

FRIENDS WITHOUT BORDERS (PORTSMOUTH) CIO

England & Wales · Charity number 1194005

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2021-04-06

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address Holy Spirit Church
Heyward Road
Southsea
Hampshire
PO4 0DY

Phone 07546502143

Email office@friendswithoutborders.org.uk

Website <http://www.friendswithoutborders.org.uk/>

Activities

Objects: THE RELIEF OF IMMIGRANTS, ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES WHO ARE SUFFERING HARDSHIP OR DISTRESS OR IN NEED, PARTICULARLY, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY, IN THE CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, BY THE PROVISION OF FINANCIAL AND OTHER ASSISTANCE AND RAISING THE AWARENESS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

Activities: Friends Without Borders helps people seeking asylum to access support when few other services remain accessible to them. We provide two ongoing projects which aim to problem-solve, reduce isolation and challenge the discrimination faced by our clients: our Drop-in provides advocacy and advice without appointment and our Access to Justice project provides legal advice.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Disability, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity
- **Who:** Other Defined Groups

Geography

- Portsmouth City

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£58,082	£84,548	-	-
2023-12-31	£59,569	£49,489	-	-
2022-12-31	£108,268	£13,733	-	-
2021-12-31	£0	£0	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Anthony McCARTHY	Chair	2026-03-03
COLEEN LE		2021-04-19
Dr Charles Leddy-Owen		2021-04-19
Folasade EFUWAPE		2026-03-03
GEOFFREY ALAN WILSON		2021-04-19
Janet PROBERT		2023-05-20
Lia Deyal		2021-04-19

Accounts

FRIENDS WITHOUT BORDERS (PORTSMOUTH) CIO 1194005



Annual Report 2024 (Sept 24-August 2025)

(Published August 2025)



Annual Report of Friends Without Borders (Portsmouth) CIO for the Year 2024

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CHARITY NUMBER- 1194005

Trustees 2024- 2025:

Coleen Le -Chair
Geoff Wilson - Treasurer
Charles Leddy-Owen - Access to Justice
Lia Deyal
Yenga Ikuse (Untill March 2025)
Jan Probert
Majid Dhana
Nadera Assim (co-opted)

Aims and Organisation

The relief of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees who are suffering hardships or distress or in need, particularly, but not exclusively, in the city of Portsmouth, by the provision of financial and other assistance and raising the awareness of the general public.

The organisation is managed by an executive committee, consisting of the trustees, which meets every two months.

Client Services Manager Rachel McCormick and Administrative Assistant Sam Bell assist the trustees with operational management.

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees have paid due regard to the guidance issued by Charity Commission on public benefit.

a) Friends Without Borders relieves poverty through the provision of payments to meet particular needs, granting allowances to destitute clients for limited periods and assistance with travelling expenses.

b) Friends Without Borders provide free legal advice, regulated by the IAA, on immigration matters through Access To Justice.

c) Public Benefit is served by the education of the general public through the use of social media, and with collaboration with local press and liaison and network with relevant groups in the city.

Chair's Report

Dear Supporters and Friends,

Over the last 12 months at our drop in, we have welcomed between 70 - 90 clients a week - a rise compared to previous years. These are individuals / families fleeing war, conflict, persecution or insecurity, arriving in the UK with hope for the future.

As always our volunteers have stepped up admirably, providing: Weekly drop in sessions where clients receive warm meals and a very warm welcome and someone to listen to them. Our casework has become more complex and we are often coming across new situations.

Support and signposting with housing issues, and working with homeless shelters are one of the major issues our clients come with.

Also, there are huge problems for clients in obtaining immigration advice. We are so grateful to have Dr. Leddy - Owen and his team who run our other main service - Access to Justice. This provides the only free legal advice across a large area of the South. We also have the support of Citizens Advice Portsmouth (SAIAS) who we are delighted to say attend our drop in monthly. Marta Beltram from CAP is a huge help to so many clients.

Language assistance is vital, and we provide help with English to a large number of clients. The classes are very popular.

Community integration, helping clients with appointments or inviting them to social events is also very important. We work in collaboration with statutory and voluntary agencies across the city. This year has increased the number we have contact with. This is due to the hard work of our talented and passionate Client Services Manager, Rachel McCormick. You will find a list of these agencies at the end of this report.

Each client brings a story, and with gentle volunteer support, clients begin to share and become part of our life too. Clients become guests, friends and family. Such a privilege. We are part of celebrating good news and supporting the bad times too.

Without our volunteers there would be no FwB. Our volunteer team has grown in number and strength. Despite the challenges they have shown tremendous commitment and care of our clients. With kindness and empathy they give clients dignity, respect and a chance to begin healing.

This year, again, has been fraught with a climate growing yet more divisive and harsh. Hostile and damaging language about asylum seekers and " small boats " is daily news. Constantly referring to vulnerable people as threats. I want to thank all of you who support our asylum seekers, whether financially, practically or by speaking about this sidelined group of people in a positive way and challenging people who are misinformed or negative. We see clients who need a humanitarian response not this nasty rhetoric.

However, I truly believe FwB has gone from strength to strength this year, particularly in the area of services we offer our clients. Again I will say what a privilege it is to work with asylum seekers and refugees.

My very best wishes,

**Coleen
Chairperson FwB**

On behalf of FwB and our clients I would like to thank the following for their support throughout the year:

**CAP (SAIAS) Migrant Help Portsmouth Central Library
University of Portsmouth Dental School Splodge Designs Home Start
British Red Cross Hive Portsmouth Stop Domestic Abuse Community
Connectors Portsmouth Mental Health Hub Good Things Foundation
University of Southampton Public Engagement With Research Unit (PERU)
Speech and Language Therapists Nomads 432 Trash Arts Southsea Cinema
Portsmouth City of Sanctuary PCC University of Southampton Dept. of Music
The Rough Sleeping Hub Action Asylum Lloyds Bank Foundation
Hive Portsmouth Kidsclothesline The Parenting Network Babybank
Arms Around the Child Harbour Church Crowbait.**

Family Support Project

Friends Without Borders was awarded a grant from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Fund to launch a Family Support Project that runs at our Thursday drop-ins. Many clients have no recourse to public funds, which reduces their access to services. Lone parents face additional barriers due to childcare and cannot access services like English at college without crèche facilities. This hampers them from integrating into the community or sourcing available support. Some parents rely on translation by older children, putting parenting pressure on those children and impacting relationships and mental health. We wanted to address this need at our drop-in.

The aim of our Family Support Project is to offer a safe, supervised, child-friendly area with additional support for lone parents to temporarily leave children while they access English classes or casework within the same space. It also provides us with an opportunity to collaborate with other agencies to offer more specialist advice or workshops like parenting skills, breastfeeding advice, guided play, child story and singing groups. We aim to train current clients to become family supporters, offering peer support and extending skills and knowledge. We are lucky enough to have partnered with Home Start and are delighted to have the support of one of their volunteers to guide us and offer children developmental play. We launched the project at the beginning of February 2025 and started with three to five children each week. Now, five months along we've had a top figure of thirty nine children in school holiday weeks and are regularly supporting twelve to twenty one families. This is a great success story and have feedback from families giving us satisfaction scores of 9 or 10/10!

Rachel



ACE Film Workshops for Refugee Week June 2025

As part of this year's Refugee Week we put together an art project giving our clients the opportunity to not only learn more about film making but also have their life story performed by local actors and developing that story with them. The project was funded by Arts Council England and Portsmouth Creates. Outside of my work for friends without borders I run a film production company, for this project I asked my co-producer Jackson Batchelor to run workshops at the drop in. To my surprise we had 36 clients learning about film making (we expected 20) and in the end we filmed 12 stories (we were aiming to shoot 6 stories).

I just personally want to say a massive thank you to everyone who was involved in this project and the clients for allowing us to help them and to tell their narrative on film. I hope in the new year we can run more film workshops and give even more of a platform for our clients to tell their story.

Below you will find some quotes from those involved.

"It was a great experience because this workshop allowed me to learn about the process of filming a short video. It is incredible how little details like the lens or lights could affect the end result! I was a bit shy at the beginning of the session, but the people in charge were really friendly and knowledgeable. They made everyone feel included and welcomed. This experience also gave me confirmation that sharing our stories is valid and needed. We all have something to share about our journey to the UK and having this opportunity is priceless. Thank you".

"The story of the 'refugee' is one quite close to me, had my father's family not been in very real danger and had to flee from Austria just prior to World War 2 I would not have been born. As I grew up I became aware of just how traumatic their lives must have been and just what they all had to leave behind in order to once again feel safe. The scars ran deep.

When I was approached by Sam Bell the Project manager to be part of a project to make a film designed to tell the stories of some of the refugees in our city, written by the individual refugees and delivered to camera via the voices of actors. The first part of the process was to meet up with refugees in the weekly 'drop-in' held in St Luke's Church, and facilitate & assist if needed, in committing the words to paper. I truly did not know what to expect. However I was pleasantly surprised to walk into a warm & welcoming environment, it was also far busier than I had expected and everyone seemed relaxed & engaged. I was offered a plate of a beautifully cooked rice dish and a cup of coffee. I took my coffee and sat at a table, surrounded by people who in the main were keen to tell their stories and by and large were very capable of completing the task at hand, which reinforced the feeling I had that a great deal of trust had been fostered within this group.

The following week we went to the Aspex Gallery in Gunwharf Quays where the project leaders had booked space to film the stories. So great a number & so varied were the stories that there was more than enough to make the film in time to be shown as part of the recent celebrations for Refugee Week. Due to sheer number of stories we have been able to book a further date so that more of these stories can be told and added to the existing film.

I feel privileged to have been one of the actors"

Suki - Actor.

"The project was such a wonderful experience. It was challenging, meaningful, and deeply fulfilling. I got to meet new people, exchange ideas, and work for a cause that we all care deeply about. It made me want to be even more active as a volunteer and inspired many ideas for future projects. I had such a great time working with camera crew and staff. It was such a rewarding experience that I will never forget and that will continue to inspire me for years to come."

Cedrick - Volunteer

Friends Without Borders Documentary

As part of this year's celebration I wanted to use my main craft of filmmaking to make a documentary about 30 years of Friends Without Borders. Documentaries to me are a powerful tool in telling a person or organisation's narrative. In making a film that was set over 30 years, I found a lot of challenges; digging through the archives of Friends Without Borders there was a lot to process. I wanted to make sure I didn't miss any important milestones, but also not bloat the film with too many interviews. I was fortunate to be able to interview trustees from now and the past, this included Coleen, Geoff, Lia, Jan, Charles and Majid. Their insight helped me to see how Friends Without Borders has been shaped and how it's still helping people today. For trustees from the past, Mike Brown spoke. Mike was a trustee back in the early 2000's, he was there for the start of Haslar Visitors Group. His knowledge, information and archive material added so much to the documentary. I'd like to thank him and all the other trustees who took part in this documentary.

I wanted to make sure I could interview those who have gained from Friends Without Borders and anyone else who has supported the organisation. I'd like to thank Majid and Sintia for telling their personal story for this documentary, it's important to understand the shell-shock experience refugees and asylum seekers go through, but it has to be done in the most sensitive and ethical way possible. MP Stephen Morgan also gave up some of his busy time to be interviewed, spreading a positive and refreshing message of refugee/asylum seeker support from the current government.

