

THE LOWDOWN

England & Wales · Charity number 1197273

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2021-12-22

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

Contact

Address The Lowdown
3 Kingswell Street
Northampton
NN1 1PP

Phone 01604634385

Email info@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk

Website <https://thelowdown.info/>

Activities

Objects: FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, TO PROMOTE THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OF YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN THE AREA OF BENEFIT, REGARDLESS OF RACE, RELIGION, OR SOCIO ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES THROUGH: A. PROVIDING A WIDE RANGE OF FREE OF CHARGE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, ADULTS AND FAMILIES TO SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE IN IMPROVING THEIR MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING. B. PROVIDING COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT SERVICES COVERING WELLBEING, SEXUAL HEALTH AND LGBTQ MATTERS, SIGN POSTING AND PROVISION OF EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION. C. THE PROVISION OF ADVOCACY AND PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY AND OTHER EVENTS TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE ISSUES AFFECTING YOUNG PEOPLE AND MARGINALISED/MINORITY GROUPS. D. PROVIDING SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE IN TRAINING VOLUNTEERS AND COUNSELLORS IN ORDER TO ENHANCE PROVISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Activities: The Lowdown is a Mental Health Charity, providing free and confidential support services for 8-25 year olds in Northamptonshire. Our services include Counselling, Information, Guidance, Wellbeing, LGBTQIA, Youth Groups and Sexual Health.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Other Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Children/young People

Geography

- Northamptonshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£1,936,906	£1,186,681	£1,791,799	47
2024-03-31	£1,399,060	£999,812	£1,041,574	46
2023-03-31	£1,086,822	£877,986	£642,326	35

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
STEPHEN EDMONDS	Chair	2021-11-18
Alice Smyth		2026-02-23
Alisa Moore		2025-11-10
Andre Gore		2023-06-12
Brendan Dunphy		2021-11-18
Damon Boughen		2025-01-20
Will White		2025-04-28

THE LOWDOWN

England & Wales - Charity number 1197273

Accounts



Trustees' Annual Report 2024 - 2025

Reference and Administration



Charity Registration No:
1197273

Registered Company No:
CE027753 (England and Wales)

Address:
3 Kingswell Street (off Gold Street),
Northampton, NN1 1PP

Honorary Presidents:
Jan Jourard and Dr John Toby

Current Trustees:
Chair - Stephen Edmonds
Vice Chair - Andrea Martin
Treasurer - Jonathan Smith
Brendan Dunphy
Georgina Bayliss
Dr Mike Scanlan
Dr Deborah Patton (left September 2024)
Andre Gore
Damon Boughen (joined January 2025)
Will White (joined April 2025)

Bankers:
Metro Bank Northampton

Auditors:
Shaw Gibbs
(who acquired DNG Dove Naish LLP)



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Chairs Report

Welcome to our Annual Report, which updates you on how we continue to respond to the needs of our young people.

In last year's report, I mentioned the commencement of our major capital project to increase the capacity of our Kingswell Street premises. You will read elsewhere that this has been successfully completed despite the numerous challenges along the way. During the year, the Charity's constitution was reviewed and minor changes made to how any residual assets would be applied in the unlikely event of a winding up or dissolution.

Mental health crisis

I had hoped that the tone of my report could be more upbeat this year, but once again the environment in which we are operating is increasingly challenging, with a mental health crisis so severe that 1.3 million young people were referred to mental health services in the last academic year – an increase of 71% in five years.



Against this background, we have:

increased our support contacts by 10% year on year, with a 7% increase in our counselling services providing a record 12,135 counselling sessions

- an incredible achievement given the disruption of a major building project.

You will also read about how our organisation is barely recognisable from that of five years ago, pre-Covid. Despite the very challenging funding environment that we face, I have no doubt that The Lowdown will be similarly unrecognisable in five years' time from the organisation we are today as we continue to respond to the needs of our young people.

As ever, I would like to express our immense gratitude to all those without whom this good work would not be possible - our outstanding Lowdown team, volunteers, supporters, and donors, who continue to be very special individuals and organisations.



Steve Edmonds

Chair of Trustees



CEO Report

What a year for The Lowdown... a rollercoaster is an understatement!



