empowered to make their own decisions since speaking to their Mentor

**86%** agree speaking to their Mentor helps them validate their emotions

**77%** feel less ashamed about what they are experiencing since speaking to their Mentor



## 03 HOW BEEN THERE WORKS



TRUSTEE REPORT 2024

Been There is a UK based charity that provides free, confidential support for people via a custom designed app. The app connects Mentees with a vetted and trained Mentor to help with their personal issues and any related mental health concerns they may be experiencing. This gives them the opportunity to speak to someone relatable who has 'Been There' themselves. Our Mentors are here to support, empower and, most importantly, listen.

We aim to provide a service throughout someone's personal journey.

Been There is, of course, not a substitute for clinical support, but when there is none available it can fill a worrying gap. Mentors who have been through the same frustrating process can share the anxiety and where possible point individuals to useful places – be that content, clinics or emergency services.

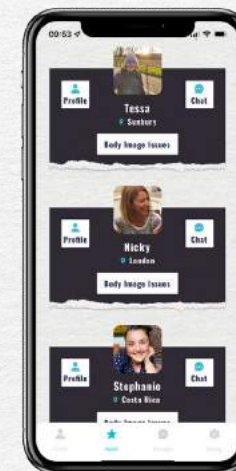
It should be remembered some sufferers feel awkward about their condition and are uncomfortable approaching 'traditional' services. Because Been There is anonymous and confidential, this difficulty falls away. Naturally, once they talk with their Mentor it helps that they will talk to someone who has felt just like them.

Crucially, when someone is receiving treatment, the Been There Mentor can be alongside them being a useful and experienced friend. Helping to make the treatment stick through encouragement and empathy.

Finally, post treatment, Been There can stay in touch with an individual so difficult moments can be tackled together.



*the app*



Our Mentors are the quiet, unsung heroes of our service. They are an inspiring community of normal, good, committed people. They are volunteers – giving up their free time to help others going through a tough time. They do this because they want to help. Our Mentors, know better than anyone, the importance of having someone on their side, who listens and doesn't judge. This is so important when a sufferer does not feel able to open up to family, friends or a professional. Our Mentors are empathetic and encouraging. They can gently guide when given Mentee's permission or simply just be there. Mentors are not therapists or psychologists, but they can play such a valuable role walking next to sufferers as they take the path to a happier life.

### *Mentee data points*

**64%** agree after speaking with their Mentor has made it easier to open up to others

**73%** agree that speaking to their Mentor gives them hope for the future

**90%** agree that they feel heard and understood by their Mentor

"I have seen first-hand the benefits this service has given to clients while also in therapy, but I also imagine it can play a significant role for those waiting or not in treatment. In addition, I feel that this service could play a unique role in helping individuals who are too ashamed or fearful to approach traditional services. To experience compassion and support from someone who truly understands what they are going through could be the spark someone needs to set them on the road to treatment and recovery."

Thomas Midgley

BSc, RD, PGDip, CBT - April 2023





### Nothing is more dispiriting than witnessing a young person in trouble.

There is a mental health epidemic dogging our most vulnerable generations: 20.3% of 8 to 16 year olds had a probable mental disorder in 2023. This rose to 23.3% among 17 to 19 year olds (source: The Mental Health of Children and Young People in England Report 2023). We cannot sit idly by while there is such suffering and such limited therapy resource available. We are putting in place the resources and governance systems to enable us to safely and legally support younger people. This will require substantial increases in funding to cover Mentor vetting, training, management and emergency protocols. We will need more specialist systems to support our Mentors. None of this is going to be easy. But it is so important we make a start. The faster we can build a service that can be available for those more than 1 in 5 young people, the safer these people will be.

### Mentee quote

"I wish I'd found Been There earlier on in my journey. I was so lonely with my thoughts, now I feel like I have a space where I can talk openly and honestly with someone who truly understands."

### Mentor quote

"Being a mentor for Been There is such a positive part of my life. I always wanted to use my own experiences with eating disorders and body image issues to help others who are struggling and I am now lucky enough to have the opportunity to do just that. So many who suffer with these issues feel alone, isolated, and often that they could not speak to anyone they know about it due to the shame and fear of being judged or misunderstood. The chance to be a listening, compassionate and non-judgmental mentor, who has been through similar to them is a real privilege and my wish is that I am helping my mentees understand there is hope and to feel empowered about the possibility of change, that they can be happier and find freedom to flourish."