You can watch the documentary on our Youtube channel at the link below

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zxb0jyGg-Q0&t=1s>

Sam



Friends Without Borders Fundraiser

On Friday November 1st 2024 we ran a fundraiser and raised £900. The event was a wonderful evening of cultural diversity that promoted awareness of refugees and asylum seekers while celebrating 30 years of Friends Without Borders. The event was masterminded and organised by trustee Jan and with the support of Majid, Rachel and Sam, the planning came together.

The event started with our trustee and compere, Lia, giving a welcome introduction and was followed by an evening of entertainment. We were very fortunate to have excellent music acts including bagpipers from the Rose and Thistle Pipes and Drums, violinist Charlie Cole, Do You Get It and DrumNation Tribe, alongside soul poetry from Zac and Majid and dance by Templar. We also had a raffle with some amazing prizes, we extend a huge thank you to everyone who supported the prizes and to the artists who performed and we would also like to say thank you to the staff from our venue at The Dockyard Club for hosting the event.

The event was a culmination of the excellent hard work our volunteers do and a celebration of our clients, who had an opportunity to enjoy themselves and engage with some local artists. We hope we can do more fundraisers in the future to showcase even more of the talent this city has to offer.

Jan



Why Do I Enjoy Working At The Allotment?

I have always enjoyed being in contact with nature so going to the allotment is a great activity for me. I was nervous the first time I went because I had no experience with plants, other than looking after the ones in my house, but I found that no experience is needed and everyone is welcome, the only thing needed is to be ready to learn.

It is amazing to see the whole growing process, from sowing the plant in little pots, to planting them in the soil, to seeing them grow and to be ready to be eaten! I have enjoyed many dishes with the produce from the allotment. It is good to know the plants were treated with love and without chemical products. There are tons of activities to do at the allotment: sowing seeds, taking weeds out, looking after plants and much more but one of my favourites is to have a cuppa and a chat with the rest of the group. We talk about our everyday lives, about our cultures, so it is a good opportunity to learn and enjoy being outside. Going to the allotment is one of the highlights of my week. It allows me to chat and hang out with people that I now consider my friends.

Alex



Footprints of Love: Celebrating Mother's Day with Clay, Culture, and Community

What do our feet say about the journeys we have taken—the care we give ourselves, and the care we offer to others along the way?

We marked Mother's Day 2025 in a unique way using clay, conversation and creativity. Our event, "Let Every Step You Take Be a Footprint of Love," was organized in collaboration with Nadera from the Public Engagement with Research Unit (PERu) at the University of Southampton. At the front table sat a large 3D foot model, designed and printed by James MacDonell at the University of Southampton. It drew people in, with one person smiling and saying they had never seen a foot that big before. The model gently opened up conversations not only about feet themselves but also about how people think about and care for their own. Participants were invited to decorate the 3D model using henna, writing messages, words or images in their language. One person shared, "Using henna made me think about my home. I love being able to do that again." For many, it was more than just art—it became a collective act of care and a sense of belonging. Some people made feet, while others created flowers, hearts, or figures that reminded them of family, motherhood, and love. One participant said, "I have never used clay before—it was different, I really enjoyed it. I hope there are more sessions like this."

Our kitchen team served up hot food—including pizza, garlic bread, and quiche—and made sure there were plenty of drinks, cakes, and pastries available for everyone to enjoy. Volunteers also gently encouraged mothers and children to come over and take part in the creative activities, helping to create a space that felt welcoming and inclusive. To end the afternoon, small bags of chocolates were handed out—a thoughtful gesture that brought smiles as people left the session.

This was not just about Mother's Day, or even just about feet. It showed that something as simple as sitting together around a table—making, talking, listening, and connecting—can open up space for care, creativity, and community. And that every step carries meaning, shaped by how we care for ourselves and for others, and the stories we are willing to hear and share. A reminder that care can be offered in many forms, and that every step tells a story.

By Nadera

Podiatrist and PhD Researcher at the University of Southampton

PERu: XTwitter: @UoS_engagement Instagram: @uos_engagement



English classes

No two weeks are the same for the English team. FWB is a drop in and those who come can choose to take part in English lessons. Some have very basic English speaking, reading and writing abilities, or none, while others are keen to improve their more advanced skills. There is a core group of learners, but also new comers, with a host of different first languages. Most lessons with our team of teachers and mentors take place in the main church where the air of concentration is tangible. Our aim is to help people to have good enough English to enhance their lives and to gain work - when the immigration system allows them to.

Lately we have set up an additional table in the main hall for mothers with small children, where children can play safely, away from potential obstacles in the main church. This table is, by definition, less concentrated with little people disruptions! We work on communication skills, vital to daily living. As well as talking about shopping, daily routines and, a favourite topic, cooking (I have learnt some delicious recipes), we role play situations such as going to the doctor and talking to your child's teacher. Repetition is important to consolidate vocabulary and phrases. And we have fun and laugh too, as their confidence increases. At times after a lesson, someone may need to talk about difficulties or a bereavement. Their lives are tough.

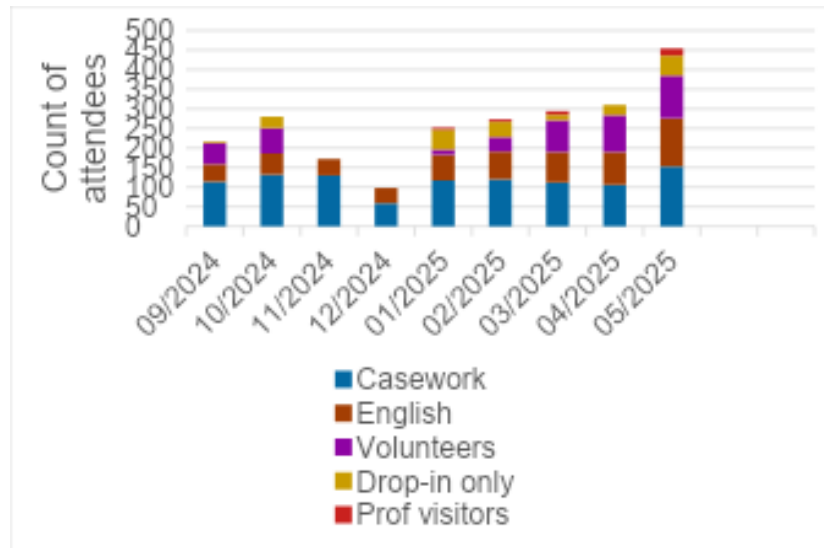
A group of our English teachers and mentors attended a six week course in teaching English, delivered by WEA, the tutor Liz Joiner taught the group theories and practical skills which proved enormously helpful and enhanced our ability to help the people who come to our lessons.

Mary

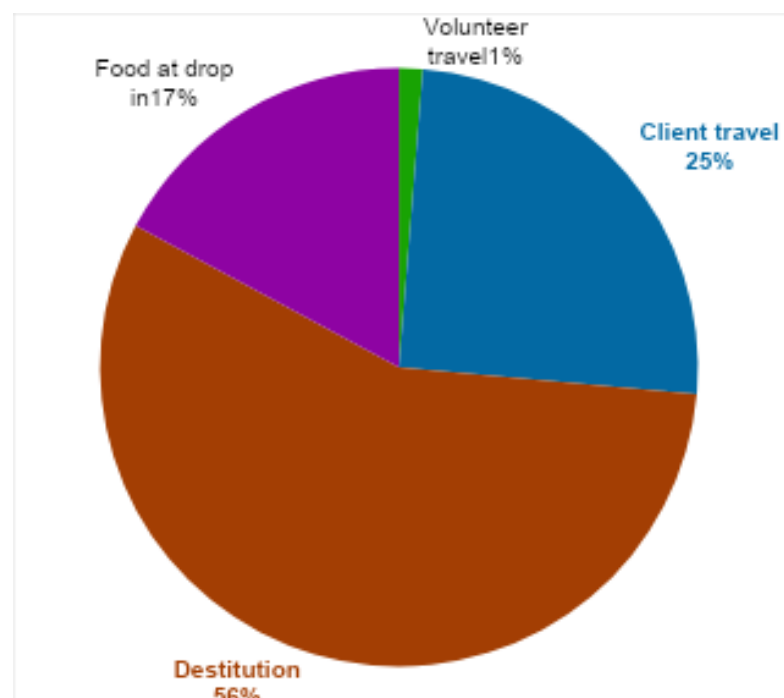


Our Data for 2024

The first chart traces the steady increase of people attending our drop-in from the end of 2024 into 2025. The increase demonstrates the need for our services, but also the success and popularity of our drop-in service, particularly with the introduction of our family support project. We have also grown our pool of volunteers and the number of professional visitors attending to work in partnership with us.



The second chart depicts how we spent our money at the drop-in service in 2024 by percentage distribution. The largest proportion is given as destitution support to clients in financial hardship. The second biggest expenditure is given as financial assistance with travel, for example to attend a solicitor's appointment, bus fare to hospital, or to travel to a Home Office reporting centre. We provide free food at our drop-in to ensure people get a meal as well as bringing a sense of welcome and community. A small 1% is used to enable volunteers to get to the drop-in, who might struggle otherwise.



Access To Justice

Access to Justice are the only completely free providers of high-level immigration law advice in Portsmouth. Most of our work involves clients experiencing homelessness and/or domestic abuse.

In 2024 Access to Justice saw over 50 clients, which is the most we have seen since 2016. This number should rise further in 2025, partly due to the recent qualification of two new advisers, and partly due to the assistance of placement students from the University of Portsmouth. These students have provided much-needed administrative and research support, have set up an Instagram account (@accesstojusticeportsmouth) and in the spring of 2025 they spoke about the service at an English class for migrants run at a nearby college.

The majority of our clients' applications rely on article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights - that is, the right to a family or private life. Applications are highly demanding in terms of the quantity of information and documents provided, and a great deal of Access to Justice's work revolves around collating these documents and putting together legal arguments that must make reference to the UK's various rules and laws. The vast majority of our referrals come from the drop in, Citizens Advice Portsmouth and Portsmouth City of Sanctuary, though we have been working hard recently to promote the service to Portsmouth City Council and other organisations engaging with those experiencing homelessness.

As has been the case in each of the past 3-4 years, Access to Justice would not be able to provide the level of advice we do without regular support from Sam and Marta at Citizens Advice Portsmouth. A huge thank you to them for this and more broadly for the work they do locally.

Charles



Treasurer's Report

As described in the Chair's Report, 2024 was a year in which the challenges and demands we faced increased significantly. It says a great deal about the outstanding financial support that we continue to receive from our wonderful supporters that we were able to cope with these additional demands on us.

However it did require actions on our part in terms of employing support for our client services and general administration in addition to the outstanding contributions made by our volunteers. So in this sense the year was one of transition from a financial perspective and our expenditure significantly exceeded our income for the first time in several years.

Importantly though this extra capacity did give is the ability to apply for grants and financial support to various organisations and I am pleased to say that much of this effort has been successful thereby enhancing our income. We recognise that this will be an on-going challenge for us as we go forward and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities shows that our total finances decreased by over £25,000 this year.