Building Extension and Team Reunification

In 2016, The Lowdown and our landlord Beckett's and Sargeant's started discussing plans to use the waste land at the side of our Kingswell Street building to extend it. Originally, the plans were for a single-storey side extension, but due to the increase in demand for our services and expansion of them, it ended up as a two-storey wrap-around side extension.

The members of our Youth Advisory Board provided a long list of things they would like to see changed in the building, and we are pleased to say that we completed 90%, with the remaining 10% forming part of our future plans.

It is incredible what has been fitted into a relatively small extension – an additional five consultation rooms, an upstairs toilet, and a dedicated entrance and waiting area for young people using our services. There were three celebration events to mark this occasion (we never do things by halves). It is wonderful to see the building back in use and that the design works so well.

Of course, there were challenges along the way with a drain being where the footings were planned to be, so the building had to be slightly adapted to build around it, adding another quirk to it. But as always, we adapt. It really shows that patience and perseverance pay off.

We finally took possession of the building in January 2025, and The Lowdown team moved back in. We are now all back together as a team, and nearly all services are under one roof as per the YIACS model (right), which drives our strategy.



Service Delivery Continuity

In terms of service delivery, we have not “missed a beat.” All our existing services (Counselling, RE:Start, LGBTQ+ groups, Café, and youth groups) continued to run, and we even expanded our counselling services in November 2024 to support 8 to 10 year olds as part of the wider Happy Heads project led by Service Six.



New Initiatives and Expansions

In March 2025, we launched a new Information and Guidance Drop-in, a RE:Start Youth Engagement Role, and reduced our age range for our Mental Health drop-in to 8 years.



Record-Breaking Achievements

Yet another record-breaking year for The Lowdown with 19,418 support contacts provided for young people and their families, a 10% increase on the previous financial year. Fifteen percent of our service users have utilised more than one of our wraparound services, a number that has already increased since we moved back into our Kingswell Street building. In total, we supported 2,304 young people and their families.

YIACS Model

Diverse support
under one roof

Supported signposting & referrals

- Family education
- Social services
- Community
- Health

A range of access points

- Self-referral
- Drop-in
- Outreach
- Online & phone

Timely, local & age-appropriate

- Assessment
- Information advice & guidance
- Therapy and mental health support
- Youth work & participation initiatives
- Referrals & signposting

Positive outcomes & experiences

- Youth-friendly
- Stigma-free service
- Tailored whole-life support for specific life phases
- Clinical improvement
- High satisfaction

Feedback & evaluation

- Validated measures
- Co-production



Acknowledgements

Of course, none of this would happen without the brilliant Lowdown team (staff, volunteers, trustees, and counselling student placements) who continue to deliver high-quality services for Northamptonshire's young people.

We can't thank them enough for their amazing work and their patience during a period of significant change. A huge thank you also goes to our supporters, donors, funders, and Reach partners who make all this possible.



Our Commitment to Young People

Young people will always be at the heart of everything we do, and we will continue to strive to embed and improve our services to give them the vital support they need.



Sharon Womersley
CEO





Who we are

A local charity in Northamptonshire providing free, safe, non-judgemental, and confidential mental health and support services for 8 to 25 year olds.

Our Vision

No young person will ever experience challenges alone.

Our Mission

To support every young person with the right help at the right time, empowering them to thrive

Our Values

Inclusive, Empowering, Nurturing, Responsive and Collaborative.

Theory of Change

Young people have free and timely access to evidence-based early intervention and prevention services that improve their mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience.

The Lowdown changes lives and sometimes saves them.

Our Impact 2024/25



2,304 young people were supported.



Through all The Lowdown services we provided
19,418 support contacts for young people and their families.

An increase of **10%** on the previous year.

Main issues

- anxiety
- low mood
- family/relationship problems
- education and training
- sleep problems
- loneliness
- suicidal feelings
- self harm
- self-esteem
- stress

What do our service users say?

99%

would recommend our service to others.

99%

felt they had a positive outcome using our services.

96%

found the service accessible.

"I would recommend The Lowdown. We're very lucky to have this service and somewhere to support young people."