We spend a lot of time monitoring and evaluating our own performance. We report in line with the Warwick Edinburgh Wellbeing Scale so we are able to compare and contrast. As our army of Mentors grows, so does our depth of knowledge. We are able to continually learn, refine and share best practice across our community.

The Been There way continues to be enhanced but its core principles remain the same:

### > BEING THERE

Sometimes the most important thing is simply to be there. To be available. To make someone realise they have someone on their side.

### > LISTENING

Our Mentors are trained to listen first. We want to know what is going on in the individual's mind and heart. It's only then we can help. We try to make it possible for someone to open up and talk of things that perhaps they have been unable to do in the past.

### > ENCOURAGING

Because our Mentors have been there themselves they have pots of empathy. They can't help but be encouraging, positive and empowering. Their presence creates light in sometimes dark times.

### > GENTLY GUIDING

Where appropriate our Mentors will point out how an individual can progress. This can be helping them access services and information or simply giving the benefit of their experience when they had been there.



### Our first partnerships are already in place.

Naturally we are learning about how to get these relationships off the ground and 'fast start' the service for their patients / clients / staff.

Our efforts to create interesting conversations have been rewarded. At the time of writing this report we have over 25 live discussions with Partners who have shown an interest in our service. Over the coming months we will concentrate our efforts on three types of Partner...

**CLINICS** - We have already trialled Been There in the body image sector. Through the practice of clinician Thomas Midgley we have seen the important role mentoring can play outside the treatment room.

**THE NHS** - The NHS is the front line for mental health recovery. We believe we can bring a very cost efficient and effective way of improving mental health outcomes. The NHS will always be under pressure. We aim to be a positive and useful partner of choice.

**CHARITIES** - Some charities already have some form of befriending service. They understand the importance of mentoring. We can bring expertise from other sectors as well knowledge of how to run a mentoring operation safely and cost effectively. This can mean a better cost solution for the charity and improved outcomes. Been There will enable the charity to focus on its core purpose and benefit from our complementary service.

## 08 A WORD FROM OUR FOUNDER



TRUSTEE REPORT 2024

The past 12 months have gone past in a flash. We have been very busy but have focused our efforts in two strategic areas: making sure our mentoring service is THE Gold Standard and creating new routes to Mentees through Partners. These two ambitions sit very comfortably together. The most reassuring thing we can do for a potential partner is to show how valued the service is by Mentees.

As this report has announced, we want to help young people under 18. This will be a demanding objective for Been There but such an important one. I always have to remind myself that if we don't do something it's likely young sufferers will turn to social media which can be so damaging if you are in a fragile state. The opportunity is huge but the challenges for us as an organisation are significant. We will manage this process professionally to ensure we can roll out the highest quality of service that can benefit these vulnerable people.

This initiative and our existing programmes will put a severe strain on our coffers. We will continue to make sure we squeeze every bit of value from each £ we fundraise and earn.

There are so many people who work hard to make Been There a success. But I would especially like to pay tribute to our wonderful army of Mentors. They lead busy lives but still find the time, energy and empathy to help people day in, day out. I admire them and thank them. They bring such goodness to the world.



Tessa

TESSA PETERS / FOUNDER & CEO

*Tessa Peters*



The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charities Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS102) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) and the Charities Act 2011 as it applies from 01.01.15.

**The principal accounting policies are summarised here:**

### Income

Grants are recognised in the statement of financial activities when the charity can demonstrate entitlement to the income.

Donations are included as income at the value to the charity.

### Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised in the statement of financial activities in the period in which it is incurred. Been There is not registered for VAT and irrecoverable VAT is charged against the category of expenditure within which it is incurred.

### Fund Accounting

**Funds held by the organisation are either:**

1. Unrestricted general funds - these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees. The majority of income falls into this category in the form of donations.
2. Restricted funds - these are funds that can only be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donor, and within the objects of the charity. Been There benefitted from £32k of restricted grants and donations during the year (2023: £32k) made up of significant contributions from The Big Give (£14k), Marketors (£10k), St James's Place (£5k) and Souter (£3k).