We are again pleased to confirm that an independent examination of our accounts has been carried out by Trevor James and his report confirms that he has no concerns with these accounts. Again we should like to thank Trevor for his support and wise counsel this year. Finally I should like to thank Sharon Brooks for her help producing the accounts and Loveleen Kumari to whom she handed over this role.

Geoff Wilson Treasurer

Friends Without Borders CIO (Charity Number 1194005)

Receipts and Payments Account for the Year to 31 December 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	2023 £
Income Receipts				
From Voluntary Sources				
Regular Donations	19,490	-	19,490	17,536
Unique Donations & Grants	27,540	4,838	32,378	24,990
Gift Aid Tax Recovered	3,959	-	3,959	1,866
	<u>50,989</u>	<u>4,838</u>	<u>55,827</u>	<u>44,392</u>
Interest	<u>1,032</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,032</u>	<u>603</u>
Transfer from Friends Without Borders	<u>1,223</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,223</u>	<u>14,574</u>
Total Receipts	<u>53,244</u>	<u>4,838</u>	<u>58,082</u>	<u>59,569</u>
Direct Charitable Expenditure				
Grants and Direct Support				
Destitute Asylum Seekers	24,372	-	24,372	16,814
Client Travel	5,906	-	5,906	3,509
Social Activities	3,864	-	3,864	4,972
Fees	680	-	680	3,127
	<u>34,822</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>34,822</u>	<u>28,422</u>
Other expenditure				
Salaries and freelance fees	34,327	-	34,327	7,129
Volunteer Travel and Expenses	1,514	-	1,514	1,922
Rent	8,095	-	8,095	7,233
Telephone and other administration costs	3,538	-	3,538	3,274
Independent Examiner's fee	1,100	-	1,100	900
Insurance	936	-	936	393
	<u>49,510</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>49,510</u>	<u>20,851</u>
Fund-raising costs				
Just Giving fees	216	-	216	216
	<u>216</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>216</u>	<u>216</u>
Other Payments	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total payments	<u>84,548</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>84,548</u>	<u>49,489</u>
Net receipts for the year	<u>(31,304)</u>	<u>4,838</u>	<u>(26,466)</u>	<u>10,080</u>

FWB Assets and Liabilities

As at 31st December 2024

	2024	2023
Bank and Cash in Hand		
Bank Deposit Account	72,238	90,608
Bank Current Account	5,952	14,254
Cash in Hand	329	121
	78,519	104,983
Debtors		
Gift Aid Recoverable	200	
1,588		
Liabilities		
All Saints Room Hire	605	960

Our Clients Thank You

Friends Without Borders has been a great support to us from the moment we arrived in Portsmouth as asylum seekers and had no idea where to start. It was the only place that opened doors for us at all times, when we barely spoke the language and couldn't even make an appointment with the GP on our own or whatever issues we had, they always helped us through it. Also to socialise, to get involved in society.

I am a person with mental health problems so I really appreciate all the effort and understanding they have had with me all this time. They offered us to be part of the allotment group which was a great experience because we met a lot of people, we spent our time doing something productive instead of being at home alone and thinking with uncertainty.

But something that marked us a lot and we will always be grateful to FWB is the moment we received our right to remain we had to vacate the accommodation we were in at the time and we were literally homeless. We couldn't find a place to stay so we went to them and they gave us a lot of emotional support and did everything in their power to help us find a place. Now we can say we have a home because of all their support. When we didn't know what to do, they were always willing to help.

Former Client

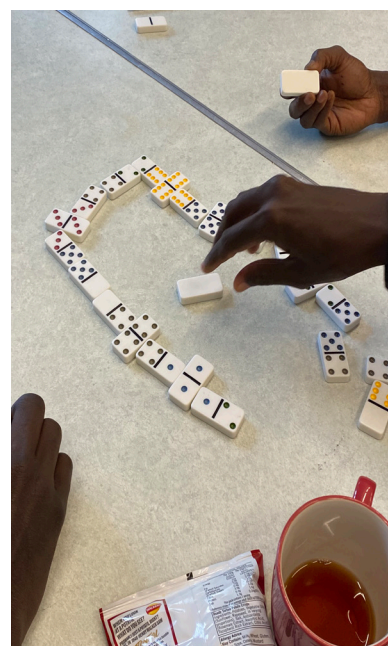
First when I arrived, my body was shaking, I was afraid when I went there. But when I got there, I felt that I was family. I did not feel afraid any more, I felt like someone was there for me. I volunteer with FWB because I like helping people and I learned much about how other volunteers give something, so I volunteered in the kitchen. When we have a party we can cook traditional food from our country and I appreciate this very much. For refugees and asylum seekers like me, it is very difficult when we are feeling very lonely, not trusting, abused, feeling frightened. A thing that makes us frightened, we are going through our documentation with the Home Office. We can be very isolated, so I can say that we can trust Friends Without Borders. Seek help from them, I trust them, they keep things confidential, seek help from them.

Former Client



FWB rose 'Believe in Yourself'

Pictures From The Year



Friends Without Borders
Registered Charity no 1194005
This is a multi-purpose form. Please fill in such parts as are relevant

Count Me In As A Supporter

Please add me to your support list to receive the Occasional Newsletter

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

I agree to be contacted by Friends Without Borders by post and email for fundraising purposes.

☐

I give consent to Friends Without Borders to keep my information (as above) for the purpose of administering our supporters mail list in accordance with our privacy policy.

☐

I give consent to Friends Without Borders contacting me by post and email with, for example, the occasional news and annual report.

☐

I understand that I can withdraw my consent at any time by contacting office@friendswithoutborders.org.uk

☐

Gift Aid Certificate

- **Donations from UK taxpayers are supplemented by a grant from the treasury.**
- **Our Treasurer will make the claim, the only thing needed for the donor is their address and signature below that they are paying income tax.**

I am a UK taxpayer paying tax at least equivalent to this claim and claim Gift Aid on this and future donations to Friends Without Borders. I have given my address above and understand this information will be kept by Friends Without Borders for six years, from the date of my last donation.

Signed _____

Dated: _____

FRIENDS WITHOUT BORDERS

We are a completely independent charity which has served asylum seekers and refugees in Portsmouth for the last 28 years.

**We have no Government contracts
and rely entirely for support on the contributions of local people.**

See our website for more information- friendswithoutborders.org.uk

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Become A Supporter

**email: office@friendswithoutborders.org.uk
and we'll send you an occasional newsletter.**

Give Money For Grants

**Asylum seekers still only get £49.18 a week enough to live
any small emergency becomes a crisis.**

Set Up A Standing Order

**One of our strengths is a network of local supporters who pay small
(whatever you like but £5 to £25 is typical) amounts each month.**

Giving us staying power.

**Friends Without Borders bank account is with Lloyds Bank.
Sort Code- 30-98-97. Account number: 59923463.**

Remember to add Gift Aid

**Gift Aid adds 25p to every £1 you give, so anybody
who pays income tax and donates should sign the form provided.**

Leave a Legacy

**Legacies enable us to plan for the future. They have helped us to run our drop in
at which we see typically around 20 refugees requiring casework each week
as well as many who come for a coffee and sandwich, destitution money, a chat
or English lessons to name but a few activities.**

Volunteer Yourself

**Volunteering can be extremely rewarding. So if you would like to join us, whatever your
availability please contact office@friendswithoutborders.org.uk
FWB always needs willing volunteers and we have a variety of jobs and tasks to suit most
people.**

**For those who have supported us in the past we want to thank you
for all your contributions!**

Standing Order

To the manager: Please pay Friends Without Borders the sum below by standing order untill further notice.

Friends Without Borders account is with Lloyds Bank, Sort Code 30-98-97, Account Number: 59923463.

Monthly amount in figures:

Monthly amount in words:

Date of First Payment:

My Bank:

My Account Number:

My Account Name:

Signed

Date:

Please send this form to your bank.

FWB Assets and Liabilities

As at 31st December 2024

	2024	2023
Bank and Cash in Hand		
Bank Deposit Account	72,238	90,608
Bank Current Account	5,952	14,254
Cash in Hand	329	121
	78,519	104,983
Debtors		
Gift Aid Recoverable 1,588	200	
Liabilities		
All Saints Room Hire	605	960

Treasurer's Report

As described in the Chair's Report, 2024 was a year in which the challenges and demands we faced increased significantly. It says a great deal about the outstanding financial support that we continue to receive from our wonderful supporters that we were able to cope with these additional demands on us.

However it did require actions on our part in terms of employing support for our client services and general administration in addition to the outstanding contributions made by our volunteers. So in this sense the year was one of transition from a financial perspective and our expenditure significantly exceeded our income for the first time in several years.

Importantly though this extra capacity did give is the ability to apply for grants and financial support to various organisations and I am pleased to say that much of this effort has been successful thereby enhancing our income. We recognise that this will be an on-going challenge for us as we go forward and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities shows that our total finances decreased by over £25,000 this year.

We are again pleased to confirm that an independent examination of our accounts has been carried out by Trevor James and his report confirms that he has no concerns with these accounts. Again we should like to thank Trevor for his support and wise counsel this year. Finally I should like to thank Sharon Brooks for her help producing the accounts and Loveleen Kumari to whom she handed over this role.

Geoff Wilson Treasurer

Accounts

FRIENDS WITHOUT BORDERS (PORTSMOUTH) CIO 1194005



Annual Report for the year 2023 30 years and 10 years

(Published August 2024)



Annual Report of Friends Without Borders (Portsmouth) CIO for the Year 2023

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CHARITY NUMBER- 1194005

Trustees 2023- 2024:

Coleen Le -Chair
Geoff Wilson - Treasurer
Charles Leddy-Owen - Access to Justice
Lia Deyal
Yenga Ikuse
Jan Probert
Majid Dhana

Aims and Organisation

The relief of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees who are suffering hardships or distress or in need, particularly, but not exclusively, in the city of Portsmouth, by the provision of financial and other assistance and raising the awareness of the general public.

Organisation, The organisation is managed by an executive committee, consisting of the trustees, which meets every two months.
Day to day management is by Coleen Le and client services manager Rachel McCormick.

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees have paid due regard to the guidance issued by charity commission on public benefit.

- a) Friends Without Borders has relieved poverty through the provision of payments to meet particular needs, granting allowances to destitute clients for limited periods and assistance with travelling expenses.
- b) Friends Without Borders has also provided free legal advice, regulated by the OISC, on immigration matters through Access To Justice.
- c) Public Benefit has also been served by the education of the general public through the use of social media, and with collaboration with local press and liaison and network with relevant groups in the city.

Chair's Report

30 years and 10 years!Let me explain

30 years ago Haslar Visitor's Group (now FwB) began, following John and Patricia Bingham's visit to the Haslar Immigration Removal Centre (IRC). They were shocked by the illegal detention of many, and lack of facilities for the 100 plus detainees. Being people of action, the Bingham's began the Haslar Visitor's Group with Michael Woolley in place. From then, until 2014 when Haslar suddenly closed, a large number of local volunteers supported the men with regular visits, often trying to get legal help, giving emotional support and meeting their needs in practical ways allowed by the IRC (more about the IRC later).

Michael Woolley then suggested HVG joined the Red Cross at the drop-in at All Saints, the name was changed to FwB and this is where we still operate from. The Red Cross left after the pandemic. Both John and Michael are no longer with us and are still missed by clients and volunteers.