- service user

Case Study: Wraparound Support

Jamie began attending Lowdown services through the Out There group, participating weekly from March 2024. They formed a solid friendship group as they felt they had found 'their people' and engaged in various activities, including Pride events. Some members of this new group were also attending the youth group on Thursdays and invited Jamie to join them.

Since June 2024, they have consistently attended the Thursday youth group, which helped them to expand their social circle and build relationships with the Free to Talk youth workers and the Mental Health Support Worker from The Lowdown. During one session, Jamie requested a one-on-one meeting with the Mental Health Support Worker and was referred to counselling, starting sessions in August 2024, after an assessment.



This demonstrates the need for wraparound services that The Lowdown provides to support young people with the 'million pressures' they are facing.

Towards the end of the counselling sessions, some practical needs and additional support was identified. Consequently, Jamie's counsellor assisted them in making a referral to the RE:Start service. Following an assessment at RE:Start, it was determined that although their mental health needs were not fully suited to the RE:Start Service, there were practical needs to be addressed. Thus, Jamie was introduced to the Information and Guidance (I&G) Drop-in workers.

The I&G Drop-in workers conducted research, advocated for Jamie independently, and provided one-on-one sessions to address their practical needs. Jamie continues to attend the Thursday youth group, the Out There group, and seeks support from the I&G drop-in service as needed.

Despite ongoing challenges, Jamie utilises appropriate support when necessary and has expanded their support network through positive relationships with both peers and trusted professionals at The Lowdown.





Case Study: Rebuilding Hope and Confidence

A 14-year-old girl was referred to The Lowdown after experiencing suicidal thoughts and repeated self-harm, including cutting and stockpiling tablets. Her emotional distress had escalated after eight months of bullying, leaving her feeling isolated, overwhelmed, and unsafe.

Early sessions revealed deeper struggles, including unresolved grief, anxiety about change, and difficulty regulating her emotions. She worried about her younger brother starting secondary school and reflected on the impact of her mum's hospitalisation when she was seven. Although school offered some support, it was also where the bullying occurred. At home, she often felt restricted in expressing herself. Safeguarding concerns were raised at the outset and monitored throughout.

Focus was on building trust and creating a predictable, safe space. Her goals included reducing self-harm and feeling more in control of her emotions. She engaged well with creative tools, which supported emotional expression and helped her self-soothe. We used metaphors like "rollercoaster weeks" to help her talk about overwhelming feelings.

A self-harm care pack was introduced, and we worked together to identify triggers and healthier responses. As the weeks progressed, she began to explore her identity, showing pride in small acts of self-expression like dyeing her hair and caring for her pet rats.



By the end of her support, she had gone several weeks without self-harming and said she felt "much happier."

She had a clearer understanding of her emotional triggers and was using her coping strategies independently. Her school engagement improved, and she felt more able to support her peers too.

This young person's journey shows how early, creative, and consistent support can make a real difference, helping young people move from crisis towards confidence and emotional resilience.

Case Study:

From Vulnerability to Empowerment



Bailey had a history of mental health inpatient care and diagnosis of Bi-Polar Disorder, anxiety and Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. When they self-referred into RE:Start they were living in a challenging environment, not working and struggling with issues around alcohol. They had a very limited support network.

At point of referral, Bailey was motivated for change but very stuck in their housing situation making them feel unsettled and at times unsafe. They were already engaging with the Community Mental Health Team for mental health support and aspired to learn to drive and start volunteering but found their living situation holding them back.

Bailey was allocated a RE:Start support worker who went to their location as travel to Northampton was a barrier to accessing the support. The support worker offered a listening ear to help manage the overwhelm around the process of finding alternative accommodation, accessing mental health support and achieving future goals. Practical help was given with the housing process and the support worker liaised with the professionals providing mental health interventions to assist with evidence to support the claim.



Bailey was supported into a volunteering role which boosted their self-esteem and gave a sense of purpose and reason to be out of the house.

Bailey started to learn to drive, accessed further interventions from the NHS adult mental health team and support around alcohol use. After much persistence they moved into a flat of their own with their RE:Start worker on hand to assist with the set up of bills and organising the move.