### Financial Summary

#### Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period -

For the year ending 31 March 2024, Been There returned an unrestricted surplus of £20k. This, coupled with the unrestricted brought forward reserves of £25k, provides a solid foundation for the organisation as it continues to develop. During the third full year of operating, we benefitted from £81k (2023: £103k) of funding, consisting of £42k (2023: £30k) of Donation Income, £33k (2023: £33k) of Grant Income, £3k from partnerships (2023: £nil) & £3k from other sources (2023: £40k from a Crowdfunder campaign).

£97k (2023: £64k) of expenditure was incurred during the year, predominantly (77%) in people (2023: 70%), marketing and brand, app development and mentoring set up.

Our balance sheet is strong and is comprised of mainly liquid assets. The £45k of unrestricted reserves represents approximately 3 months of running costs for 2024/25 which is in line with our targeted level and our reserves strategy.

The investment in staff, and growth of our unrestricted reserves, alongside the launch of our first partnership trial, reflects our determination & energy to diversify our income streams and ensure we are set up to succeed.

### Financial outlook for 2023/24

Been There is in a strong financial position entering into the new financial year. We are focused on identifying new revenue generating opportunities to maintain momentum, with the first trial partnership now up and running, and we have invested in people to allow the charity to grow.

The Trustees have agreed to allocate a proportion of its free reserves to ensure project sustainability in the event that further funding cannot be sourced to cover administration and core costs to keep the charity solvent.

#### Amount of reserves held -

At the balance sheet date, Been There has £51k held in reserves (2023: £67k), of which £45k are unrestricted and £6k are restricted.

The Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus, the Trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the accounts.



### Important Information

BEEN THERE

Charity Registration Number

1191044

Address & Contact Details

30 Ledborough lane, Beaconsfield, Bucks, HP9 2DD

# BEEN THERE / TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024



*thank you!*

THE HEALING POWER OF  
**SHARED EXPERIENCE**



**BEEN THERE**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**(INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Unrestrict ed Funds	Restricted Funds 2024	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	£	£	£	£
<b>Income</b>				
Fundraising & donations	45,228	32,245	77,473	102,753
Charitable activities	3,267	-	3,267	-
Other	742	-	742	292
<b>Total income</b>	<b>49,237</b>	<b>32,245</b>	<b>81,482</b>	<b>103,045</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Raising funds	21,105	-	21,105	11,011
Charitable activities	7,896	68,258	76,154	53,295
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>29,002</b>	<b>68,258</b>	<b>97,260</b>	<b>64,306</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>	<b>20,234</b>	<b>(36,013)</b>	<b>(15,778)</b>	<b>38,739</b>
Funds brought forward	24,745	42,429	67,174	28,435
<b>Funds carried forward</b>	<b>44,980</b>	<b>6,416</b>	<b>51,396</b>	<b>67,174</b>

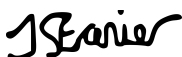
The results for the period are derived from continuing operations.

The were no recognised gains or losses other than those passing through the statement of financial activities.

**BEEN THERE  
BALANCE SHEET  
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Tangible assets	-	643
	<u>-</u>	<u>643</u>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors	6,730	918
Cash at bank & in hand	53,743	74,642
	<u>60,473</u>	<u>75,560</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	9,077	(1,690)
<b>Total current assets less current liabilities</b>	<u>51,396</u>	<u>77,250</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>	<u>51,396</u>	<u>77,893</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than 1	-	10,719
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>51,396</u>	<u>67,174</u>
<b>Reserves</b>		
Unrestricted funds	44,980	24,745
Restricted funds	6,416	42,429
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>51,396</u>	<u>67,174</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board and signed on its behalf on \_\_\_\_\_ by:



Joel Stanier  
Chair





Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name  
**Been There**

On accounts for the year  
ended

**31 March 2024**

Charity no  
(if any)

**1191044**

Set out on pages

**Pages 1-10 of the Trustee Report and pages 1-2 of the Statutory Accounts comprising of "Statement of Financial Activities" & "Balance Sheet"**

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 31/02/2024.

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

The charity's gross income did not exceed £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of Association of International Accountants (AIA).

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination 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.

Signed:

Date:

**16 May 2024**

Name:

**Michael Judd CPA FAIA**

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

**Fellow of the Association of International Accountants (FAIA) UK  
Member of CPA Australia**

<b>Address:</b>	<b>15 Roxford Close</b>
	<b>Upper Halliford</b>
	<b>SURREY TW17 8RS</b>

**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.**

NOT APPLICABLE