Also, we are proud to announce that Access to Justice, led by Dr. Charles Leddy-Owen, celebrates 10 years of immigration advice. However, Charles writes about this later in the report. Congratulations to you Charles!

We were delighted to employ two members of staff in 2023, after 5 years of being entirely run by volunteers. We welcomed Sam Bell, who looks after our admin needs and Rachel McCormick is manager of the day to day running of the service. How did we manage without you both?

Our database holds 1,400 client names. Obviously many of these people "just pass through" and are only seen once (we remove people every 5 years who have not been seen in that time) but we have new people arriving and a large hardcore of clients who have been in the city many years.

Our drop-in continues to be very busy with 40-60 men, women and children every session. The very important English classes are well attended. There are frequent art sessions and other activities. Clients are encouraged to play board games etc. while they wait to see a caseworker. Volunteers encourage befriending. We always want our centre to be a welcoming and safe space.

Casework continues to be challenging, with changes in the asylum process and the difficulty with our clients engaging a solicitor, among other things. This, and accommodation remain the biggest problem. Many clients, on receiving their leave to remain can find themselves homeless or in a hotel or BnB. There will be no cooking facilities and a wait for Universal Credit. One lady told me her 6 years old's evening meal was milk and biscuits. Another client was sent to hospital by his GP suffering from malnutrition. We have to try and meet so many different needs; travel costs to hearings, solicitors, hospitals, and to Fareham to sign on at the police station. We have many clients in need of help with food while waiting for their Home Office support or Universal Credit.

We usually have approx 6 clients receiving a regular destitution payment of £35 weekly, longer term. We have several people who are applying for leave to remain based on 20 years.

We have shared the joy of clients receiving their leave to remain and tried to support emotionally those whose asylum claim has failed.

In 2023 the Conservative Government continued its anti-asylum stance and focussed particularly on the small boats arriving, ultimately leaving the UK with no safe legal entry for asylum seekers. The language used has had a negative impact on the population; we went from Theresa May's "hostile environment" to Suella Braverman's "invaders". Mixed with declaring certain human beings as "illegal".

More positively, we still have a power house of 30 volunteers. I can never thank them enough for all they bring to the drop-in, even making time for special events throughout the year, such as Eid, Diwali, Christmas and other activities in between. Our volunteers deserve so much in the way of thanks but are happy just to serve our clients.

We thank Stephen Morgan MP for his willingness to support our clients and Citizen's Advice Portsmouth (Immigration) for their continued attendance at our drop in. We enjoy and benefit from collaborating with so many gifted people and organisations throughout the city. Finally and most importantly, a huge amount of thanks and gratitude go to our friends and supporters. Without you we wouldn't be able to offer a degree of humanity to our deserving clients.

Coleen Le Chair FWB.

Green Woodworking Project



Once a month a group of FWB clients go on a trip to Rushmere Farm in Hambledon to learn the skills of green woodworking. Last year we finally put the finishing touches to the bench we had been working on for several months and set to work on the next project. Our tutor Ivan landed a fantastic job in Wales using his woodworking skills, but luckily for us, Jim, who had been volunteering alongside Ivan, offered to take over. It was decided that we would construct a pole lathe made from the local wood, which could later be used to make bowls and cups.



After much hard work sourcing the wood from the forest and sawing and chopping it to the right size, the lathe gradually began to take shape.



Once completed, Jim demonstrated how to use the device and we all had a practice at 'turning'. It will take a long time to become skillful, but hopefully one day we will be able to make some utensils.



A huge 'thank you' to Jim for his patient tuition, and to George Crossley, the farmer, for his generous hospitality.

Gardening

The Community Allotment at Moneyfields, Portsmouth, had a good year in 2023. We grew lots of vegetables including tomatoes, potatoes, raspberries, corn, herbs, onions and beans.

We also grow relationships between people who wouldn't normally get the opportunity to meet. Our group continues to be a mixture of local Portsmouth residents and refugees who I meet at our Thursday Friends Without Borders refugee drop-in at centre at All Saints Church where I am a volunteer English mentor.

Our allotment meeting time is 10 till 1 on Wednesdays. We sow seeds, plant, trim grass and weed depending on our capabilities.

At some point in the morning we all stop and sit round our big table and have a cup of tea or coffee and chat.

We are organic, trying to save the bees and we recycle and upcycle as much as we can

Last year a few of our allotmenters received Right to Remain and each time we celebrated with a cake of course!

If you would like to join us email me at janprobert@hotmail.com



Haslar Immigration Removal Centre

Friends without Borders was formerly known as Haslar Visitors Group. HVG was started in 1994 by local people concerned by the detention of foreign nationals at Haslar in Gosport. Haslar was used for the detention of foreign nationals from 1989 and was designated an Immigration Removal Centre in 2002. The proposal is to re-open Haslar Immigration Removal Centre to hold 600 detainees. (Previously Haslar IRC had 160 beds.) Haslar detention centre closed in 2015.

As a member of HVG, I visited weekly from 2003. I visited about 50 people, some for just one visit but 5 people for over a year. Every person I visited should not have been detained. None should have had their freedom removed. None should have been denied the right to be with their children and families. Many had the most terrible stories of torture, amazing stories of bravery, of standing up to corrupt government of being caught up in conflict, of incredible and dangerous journeys to reach the UK, of losing family members and of not knowing if family members were still alive and if they were safe.

One person I visited for 17 months had been detained for working. He had a good case. At his third bail hearing he was released. Two years later he came to visit me with his wife and child. He had a job at the airport. What a waste of life to detain.

Now the Government is wanting to reopen Haslar as a detention centre for 600 people. Caroline Dineage the Gosport MP says it will be for offenders. For offenders who have served their sentence in prison only to be re-detained on release. The offences include arriving on small boats, working, overstaying, not having a passport, false documents etc. immigration offences. It can be impossible to have the correct documents when seeking asylum and there are no safe routes.

In 2003 the detainees went on hunger strike. The conditions at Haslar were reported to be the worst in the country. Michael Woolley, Haslar Visitors Group, the University STAR group at Southampton organised pressure and protest and conditions did improve. However the condition of having no release date, no idea of what was going to happen to you and the fear of being returned to the country you fled from remained. The Guardian reported in 2018 that there were two suicide attempts every day in immigration detention.

Writing this and researching for it fills me with dread and abhorrence to what my country is doing. 600 frightened people living within walking distance of my house and the Drop In. 600 people who should be helped, supported and welcomed by the UK. Legal help for 600 people in Gosport- the IRC is not easily accessible. Haslar IRC was run by the prison service. When the IRC reopens it will be run by a private company. My understanding is that the private companies running IRCs are less professional and less humane than the prison service. AND 600 people who it would be good to think could have the offer of a visitor. There is a WhatsApp group 'No Detention, No Haslar' and a dozen FWB volunteers are on that. It's a small group of 24 people, our aim is to prevent the reopening of the detention centre but also looking to making it as humane as possible.

Bibby Stockholm has been recognised to be inhumane and cruel and will be closing in January 2025. The Rwanda Plan has been abandoned. These and the reopening of Haslar are costing millions. Money that could be so much better spent on welcoming and integrating refugees and asylum seekers into our country.

How is FWB going to meet this challenge?

2023 What We Achieved..

Our drop-in gets steadily busier, but our volunteers continue to do an outstanding job in helping our clients.

Our small team of caseworkers have helped between 17 and 37 clients each week. The casework is getting more complex and involved, so we are looking to recruit more caseworkers for next year. Many thanks to the caseworkers for your dedication and support.



There were between 10 and 22 clients attending our small group English classes each week. English classes are so valuable for clients to navigate life in Portsmouth and to make new friends when they move here. Thank you to all our volunteer English mentors.

Overall, we had between 29 and 53 clients attending the drop-in each week (data taken from Aug to Dec). Clients attend for casework, English and for a safe social space. It is wonderful that we are welcoming so many people to our drop-in service.



A New Experience

Hello everyone, this is Loveleen! I am currently studying MRes in Humanities and Social Sciences at Portsmouth University. I am currently researching the motivations and perceptions of NGOs participating in HQAI's (Humanitarian Quality Assurance Initiative) for my project. I am particularly interested in understanding the factors that drive NGOs to join HQAI, the perceived effectiveness of independent verification, and the potential for policy recommendations based on these findings.

I joined Friends without Borders in April and have been in love with everything that happens here! I first came in contact with Rachel and from Day 1, I knew I wanted to stay here. I learnt about everything that the charity does: English classes, social space for anyone to come and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, caseworkers to provide guidance and much more. I was amazed when I came to know all this and it's been over 6 weeks now, and my interest in becoming a caseworker has strengthened as I learn more about the role and people. One thing that always stunned me was how everyone volunteering there knows and welcomes anybody who comes in the drop-in, they have a special bond, a connection of understanding and respect. There is no doubt that whoever comes in, feels comfortable and understood!

The drop-in service can be very busy at times, many come to learn English and have seen them regularly on Thursdays, this shows their commitment to exploring their language skills and meeting new people. On my first day, I was shadowing Clive (English teacher), and I got to learn about both his and people's passion for learning. We talked about where we all come from, the months and the weather. It was really interesting how Clive managed to get everyone to speak a little by giving everyone examples which teach about different months and seasons with expressions, hand gestures and sounds too!

After Day 1, I have been shadowing caseworkers (Geoff mainly). I learnt a lot about the role, the different complications behind each case, the challenges that we as caseworkers may come across, the common difficulties of people seeking asylum, language barriers and much more. There is no end to learning whenever I go to the drop-ins. Everyone tries their best to support whoever comes in the best way possible, we are not trained legal professionals but we can guide each person to the right place. It can be very disheartening at times, as you learn in all the difficult situations people may be in, but we keep our hopes up. From financial assistance to requesting solicitors, we can guide everyone through all the steps and their needs in their current situation. No matter how hard the role is, it's very rewarding because in one way or another, help is provided and nobody goes unassisted. However, it can be challenging to explain when some things are out of our control as clients are in vulnerable situations.

Everyone volunteering here has amazed me, I learn about different ways they all participate to help and provide support to each person who enters that door. It's a place where we grow and learn, a place where we help our community, a place where we have fun and a place to cherish forever!

Loveleen Kumari



Access To Justice

The Access to Justice project, which started in 2014, provides free legal advice and casework in immigration law. The UK's immigration law is notoriously complex and was explicitly and consciously designed as a 'hostile environment' for those deemed undesirable by the recently departed government.

Since passing an exam and moving up to a higher advice level at the end of 2022 Charles has been able to take on far more complex immigration cases. Many of these relate to clients' rights as family members, as long-term residents of the UK, or as children. The majority of these cases involve situations where the individual or family has no recourse to public funds, either as a condition of their current leave, or because they have no immigration status whatsoever (and therefore cannot work either). Around one third of our clients are homeless. In nearly all such cases there is no right to legal aid, meaning that the Access to Justice project offers a lifeline for clients seeking to renew or regularise their status in the UK.