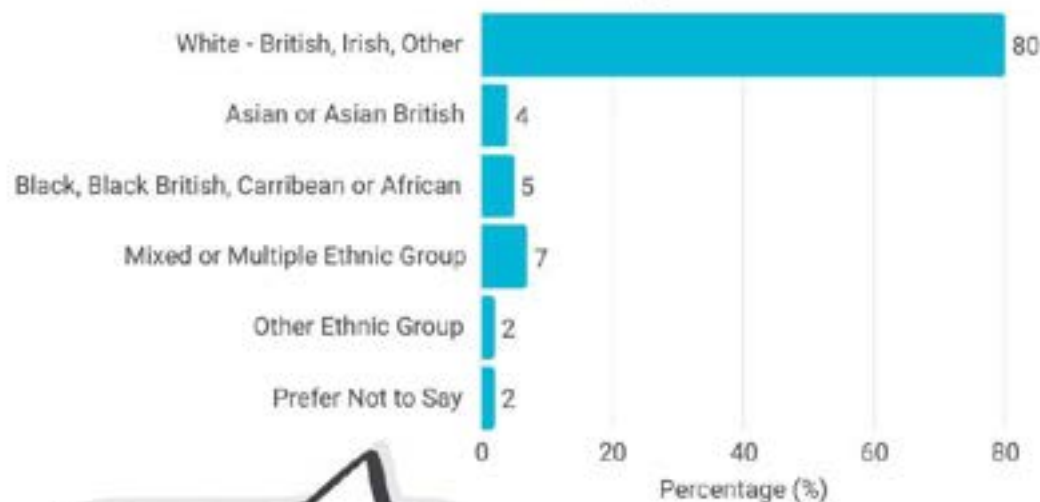
The trajectory of Bailey's life had changed, and they were doing well but this brought fear around self-sabotage and loss of what they had managed to achieve. Their RE:Start worker completed a referral into Lowdown counselling to work through these fears and support them to stick with their goals and positive changes.

Bailey is now closed to the community mental health team and doing well. They are happy in their new home and have become a peer mentor supporting others with their mental health challenges. Their RE:Start worker continues to support them with life's ups and downs as they build confidence in their abilities and continue to focus on their recovery.



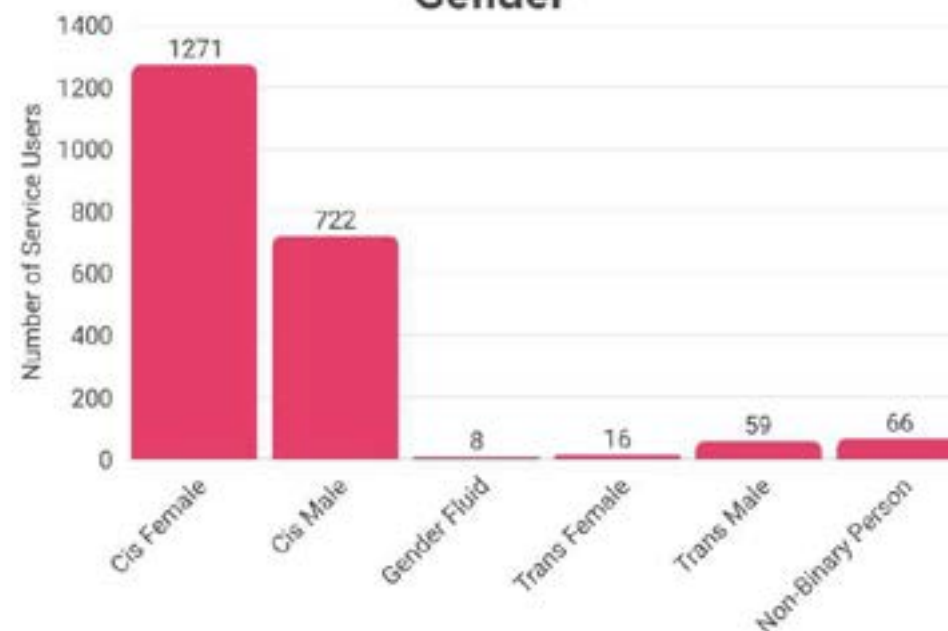
Accessibility Statistics of our Service Users