During the summer of 2023 Access to Justice moved offices to the University of Portsmouth. This has enabled Charles to take on more clients because his 'day job' is as a lecturer there. Access to Justice now sits alongside (though is distinct from) the University's general Legal Advice Clinic. This move has contributed to a very substantial rise in the numbers of clients the service has assisted. 21 clients were taken on in 2023, as compared to 12 in 2021 and just 2 in Covid-affected 2020. At the time of writing 30 clients have been seen in 2024, and next year's Annual Report will be able to introduce the trainees and student placements Access to Justice have recently taken on. In short, the service is growing fast.

In 2023, successes of Access to Justice included – renewals of leave to remain for three families based on their right to a family life; British citizenship achieved for two children; change of conditions to access public funds for someone who had left an abusive relationship; indefinite leave to remain for someone whose relationship had broken down due to domestic abuse.

It is worth noting that many of the applications submitted in 2023 remain caught up in the Home Office's lengthy waiting times for processing applications (around 12 months for human rights-based cases) but we hope to have further good news about these in next year's report.



English Mentor

This has been another fascinating and interesting year, helping our remarkable clients from around the world with English language. We all find it a privilege (and rarely a chore) to engage with them, get to know them and impart some English grammar with plenty of good humour on the way. My experience is now over about 6 years working with FWB English teachers.

This is a dedicated and committed group of people and we all share a very strong feeling that refugees who have struggled against the odds to get here should be given proper support and care. They need to feel truly welcome, just as any of us would. The English teaching group, and FWB, has invested in a really up to date set of learning materials, books that work easily and visually for adult learners (thank you Andrew!). We use these consistently as a basis for our sessions as they cover all the subjects that become essential for a newcomer to UK.

I have found flash cards with images are an excellent and impromptu way of getting a session started with fun and shared engagement. Remembering of course, that a group may be a mix from several countries, languages and cultures.

We have learnt over time, that our clients are under a lot of pressure in so many areas of their lives that even weekly commitment to an organized sequence of lessons is not always realistic. As a former teacher, I will always have a basic plan for them to explore but we all find it is better to be ready to work in a spontaneous way depending on who can attend that day. Also, some clients are passing through or on the move anyway for various reasons. Good basic grammar is often the biggest drawback for people who have had to learn a new language hastily and 'on the hoof' to get by. Our house style is rather 'ad hoc' but with plenty of good materials always at hand.

A very important role, apart from developing grammar skills in our clients, is to engage and befriend. A prime directive of Friends Without Borders of course! I think we do this consistently in the English group by working with themes of culture, empathising with types of food, weather, hobbies, wildlife etc. This often develops out of simple conversation about their week, activities, problems etc. This is a flexible and dynamic approach which seeks to engage more fully with our clients, making them feel valued and connected while teaching some of the grammar basics.

It has been a year of helping and getting to know some remarkable and interesting people who enrich us with their own stories, backgrounds and unique personalities.

Rob Johnston



Treasurer's Report

From a financial perspective, again for much of the year we operated with two Friends Without Borders charities in place – the original Friends Without Borders (charity number 1080187) and the more recently established Friends Without Borders Portsmouth CIO – Charitable Incorporated Organisation – (charity number 1194005). This required us to take considerable care and effort to manage the transition between the two to ensure that all of our supporters and donors, individual and organisational, moved across to the new organisation. We are pleased to confirm that this process was completed early in 2024.

After discounting the effects of moving finances between the two organisations, there are a number of factors which stand out. Firstly our income in 2023 increased by more than 10% over that for 2022. This is such a great testimony to our regular donors and supporters which is absolutely breathtaking. Secondly this amazing level of income enabled us to spend more of our money on our clients and our direct client expenditure increased by just over 50% compared with 2022.

Perhaps inevitably our overheads also increased but not by a significant amount although we will continue to monitor these carefully. After all the above transactions, as you can see from the Assets and Liabilities Summary, as at 31st December 2023, we are pleased to report that at the end of the year our total financial assets had increased by over £10,000.

Finally an Independent Examination of our accounts has again this year been carried out by Trevor James and his report confirms that he has no concerns with these accounts. We should like to thank Trevor for his support and wise counsel again this year.

Geoff Wilson and Sharon Brooks – FWB Treasury Team

FWB: Receipts and Payments for 2023

	Original Account (1080187)	CIO Account (1194005)	Total for 2023	Total for 2022
Income Receipts	£	£	£	£
Regular Donations	2,687	17,536	20,223	25,613
Unique Donations	8,508	24,990	33,498	13,092
Portsmouth High School	-	-		10,150
Gift and Recovered	1563	1,866	3,429	3,200
Bank Interest	-	603	603	25
Total	12,758	44,995	57,753	52,080
Transfer from Original Acct	-	14,574	14,574	90,016
Total Receipts	12,758	59,569	72,327	142,096
Direct Charitable Expenditure				
Destitute Asylum Seekers	-	16,814	16,814	10,135
Client Travel	-	3,509	3,509	814
Social Activities	-	4,972	4,972	4,825
Legal Fees	-	3,127	3,127	300
Other Expenditures				
Freelance Administrator	-	7,129	7,129	4,326
Volunteer Travel Expenses	-	1,922	1,922	1,941
Rent	-	7,233	7,233	6,222
Phone/ Other Admin Costs	-	3,274	3,274	4,211
Independent Examiner Fee	-	900	900	450
Insurance	-	393	393	656
Just Giving Fees	-	216	216	216
Transfer to FWB CIO	14,574		14,574	
Total Payments	14,574	49,489	64,063	34,126
Net Receipts for Year	1,816	10,080	8,264	107,970

FWB Assets and Liabilities as at 31st December 2023

	Original Organisation (Charity No. 1080187)	CIO Organisation (Charity No. 1194005)	2022
Bank and Cash in Hand:			
Bank account	300	104,862	94,534
Cash		121	132
Debtors:			
Gift aid recoverable	109	1588	834
Liabilities:			
Freelancer	0	0	729
Rental	0	960	630
TOTALS:	409	105,611	94,141

Clients Thank you Messages

"Everything is good. Before, when I was pregnant you helped me a lot, you helped me with everything, food, clothes for me and my daughter. You've helped me for 7 years. Thank you very much. I remember Michael, he helped me a lot and visited me at home and brought me food. I will never forget this in all my life. Coleen thank you very much. Thank you everyone. When I come here I am happy."

"Thank you very much. I am happy for your help."

"It's very good. Thank you to the caseworkers, very good."

"Thank you very much for doing this job, to look after asylum like me and homeless people."

"Thank you for what you are doing. It's not easy being a volunteer. Please continue your good work."

"Thank you for helping every day. I am happy for the nice classes, they are good."



Pictures from the year



Friends Without Borders
Registered Charity no 1194005
This is a multi-purpose form. Please fill in such parts as are relevant

Count Me In As A Supporter

Please add me to your support list to receive the Occasional Newsletter

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

I agree to be contacted by Friends Without Borders by post and email for fundraising purposes.

☐

I give consent to Friends Without Borders to keep my personalised information to keep my information (as above) for the purpose of administering our supporters mail list in accordance with our privacy policy.

☐

I give consent to Friends Without Borders contacting me by post and email with, for example, the Occasional news and Annual report.

☐

I understand that I can withdraw my consent at any time by contacting coordinator@friendswithoutborders.co.uk

☐

Gift Aid Certificate

- **Donations from UK taxpayers are supplemented by a grant from the treasury.**
- **Our Treasurer will make the claim, the only thing needed for the donor is their address and signature below that they are paying income tax.**

I am a UK taxpayer paying tax at least equivalent to this claim and claim Gift Aid on this and future donations to Friends Without Borders. I have given my address above and understand this information will be kept by Friends Without Borders for six years, from the date of my last donation.

Signed _____

Dated: _____

FRIENDS WITHOUT BORDERS

**We are a completely independent charity which has served asylum seekers and refugees in Portsmouth for the last 28 years.
We have no Government contracts
and rely entirely for support on the contributions of local people.**

See our website for more information- friendswithoutborders.org.uk

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Become A Supporter

**email: chair@friendswithoutborders.org.uk
and we'll send you an occasional newsletter.**

Give Money For Grants

**Asylum seekers still only get £49.18 a week enough to live
any small emergency becomes a crisis.**

Set Up A Standing Order

**One of our strengths is a network of local supporters who pay small
(whatever you like but £5 to £25 is typical) amounts each month.
Giving us staying power.
Friends Without Borders bank account is with Lloyds Bank.
Sort Code- 30-98-97. Account number: 59923463.**

Remember to add Gift Aid

**Gift Aid adds 25p to every £1 you give, so anybody
who pays income tax and donates should sign the form provided.**

Leave a Legacy

**Legacies enable us to plan for the future. They have helped us to run our drop in
at which we see typically around 20 refugees requiring casework each week
as well as many who come for a coffee and sandwich, destitution money, a chat
or English lessons to name but a few activities.**

Volunteer Yourself

**Volunteering can be extremely rewarding. So if you would like to join us, whatever your
availability please contact office@friendswithoutborders.org.uk
FWB always needs willing volunteers and we have a variety of jobs and tasks to suit most
people.**

**For those who have supported us in the past we want to thank you
for all your contributions!**

Standing Order

To the manager: Please pay Friends Without Borders the sum below by standing order untill further notice.

Friends Without Borders account is with Lloyds Bank, Sort Code 30-98-97, Account Number: 59923463.

Monthly amount in figures:

Monthly amount in words:

Date of First Payment:

My Bank:

My Account Number:

My Account Name:

Signed

Date: =

Please send this form to your bank.

Friends Without Borders CIO (Charity Number 1194005)

Receipts and Payments Account for the Year to 31 December 2023

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2022
	£	£	£	£
Income Receipts				
From Voluntary Sources				
Regular Donations	17,536	-	17,536	4,663
Unique Donations	24,990	-	24,990	3,439
Portsmouth High School	-	-	-	10,150
Gift Aid Tax Recovered	1,866	-	1,866	-
	<u>44,392</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>44,392</u>	<u>18,252</u>
Interest	<u>603</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>603</u>	<u>-</u>
Transfer from Friends Without Borders	<u>14,574</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,574</u>	<u>14,574</u>
Total Receipts	<u>59,569</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>59,569</u>	<u>32,826</u>
Direct Charitable Expenditure				
Grants and Direct Support				
Destitute Asylum Seekers	16,814	-	16,814	3,868
Client Travel	3,509	-	3,509	109
Social Activities	4,972	-	4,972	1,475
Legal Fees	3,127	-	3,127	180
Cash box	-	-	-	-
	<u>28,422</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>28,422</u>	<u>5,632</u>
Other expenditure				
Freelancer	7,129	-	7,129	3,084
Volunteer Travel and Expenses	1,922	-	1,922	886
Rent	7,233	-	7,233	2,619
Telephone and other administration costs	3,274	-	3,274	814
Independent Examiner's fee	900	-	900	-
Insurance	393	-	393	500
	<u>20,851</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>20,851</u>	<u>7,903</u>
Fund-raising costs				
Just Giving fees	216	-	216	198
	<u>216</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>216</u>	<u>198</u>
Other Payments	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total payments	<u>49,489</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>49,489</u>	<u>13,733</u>
Net receipts for the year	<u>10,080</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,080</u>	<u>19,093</u>

Friends Without Borders CIO (Charity Number 1194005)

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2023

		2022
Bank and Cash in hand		
Bank Deposit Account	90,608	5
Bank Current Account	14,254	94,529
Cash in hand	121	132
	<u>104,983</u>	<u>94,666</u>
Debtors		
Gift Aid recoverable	1,588	0
	<u>1,588</u>	<u>0</u>
Liabilities		
Freelancer	0	729
All Saints room hire	960	630
	<u>960</u>	<u>1,359</u>

Approved by the Trustees of Friends Without Borders

on _____ and signed on their behalf by:-

Chairperson *Carolee*

Treasurer *Ray*

Friends Without Borders (Charity Number 1080187)

Receipts and Payments Account for the Year to 31 December 2023

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2022
	£	£	£	£
Income Receipts				
From Voluntary Sources				
Regular Donations	2,687	-	2,687	20,950
Unique Donations	8,508	-	8,508	9,653
Legacies and Major Donations	-	-	-	-
Gift Aid Tax Recovered	1,563	-	1,563	3,200
	<u>12,758</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,758</u>	<u>33,803</u>
Fund Raising	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Bank Interest	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25</u>
Total Receipts	<u>12,758</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,758</u>	<u>33,828</u>
Direct Charitable Expenditure				
Grants and Direct Support				
Destitute Asylum Seekers	-	-	-	6,267
Client Travel	-	-	-	705
Social Activities	-	-	-	3,350
Legal Fees	-	-	-	150
Laptops	-	-	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,472</u>
Other expenditure				
Freelancer	-	-	-	1,242
Volunteer Travel and Expenses	-	-	-	1,055
Rent	-	-	-	3,603
Telephone and other administration costs	-	-	-	3,397
Independent Examiner's fee	-	-	-	450
Insurance	-	-	-	156
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,903</u>
Fund-raising costs				
Just Giving fees	-	-	-	18
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>18</u>
Other Payments				
Transferred to Friends Without Borders CIO	<u>14,574</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,574</u>	<u>90,016</u>
Total payments	<u>14,574</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,574</u>	<u>110,409</u>
Net (Payments)/Receipts for the year	<u>(1,816)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1,816)</u>	<u>(76,581)</u>

Friends Without Borders (Charity Number 1080187)

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2023

2022

Bank and Cash in hand

Bank	300	2,116
Cash in hand	0	0
	<u>300</u>	<u>2,116</u>

Debtors

Gift Aid recoverable	109	834
	<u>109</u>	<u>834</u>

Liabilities

0	0
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Approved by the Trustees of Friends Without Borders

on 1st May 2024 and signed on their behalf by:-

Chairperson *C. A. LÊ* (C. A. LÊ)

Treasurer *G. A. WILSON* (G. A. WILSON)

**Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Friends Without Borders
(Registered charity number 1080187) on the accounts for the year ended
31 December 2023**

This report is made solely to the trustees of Friends Without Borders, as a body, in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act"). My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the trustees of Friends Without Borders those matters I am required to state to them in an independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the trustees as a body, for any work, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of Friends Without Borders you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Act. You consider that the audit requirements of the Act do not apply.

I report in respect of my examination of the accounts of Friends Without Borders for the year ended 31st December 2023 set out on the attached pages carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed 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 my examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts did not accord with the accounting records.

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.



Trevor James FCA DChA
Dormer Cottage
West Broyle
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 3PR

18 April 2024

Friends Without Borders CIO (Charity Number 1194005)

Receipts and Payments Account for the Year to 31 December 2023

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2022
	£	£	£	£
Income Receipts				
From Voluntary Sources				
Regular Donations	17,536	-	17,536	4,663
Unique Donations	24,990	-	24,990	3,439
Portsmouth High School	-	-	-	10,150
Gift Aid Tax Recovered	1,866	-	1,866	-
	<u>44,392</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>44,392</u>	<u>18,252</u>
Interest	<u>603</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>603</u>	<u>-</u>
Transfer from Friends Without Borders	<u>14,574</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,574</u>	<u>14,574</u>
Total Receipts	<u><u>59,569</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>59,569</u></u>	<u><u>32,826</u></u>
Direct Charitable Expenditure				
Grants and Direct Support				
Destitute Asylum Seekers	16,814	-	16,814	3,868
Client Travel	3,509	-	3,509	109
Social Activities	4,972	-	4,972	1,475
Legal Fees	3,127	-	3,127	180
Cash box	-	-	-	-
	<u>28,422</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>28,422</u>	<u>5,632</u>
Other expenditure				
Freelancer	7,129	-	7,129	3,084
Volunteer Travel and Expenses	1,922	-	1,922	886
Rent	7,233	-	7,233	2,619
Telephone and other administration costs	3,274	-	3,274	814
Independent Examiner's fee	900	-	900	-
Insurance	393	-	393	500
	<u>20,851</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>20,851</u>	<u>7,903</u>
Fund-raising costs				
Just Giving fees	216	-	216	198
	<u>216</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>216</u>	<u>198</u>
Other Payments	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total payments	<u><u>49,489</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>49,489</u></u>	<u><u>13,733</u></u>
Net receipts for the year	<u><u>10,080</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>10,080</u></u>	<u><u>19,093</u></u>

Friends Without Borders CIO (Charity Number 1194005)

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 December 2023

2022

Bank and Cash in hand

Bank Deposit Account	90,608	5
Bank Current Account	14,254	94,529
Cash in hand	121	132
	<u>104,983</u>	<u>94,666</u>

Debtors

Gift Aid recoverable	1,588	0
	<u>1,588</u>	<u>0</u>

Liabilities

Freelancer	0	729
All Saints room hire	960	630
	<u>960</u>	<u>1,359</u>

Approved by the Trustees of Friends Without Borders

on 1st May 2024 and signed on their behalf by:-

Chairperson Coleen (C.A. LEE).....

Treasurer G.A. Wilson (G.A. WILSON).....

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Friends Without Borders CIO (Registered charity number 1194005) on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023

This report is made solely to the trustees of Friends Without Borders CIO, as a body, in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act"). My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the trustees of Friends Without Borders CIO those matters I am required to state to them in an independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the trustees as a body, for any work, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of Friends Without Borders CIO you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Act. You consider that the audit requirements of the Act do not apply.

I report in respect of my examination of the accounts of Friends Without Borders CIO for the year ended 31st December 2023 set out on the attached pages carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed 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 my examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts did not accord with the accounting records.

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.



Trevor James FCA DChA
Dormer Cottage
West Broyle
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 3PR

18 April 2024

Accounts

FRIENDS WITHOUT BORDERS (PORTSMOUTH) CIO 1194005



Annual Report for the year 2022

(Published August 2023)

Annual Report of Friends Without Borders (Portsmouth) CIO for the Year 2022

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CHARITY NUMBER- 1194005

Trustees 2022:

Veronica Dunne
and Bryony Whitmarsh -
joint Chairpersons
Coleen Le - Deputy Chairperson
Sharon Brooks
and Geoff Wilson - joint treasurers
Charles Leddy-Owen Access to Justice
Lia Deyal
Yenga Ikuse

Trustees 2023:

Coleen Le - named person with CIO
Geoff Wilson - Treasurer
Charles Leddy-Owen - Access to Justice
Lia Deyal
Yenga Ikuse
Jan Probert - co opted
Majid Dhana - co opted

Aims and Organisation

The relief of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees who are suffering hardships or distress or in need, particularly, but not exclusively, in the city of Portsmouth, by the provision of financial and other assistance and raising the awareness of the general public.

Organisation, The organisation is managed by an executive committee, consisting of the trustees, which meets every two months.
Day to day management is by Coleen Le.

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees have paid due regard to the guidance issued by charity commission on public benefit.

a) Friends Without Borders has relieved poverty through the provision of payments to meet particular needs, granting allowances to destitute clients for limited periods and assistance with travelling expenses.

b) Friends Without Borders has also provided free legal advice, regulated by the OISC, on immigration matters through Access To Justice.

c) Public Benefit has also been served by the education of the general public through the use of social media, and with collaboration with local press and liaison and network with relevant groups in the city.

Chair's Report by the Deputy Chair.

2022 has been a positive year at Friends Without Borders. We had closed our drop in but kept telephone contact with our most vulnerable clients. When we reopened in 2022 we were only able to receive clients requiring 'casework' advice. By the end of the year, the sessions were thriving providing a full and expanded service with numbers of new clients increasing. Similarly, we were able to enhance and develop English classes and other resources for clients, including creative projects, art and board games. Sometimes the social contact and companionship is as important as the advice required. As well as support and advocacy we always stress befriending and enabling our clients to make the service more rounded. True to our name, we seek to befriend those in need despite any borders between us. We saw an average of 42 attendees at our drop in per week. 12 attended English classes. 18 engaged with Caseworkers. Most frequent represented countries were Iraq, Afghanistan and Nigeria, and in Total we supported clients from across 49 countries.

Case work is at the core of our mission and the support that we provide to our clients. Case work has become more complex and we have sought to deepen our help. The free confidential assistance given by trained volunteers is invaluable to clients who are often at their wits' ends. Their issues cover a large number of areas ranging from access to a GP or Dentists, to schools for children, housing and a number of other administrative problems which can be very hard to navigate for an English speaker but sometimes like a brick wall for someone without fluent English.

To free up more time for the case workers and help us to properly prepare for the drop in, in 2022 we took on a part time admin assistant which helped relieve some of the pressures on the volunteers. Our caseworkers are trained and keep up to date with relevant policies and concerns, a recent example is training on how to spot and deal with issues of modern-day slavery.

We have a network of organisations that we work with and to whom we can refer clients for more specialist support notably to Citizens Advice Portsmouth who frequently join us in our drop in and who can advise on debt and money advice, immigration advice which is an enhancement on what we can provide.

Our local MP Stephen Morgan remains supportive of Friends Without Borders and of a potential right for asylum seekers to work, a logical proposal and one that he is pursuing. In December the number of asylum seekers in Portsmouth was 561 up on 302 the year before. (Portsmouth.co.uk, The News 2nd March 2023). The need for support is self evident and we seek to support such people rather than see them as a problem to be dealt with.

Throughout the year we held a number of key events which were organised for the benefit of our clients including regular visits to a farm, allotment work and linking up with Action Asylum. In December we held our Christmas party for clients and their children. Our kitchen volunteers spent all morning and worked tirelessly to prepare a spread of chicken curry, dahl, rice, pakora, samosas and desserts. We were also provided entertainment by our talented volunteers which included clog dancing and music and approximately 100 clients attended.



We were able to distribute 120 £5 supermarket vouchers, one for every client. Donations from our supporters also enabled us to hand out 35 bags full of toiletries and toys for every one of roughly 40 children in attendance.

During 2022 the numbers of English teachers and English students increased substantially and we instituted a different way of working which clients have found much more approachable and popular. We work in small groups, often mixing nationalities and ethnic groups, this seems to work very well and clients often finding life experiences in common. We are fortunate to have been able to buy a full set of English texts which allow a variety of approaches. Of course, the English class is not just a way of increasing fluency in English, crucially it embodies companionship, support, befriending.

Many volunteers support groups whose aim is to improve the lives of asylum seekers and refugees. For example "The Right to work" campaign which has had some success. Locally there is support for "no detention, no Haslar" campaign, as there are concerns regarding the opening of Haslar Immigration Removal Centre.