Ethnicity

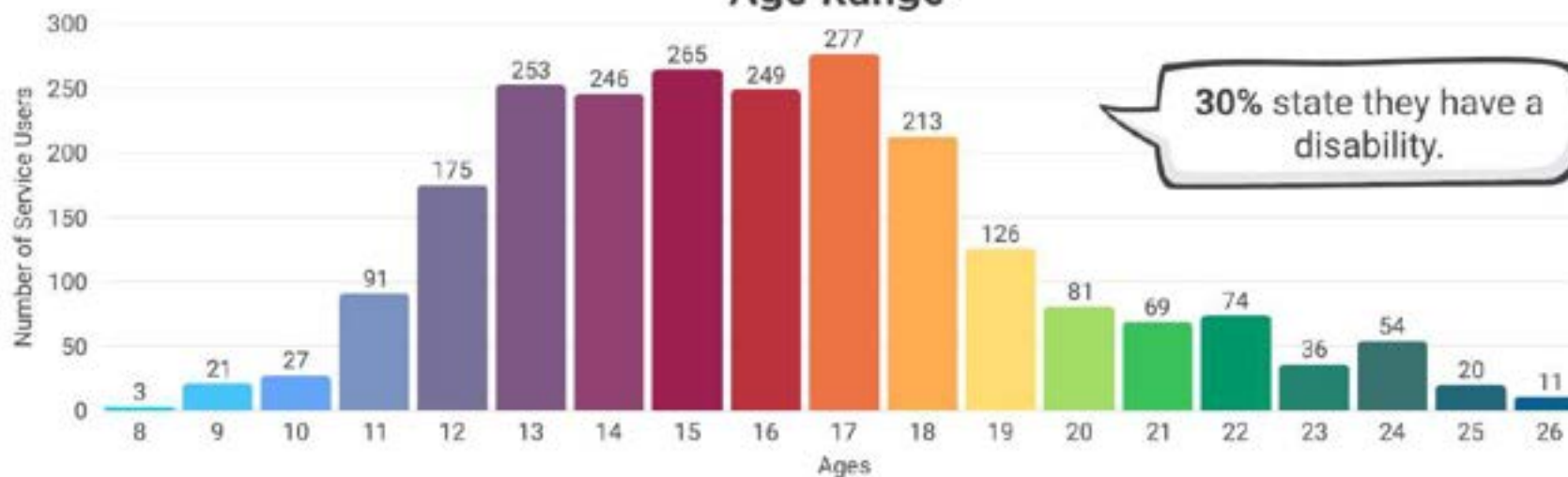


18% are not white British, Irish or other.

Gender



Age Range



30% state they have a disability.

Objectives

The Lowdown is a Mental Health Charity, providing free and confidential support services for 8-25 year olds in Northamptonshire. Our services include Counselling, Information, Advice & Advocacy, Wellbeing, LGBTQ+, Youth Groups and Sexual Health.



Our services are developed based on the proven YIACS (Youth Information Advice and Counselling) model developed by Youth Access (youthaccess.org.uk) to provide a holistic approach to supporting young people. Part of this is ensuring that young people's voices are heard, and we are developing our services **with** young people to meet **their** needs.



Our services are easy to access, as young people can either drop-in, self-refer or be referred by professionals such as CAMHS, schools or their GP.



We actively promote all our services in the local community so that young people and their families are aware of what we have to offer and how to access them.