All of the above services, activities and support are only possible because of the generosity of our donors and supporters. Despite the disruption caused by us establishing Friends Without Borders as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with its new and different bank account, the majority of our donors have moved their donations into the new account and we thank them for that.

Finally I should like to take the opportunity to thank our previous Chair Veronica Dunne who resigned in October 2022. Her contribution to FWB was enormous and we will forever be indebted to her.

**Colleen Le
Deputy Chair**

Who Are We And Who Are They?

Immigration to the UK is highly topical at the moment. Coverage is mixed but includes a slice of commentary and opinion along the lines of ... 'we take too many people, it's not our problem, they are illegal and not entitled to come here....'

When dealing with such issues, it is useful to consider the core principles - who 'they' are, why they are here and how they should be welcomed or otherwise processed. Some consider that 'we' are a separate group and so don't have responsibility for others, despite need. Alternatively, are we one people with moral or spiritual responsibilities to each other, on top of the international law requiring us to assist? Some religions would say we should help anyone in need.

Common narratives however are hostile and involve 'othering' ie treating people as in a separate group for which we have no responsibility, they often provoke and inflame opinions.

The reality of the legal positions and stories of many who arrive, differ from those narratives though. Looking at asylum seekers - those seeking refugee status have right rooted in international law to seek asylum in any country if they are in fear of persecution. That right was established after the horrors of the Second World War. Once the asylum seeker has made their case they become a refugee.

This is not the same as the case of immigrants who arrive with permission or those that arrive without, who may be economic migrants but are undocumented; they are not fleeing persecution. These are the so called 'illegals' which is a pejorative term and misrepresents the reality.

The labels and the nature of the claims are often muddled including by the press, it almost seems that the mislabelling of asylum seekers even by the government is intended to confuse or inflame tensions. Brexit and the debates about European workers in the UK, presented politicians and the press with further opportunities to debate 'them and us' and the debates are well documented. It could be argued that this augmented the debate about fear of and anger towards the 'other'.



Ukraine was dealt with differently, many people came to the UK but with Ukraine, the reasons for them leaving was obvious, it was on the TV, it was clear and recent - unlike some long, complicated wars which drive people away from their homes in the Middle East. It may be relevant that they were in Europe and they were white, meaning perhaps that more of the UK population could more easily identify with them. The government approach to the crisis was completely different and the public supported it, even though the backdrop was very similar to that of others arriving.

Government policy (as well as the media) in this area must be an influence on values; the label of the government policy towards immigrants is 'Hostile Environment'. The emphasis is on how to reduce numbers of all types of immigrants not how to protect those in need or welcome workers. Some sections of the press go further and coverage hypes up fears and prejudices, some of the same papers used similar language a lot in the past including in connection with Jewish people fleeing Germany in the 1930s. Lord Dubs has spent a lifetime campaigning for the needs of people seeking refuge after being a child in the 'Kinder Transport' himself.

Those that are new to our shores often have harrowing pasts. The narrative laid over the facts is that 'they' are a threat, scrounging and that we don't have any obligation to help, rather that they should leave. The portrayal of the situation is simplified and biased; alternatives or alternative analyses are rarely presented. Many asylum seekers have come from countries where the UK have been involved in war, bombing and political disruption where the UK/US were portrayed as rescuers and friends, hence asylum seekers believing that they would be welcomed.

Emotive language in the press invoking prejudice and fear and misrepresenting facts confuses the issue. To make progress we need to cut through that and revert to core principles of law and theology, which are complex. They resolve around who is included, who is welcome and who we will help and protect.

Alison Hunt

Compassion Tree Project

At Friends Without Borders we are continuing to promote art activities. For refugee week this year we have teamed up with John Ashlin from Action Asylum Portsmouth and two artists. When we found out that this year's theme was Compassion we decided to make a "Compassion Tree".

For the last few weeks visitors to our drop in have been tracing, drawing and cutting out leaves. Then we ask them to write on the leaves any words that conjure up the word “compassion”, writing in their first language and also English. Our artists have linked up with Portsmouth Central Library to make a 3D tree in the main lobby of the library. Then we will add the leaves. I’m looking forward to seeing the finished artwork. Compassion is such a relevant theme for today’s society.

Jan Probert



Every Life Matters

*From war-torn countries
These people have fled
And you seem to say
No roof over your head*

*All they want is a home
Is that too much to ask
Please do not tell us
You have a more important task*

*Have some respect
For your fellow humankind
We all differ in appearance
But our lives are intertwined*

*So open your heart
Don't send them away
Diversity did build
The world of today*

Natalie Peace aged 13



Gardening

My name is Jan and I run the Moneyfields Community Allotment . We meet every Wednesday 10am -1pm. We are an international gardening community of local Portsmouth people and people from around the world that I have met at Friends Without Borders drop in where I am a volunteer.

We grow organic vegetables from seed and when it comes to harvest time we share all the produce. This year so far we are growing potatoes, raspberries, tomatoes, sweetcorn, asparagus, spinach, broccoli and rhubarb.

Usually there are 7-9 of us and at some point in the morning work stops and we sit around our large table and drink tea or coffee. Sometimes we will eat something from our allotment produce. For example rhubarb cake, which is delicious!

We also put the world to rights and although the predominant language is English we sometimes try and learn a little of each other's language.

Last week I asked people what the allotment meant to them. One of the refugee gardeners from Ethiopia said working on the allotment is a good use of his time as he is not allowed to do paid work. He wants to be doing something useful with his time. He said he is pleased to be learning new things, meeting new people and improving his English language skills. Being at the allotment also offers some relief from mental stress. It is good to be busy, he says.

One of our local born gardeners says she loves to come to the allotment, it is like another world. During the pandemic it was somewhere to be with nature in a safe way. She also said it was great to be part of an 'international community', and to be meeting people she wouldn't otherwise have met.

Working in nature and feeling part of a community is not only enjoyable but proven to be beneficial for mental health.

Email me at janprobert@hotmail.com if you would like to join us.



Green Wood Working Project

Since the summer of 2021, a group of clients from the Friends without Borders drop-in has been visiting a farm in Hambledon every month to learn about green woodworking. This is thanks to the Crossley family who own the farm, and Ivan Pigott, the skilled green woodworker.

Green woodworking is a craft that works freshly-felled, unseasoned timber into fashioned items. Green wood is much softer than seasoned wood, so it is easier to shape with hand tools. Initially the group learnt the basic skills and made spoons and stools. Then there was talk of a collaborative venture: making a bench.

First, the spindles for the back of the bench were made:



Then there was a lot of hard work:



And now it is almost finished:



We are currently planning the next exciting project.

Although it is called the Green Woodworking Project, there is much more to our visits to Rushmere than only that. It is a very social day; George, the farmer, invites some local people so there is always a lot of conversation. And we have a walk together and learn about the natural environment. We also have a delicious lunch together, sometimes home-made pizza baked in George's home-made pizza oven. For the next visit, Norman and Alejandro are preparing an El Salvadorian lunch for everyone.

It gives everyone a break from city life and from their constant worries, as these quotes from participants show:

'We love this woodworking, it takes mind off everything...we can learn English with teacher, or speak about our problems.'

'Inside (points at chest) it is hard...everything here is good...first time I've been to the country after 2 years living in Portsmouth.'

'Some of us lost our families. For a moment we can forget, we create new connections to make a new life.'

'I really enjoyed woodworking, speaking with others... walking in the woods for relaxing, good for mental health...'

'Staying inside, it is so boring; sometimes we feel depression or anxiety.'

Sally Jones

Access To Justice

The Access to Justice project provides free advice on issues relating to immigration law. At present, Charles Leddy-Owen is our only qualified adviser.

The first half of 2022 was dominated by the refugee crisis caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine causing tens of thousands of Ukrainians to seek safety in the UK.

While the government set up some dedicated routes for Ukrainians, these were riddled with Problems, both in set-up and execution, fostering an enormous amount of stress for already traumatised people. In these circumstances, Charles took on 32 one-off online advice cases as part of a nation-wide emergency legal advice scheme called the Ukraine Advice Project. To give some examples of the remarkable range of people Charles assisted, at one point he was simultaneously advising (i) the guardians of a Ukrainian child stranded in France trying to reach UK- based parents, (ii) an agricultural worker who had overstayed their UK visa, and (iii) an award-winning member of the fashion industry. More proof, if it were needed, of the diversity of refugees 'lives.

The rest of 2022 was (less frenetically) taken up by Charles working towards raising his advice level. For this he had support from Citizens Advice Portsmouth (CAP). Charles shadowed CAP's Sam Alves for over a year across 2021 and 2022 before finally, in December 2022, taking an Office for the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) level 2 exam.

It never merely rains at Access to Justice because, by unhappy coincidence, the Access to Justice offices were audited by the OISC the week after Charles' exam. Thankfully Charles passed both the exam and the audit (with 81% and 'no issues' results respectively) meaning that Access to Justice are now able to focus on complex immigration cases for the first time since John Bingham retired in 2017.

It will be the task of next year's report to cover the kinds of clients taken on since Charles' upgrade, but they include a domestic abuse case and complex human rights-based applications involving some of Portsmouth's most socio-economically deprived individuals and families. In late 2023 Access to Justice will be moving offices to the University of Portsmouth where they will sit alongside the university's existing Legal Advice Clinic. This will enable Charles, whose day job is as a lecturer at the university, to dedicate more time to the project, taking on new clients and training up new advisers. Three potential trainees have already volunteered, and it is hoped that within a couple of years the capacity of the service will be transformed from its current status as a one person show.

Friends without Borders would like to thank Phil Marshall and everyone at CAP for helping to set up the shadowing that made it possible for Charles to raise his level of advice. Particular thanks are due to Sam Alves for his patient, friendly and impressively knowledgeable support throughout the process (and since).

Charles Leddy-Owen



English Mentor

Every Thursday the doors open at 10 am. We, the English mentors set to work to make the people coming through the door welcome. Some people have been coming to the Drop In for years. Coming to us shortly after arriving in Portsmouth. When people first arrive it can be very difficult. We call ourselves English mentors and our first task is to meet with new arrivals to help people to feel comfortable.

What can we offer and more importantly what do people want?

Some clients speak and write English well. Some were professional people in their countries of origin, now needing support with language to help them negotiate their way through the legal system. To help to find access to colleges, professional education and, to be able, once obtaining status to continue with their professional life.

There are those that come from countries that have been in a state of war and turmoil where there has been no opportunity at all for any educational experience. No books, no pens or paper, no colouring in.

Some of our students, usually those literate in their mother tongue enjoy the group learning getting to grips with theme based English learning. Some, especially those who know little English and whose mother tongue alphabet is different are more interested in learning the English alphabet and writing.

We have a lot of parents coming to the Drop In, mothers with school age children. The children have huge challenges to face when going to school. They don't understand the language or culture or the norms of an English school. The mothers are desperate to support their children and they need the language and skills to help them. The children can be arriving for their first day in an English school in any year of school and at any time during the school year. It's hard. It's amazing and wonderful how many refugee children do settle in and go on to achieve academically. But this is also very hard for the parents especially the mothers. The children learn so quickly and soon the children take on the role of parent to their parents in negotiating bills, doctors, hospitals, schools, immigration etc. Parents appreciate learning the words and workings of these systems. We sometimes have role play for talking to the doctor, the teacher etc. I am so fortunate to be an English mentor. I have the opportunity to to meet so many brave and wonderful people. My greatest hope is that the World and the UK will soon be kinder.