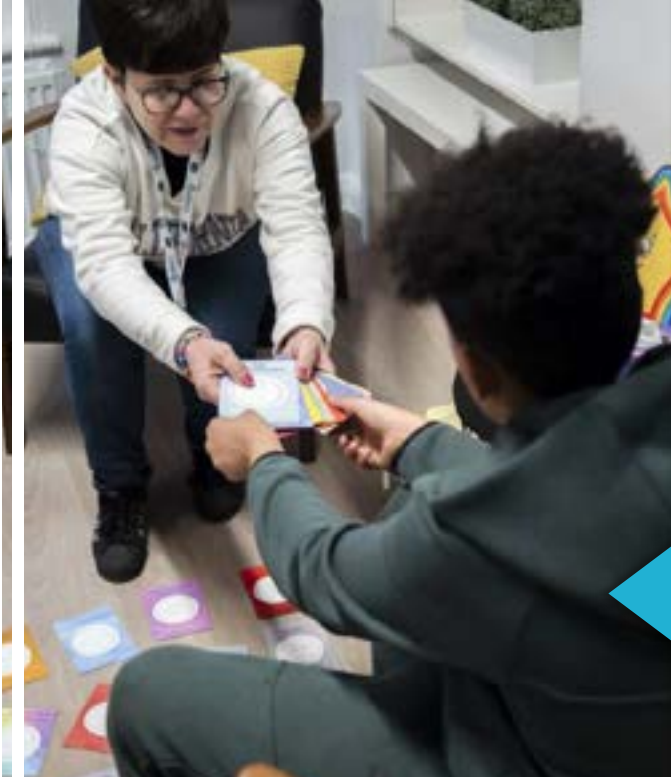


Robust safeguarding procedures are implemented and regularly reviewed to ensure that any disclosures are dealt with appropriately.



The Lowdown offers unique and rewarding volunteering and personal development opportunities for young people and members of the public. We also partner with Higher Education providers, including The University of Northampton, Tresham College, Chrysalis etc. to offer placements and internships for students.

Further details of our services are shown right, and **continue on the next page:**



Counselling

Supporting 8-25 year olds to manage and improve their mental health. Counselling can facilitate, support and empower young people to make positive changes in a safe, friendly and non-judgemental environment.

Counselling support is person-centred, with aspects of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and solution focused therapy.

We offer on average between six and twelve sessions, either face-to-face or remotely via telephone or videocall, on a wide range of issues that young people present with.



LGBTQ+ Youth Groups

Our Out There LGBTQ+ groups offer a safe and confidential space for young people to socialise, meet like-minded people, discuss issues and take part in activities.

The Out There Youth Group is for school years 7-13, and the Out There Plus Group is for 18-25 year olds.

For parents and carers of young people in the LGBTQ+ community we offer a Facebook group that is accessed by searching for 'Out There Group Parent and Carers Support Network Northamptonshire'.





Drop-In Services

Our **Mental Health and Wellbeing Drop-In** is for 8 to 25 year olds who need support, we are here to listen.

Professional mental health workers offer a safe space to talk, be listened to with one-to-one support, wellbeing activities and peer support. Parents and carers of young people are welcome too.

There are 9 Drop-Ins open 6 days of the week across Northamptonshire.

Mindspace

Our weekly Mindspace group for 11 to 18 year olds provides a safe space to explore emotional and personal wellbeing with activities such as relaxation, mindfulness, self-care and creativity.



Youth Voice

We have established a **Youth Advisory Board (YAB)** for 11 to 25 year olds to volunteer their time, share views on our services, building, accessibility, website, social media etc.

This helps ensure we are providing what young people need and want while offering those involved the opportunity to learn new skills, meet new people and make a difference in their community.



Youth Groups

Our 4 weekly youth groups for 11 to 18 year olds are a place for young people to have fun and just be themselves.

It's an inclusive and safe space, a chance to meet new people and participate in fun activities; designed collaboratively with the young people that attend.

Young Adult Social Group

This free weekly group for 18 to 25 year olds is a space to meet new people and connect with others through fun activities. Our support workers are on hand if needed.



Advice and Guidance Services

Our **Information and Guidance Drop-In** for 8 to 25 year olds provides in the moment support with practical issues.

We offer a listening ear and validation for anything that a young person may be experiencing.

The **RE:Start** Service is for 16 to 25 year olds and provides practical and emotional wellbeing support for young people transitioning from CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) to AMS (Adult Mental Health Services).

Our **Sexual Health Service** provides information and support on all aspects of sexual health and relationships including free condoms, pregnancy testing and chlamydia and gonorrhoea screening for 14 to 25 year olds.





Redesigned marketing materials

This year, we updated our marketing materials based on feedback to provide a single flyer highlighting all our services for young people.

To ensure it appeals to our audience, our **Youth Advisory Board** designed the eye-catching poster (shown left), which we now use for both flyers and presentations.

We appreciate everyone's involvement - this is a strong example of co-production and youth voices shaping our work.



OUR SERVICE STATISTICS

- number of young people supported

Mindspace

50

"I really enjoy coming to MindSpace because it makes me happy. I love doing loads of different crafts and I loved gardening. I think it's a great place!"

LGBTQ+ Groups

137

"The group gives me a place where I feel I can be myself, where I can tell the staff genuinely care and consistently go above and beyond what is necessary."

Counselling

11-18 year olds: 1,566

19-25 year olds: 352

"I had a really good experience, my counsellor helped me a lot. It gave me someone to talk to when I had no one."

Youth Groups

121

"I like youth group, because its helped me grow my confidence and helped me become more socialised."

RE-Start

221

"They offered invaluable support during my transition into adulthood. Their mentorship and practical guidance have given me the confidence and skills I need to navigate life's challenges."

YAB

31 youth Advisory Board Members during the year.

"I have developed lots of skills including communication, compassion and listening skills. It has helped build my confidence."

Adult Social

45

"A space to be creative, make new friends."

Drop In For

Mental Health & Wellbeing Drop In

199

"The workers were really understanding of our situation. They were also aware of confidentiality and were very kind."

Information & Guidance

19 young people supported in our first month of being open.

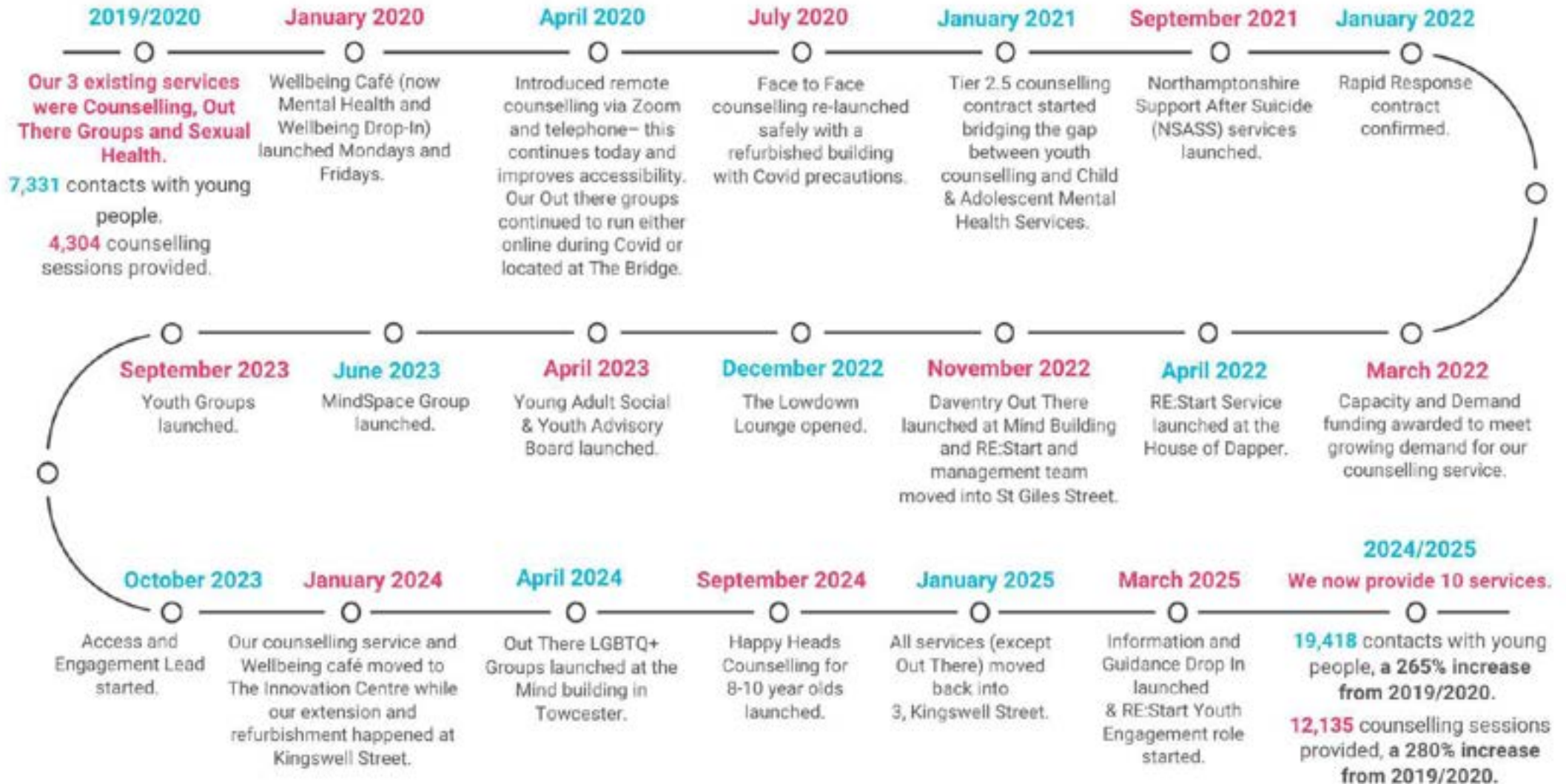
Sexual Health

90 individual contacts with young people.



Our Post-Pandemic Journey

What has The Lowdown achieved in the 5 years since the Covid19 pandemic began to address the mental health crisis among young people?





Social Media Highlights

Over the year we have worked hard to expand both our reach and followers on social media platforms.

We are on Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn to promote our services and tell the 'behind the scenes' stories of The Lowdown including team members, building developments, events, fundraisers and to thank our supporters.



Our New and Improved Building

The recently expanded Lowdown building provides:



New Accessible Entrance ▶ a mobility lift ensures inclusive and easy access for all young people visiting the building.



Improved Environment ▶ 5 new consultation rooms improve access for anyone with physical disabilities, including widened corridors and doorways.



Toilet Refurbishment ▶ newly refurbished, easily accessible, inclusive, gender-neutral toilets, including facilities for those with disabilities and ambulatory users.



Larger Waiting Area ▶ a more welcoming and less clinical space, with ample room for wheelchair users.



Improved Signage and Lighting ▶ enhancements designed to support individuals with additional needs and reduce anxiety.



Before



After



Happy Heads

NEW

The Happy Heads service, offering counselling to children aged 8-10 years, successfully launched in September 2024.