Lia Deyal

Financial Report

During a year of considerable change in many aspects of our operation, it is pleasing to note that our finances remained under control throughout the year and our total funds showed a significant increase at year end 2022 over 2021.

We started the year with two Friends Without Borders Charities in place – our original Friends Without Borders organisation (charity number 1080187) and the newly established Friends Without Borders (Portsmouth) CIO (charity number 1194005) – and much of the financial focus for the year involved transitioning from the original entity to the new CIO organisation. The CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) status gives us a stronger legal basis under Charity Law and enables us to operate and consider options and actions with greater legal protection. We opened our new CIO Bank Account with Lloyds in March 2022 and moved our expenditure and the majority of our income to this new account over the coming months.

In 2022 we managed to operate with a positive balance between income and expenditure due to a very large extent, to the generosity and continued support from our regular donors and supporters. Despite the increasing financial pressures on us all, our regular donors again came up trumps maintaining their regular donations and, in most cases, moving their monthly contributions to our new bank account. In addition we had a number of one-off donations from organisations and individuals that are too numerous to mention each one in detail although we were especially pleased that Portsmouth High School chose us as their charity of the year and after a considerable effort they donated £10,150 to us. On behalf of our clients we wish to express our undying gratitude to all of you on behalf of our clients.

Our expenditure changed in a number of areas during the year. We were pleased to be able to increase our weekly “destitution” payments to clients who have no other access to public funds, from £25 to £35 plus through working with our clients in a number of areas, very much assisted by our partnership with Citizens Advice Portsmouth and our close liaison with the offices of Stephen Morgan and Penny Mordaunt, the number of clients receiving destitution payments decreased this year. Our rental costs at All Saints Church have increased compared to 2021 when the drop-in was closed for part of the year and energy costs were lower.

The biggest expenditure increase was in the area of administration. So in June 2022 the Trustees decided that the various administrative activities surrounding our operation had grown to such an extent that it was no longer practical for these to be carried out by Veronica Dunne and volunteers alone. It was therefore decided to recruit on a part-time basis a Co-ordinator who would carry out many of these tasks at an average monthly cost to the business of £700-800.

Please note that Sharon Brooks, Trustee joined Geoff Wilson in the FWB Treasury Office in August 2022.

Finally we are pleased to record that an Independent Examination of our accounts has been carried out by Trevor James and his report confirms that he has no concerns with these accounts. We should like to thank Trevor again this year for how he has supported us with his wise counsel.

Geoff Wilson and Sharon Brooks – FWB Treasury Team

FWB: Receipts and Payments for the year

	CIO Account	Original Account	Total Funds	2021
	Charity No:1194005	Charity No:1080187		
Income Receipts	£	£	£	£
From Voluntary Sources				
Regular Donations	4,663	20,950	25,613	30,053
Unique Donations	3,439	9,653	13,092	9,332
Legacies and Major donations	-	-	-	38,026
Portsmouth High School	10,150	-	10,150	-
Gift Aid Tax Recovered	-	3,200	3,200	5,517
	18,252	33,803	52,055	82,928
 Bank Interest	-	25	25	7
 Transfer from FWB Original Account	90,016	-	90,016	-
Total Receipts	108,268	33,820	142,096	82,935
 Direct Charitable Expenditure				
Grants and Direct Support				
Destitute Asylum Seekers	3,868	6,267	10,135	17,454
Client Travel	109	705	814	791
Social Activities	1,475	3,350	4,825	1103
Legal Fees	180	150	330	462
	5,632	10,472	16,104	19,810
 Other expenditure				
Freelance Administrator	3,084	1,242	4,326	-
Volunteer Travel Expenses	886	1,055	1,941	1238
Rent	2,619	3,603	6,222	3244
Telephone and other administration costs	814	3,397	4,211	3,743
Independent Examiners Fee	-	450	450	400
Insurance	500	156	656	1164
	7,903	9,903	17,806	9,789
 Fund raising costs				
Just Giving Fees	198	18	216	216
	198	18	216	216
 Total Payments	13,733	20,393	34,126	29,815
Net Receipts for the year	94,535	13,435	107,970	53,120

Friends Without Borders
Registered Charity no 1194005
This is a multi-purpose form. Please fill in such parts as are relevant

Count Me In As A Supporter

Please add me to your support list to receive the Occasional Newsletter

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

I agree to be contacted by Friends Without Borders by post and email for fundraising purposes.

☐

I give consent to Friends Without Borders to keep my personalised information to keep my information (as above) for the purpose of administering our supporters mail list in accordance with our privacy policy.

☐

I give consent to Friends Without Borders contacting me by post and email with, for example, the Occasional news and Annual report.

☐

I understand that I can withdraw my consent at any time by contacting coordinator@friendswithoutborders.co.uk

☐

Gift Aid Certificate

- **Donations from UK taxpayers are supplemented by a grant from the treasury.**
- **Our Treasurer will make the claim, the only thing needed for the donor is their address and signature below that they are paying income tax.**

I am a UK taxpayer paying tax at least equivalent to this claim and claim Gift Aid on this and future donations to Friends Without Borders. I have given my address above and understand this information will be kept by Friends Without Borders for six years, from the date of my last donation.

Signed _____

Dated: _____

FRIENDS WITHOUT BORDERS

**We are a completely independent charity which has served asylum seekers and refugees in Portsmouth for the last 28 years.
We have no Government contracts
and rely entirely for support on the contributions of local people.**

See our website for more information- friendswithoutborders.org.uk

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Become A Supporter

**email: chair@friendswithoutborders.co.uk
and we'll send you an occasional newsletter.**

Give Money For Grants

**Asylum seekers still only get £39.63 a week enough to live
any small emergency becomes a crisis.**

Set Up A Standing Order

**One of our strengths is a network of local supporters who pay small
(whatever you like but £5 to £25 is typical) amounts each month.
Giving us staying power.
Friends Without Borders bank account is with Lloyds Bank.
Sort Code- 30-98-97. Account number: 59923463.**

Remember to add Gift Aid

**Gift Aid adds 25p to every £1 you give, so anybody
who pays income tax and donates should sign the form provided.**

Leave a Legacy

**Legacies enable us to plan for the future. They have helped us to run our drop in
at which we see typically around 20 refugees requiring casework each week
as well as many who come for a coffee and sandwich, destitution money, a chat
or English lessons to name but a few activities.**

Volunteer Yourself

**Volunteering can be extremely rewarding. So if you would like to join us, whatever your
availability please contact Chair@friendswithoutborders.org.uk
FWB always needs willing volunteers and we have a variety of jobs and tasks to suit most
people.**

**For those who have supported us in the past we want to thank you
for all your contributions!**

Friends Without Borders CIO (Charity Number 1194005)**Receipts and Payments Account for the Year to 31 December 2022**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2021
	£	£	£	£
Income Receipts				
From Voluntary Sources				
Regular Donations	4,663	-	4,663	-
Unique Donations	3,439	-	3,439	-
Portsmouth High School	10,150	-	10,150	-
Gift Aid Tax Recovered	-	-	-	-
	<u>18,252</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>18,252</u>	<u>-</u>
Fund Raising	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Transfer from Friends Without Borders	<u>90,016</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>90,016</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Receipts	<u>108,268</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>108,268</u>	<u>-</u>
Direct Charitable Expenditure				
Grants and Direct Support				
Destitute Asylum Seekers	3,868	-	3,868	-
Client Travel	109	-	109	-
Social Activities	1,475	-	1,475	-
Legal Fees	180	-	180	-
Laptops	-	-	-	-
	<u>5,632</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,632</u>	<u>-</u>
Other expenditure				
Freelancer	3,084	-	3,084	-
Volunteer Travel and Expenses	886	-	886	-
Rent	2,619	-	2,619	-
Telephone and other administration costs	814	-	814	-
Independent Examiner's fee	-	-	-	-
Insurance	500	-	500	-
	<u>7,903</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,903</u>	<u>-</u>
Fund-raising costs				
Just Giving fees	198	-	198	-
	<u>198</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>198</u>	<u>-</u>
Other Payments	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total payments	<u>13,733</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>13,733</u>	<u>-</u>
Net receipts for the year	<u>94,535</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>94,535</u>	<u>-</u>

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Friends Without Borders CIO (Registered charity number 1194005) on the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022

This report is made solely to the trustees of Friends Without Borders CIO, as a body, in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act"). My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the trustees of Friends Without Borders CIO those matters I am required to state to them in an independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the trustees as a body, for any work, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of Friends Without Borders CIO you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Act. You consider that the audit requirements of the Act do not apply.

I report in respect of my examination of the accounts of Friends Without Borders CIO for the year ended 31st December 2022 set out on the attached pages carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed 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 my examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts did not accord with the accounting records.

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.



Trevor James FCA DChA
Dormer Cottage
West Broyle
Chichester
West Sussex
PO19 3PR
31 May 2023

Accounts

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

		Period start date		Period end date	
	01	January	2021		31st
From				To	December 2021

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name Friends without Borders (Portsmouth) CIO

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any) 1194005

Charity's principal address All Saints Church

338 Commercial Road

Portsmouth

Postcode

PO1 4BT

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Veronica Anne Dunne		19 th April 2021	
2	Geoffrey Alan Wilson		19 th April 2021	
3	Coleen Le		19 th April 2021	
4	Dr Charles Leddy-Owen		19 th April 2021	
5	Sharon Brooks		19 th April 2021	
6	Lia Deyal		19 th April 2021	
7	Yenga Ikuse		6 th July 2022	
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year
N/A	

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
N/A		

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	CIO
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Selection by invitation

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

N/A

Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

Helps people seeking asylum access support when few other services remain accessible to them. We provide two ongoing projects which aim to problem solve reduce isolation and challenge the discrimination faced by many of our client. Our drop in provides advocacy and advice without appointments and our Access to Justice project provides legal advice.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

Charitable activities – we offer support at our drop in with free refreshments and food. We offer advocacy and support with the challenges which refugees and asylum seekers face. We offer free social activities, free English lessons and a listening ear. We offer financial support when appropriate, or signposting to other agencies if required.

Fundraising – we raise awareness of refugee issues, and so have supporters donate either monthly or as a one off to the charity to continue its on-going work

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

N/A

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

Section D

Achievements and performance

Section D

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

Not operational in 2021

Section E**Financial review**

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

We will put aside 3 months' rent/overheads as reserve

Details of any funds materially in deficit

N/A

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

We are funded by supporters who donate either regularly through standing order, or one-off donations.

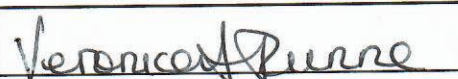
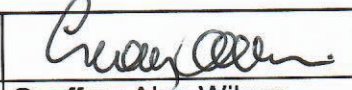
Section F**Other optional information**

N/A

Section G**Declaration**

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Veronica Anne Dunne	Geoffrey Alan Wilson
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	treasurer
Date	29. AUGUST 2022	

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
N/A		0.00	
		0.00	
		0.00	
		0.00	
		0.00	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
Veronica Dunn	VERONICA DUNN	29/8/2022
Geoffrey A. Wilson	GEOFFREY A. WILSON	29/8/2022