Recognising the unique needs of this younger age group, we adapted the service model following feedback later in the year, which indicated that most children felt more comfortable receiving support within their school environment rather than attending sessions at The Lowdown.

To make the service more accessible, we recruited 2 dedicated Outreach Workers, Georgina and Andy, who joined the team in Spring 2025. Their roles focus on delivering counselling directly within school settings, helping to remove barriers to engagement and ensuring children feel safe and supported.

This outreach model will allow us to strengthen relationships with schools, meet young people in spaces familiar to them, and provide early intervention to prevent issues from escalating. We are excited to continue developing Happy Heads as a vital part of our expanding mental health services for children and young people.



RE:Start Youth Engagement Worker

NEW

The RE:Start team has expanded again this financial year, and we welcome Bekah to the team as our RE:Start Youth Engagement Worker.

This role has been developed to tackle the health inequalities of those living in the more rural areas of West Northamptonshire, support our service users struggling with social isolation to access more group and drop-in support, and ensure a variety of activities to boost wellbeing.

She has also launched a Youth Involvement Group (YIG) specifically for RE:Start clients to inform us on how to develop the service to meet their needs. Their first project is to organise a wellbeing event for RE:Start clients, planned for May this year.

Information and Guidance Service

NEW

In the latter half of 2024, we have continued our work towards fulfilling the YIACS model, particularly around open access and supported signposting and referrals.

On the 1st of March 2025, The Lowdown's latest service development launched, offering an Information and Guidance drop-in for 8 to 25 year olds and their parents through the front door or via phone, WhatsApp, or email.

This is an 8-month trial, but already we are seeing there was a need for such a service, as well as alleviating the pressure on the counselling service to fulfil practical, as well as emotional needs within sessions.

This service is supporting our goal of ensuring we are visible and accessible within the local community and that support is available without the need to meet an entry threshold. It is a great entry point to The Lowdown to ensure all young people are aware of all the wonderful services on offer to them, so they 'know us before they need us.'





Out There LGBTQ+





Youth Groups





Young Adult Social



Youth Advisory Board (YAB)

You said, we did:

Over the 2024/2025 year, the YAB (Youth Advisory Board) consulted on major decisions regarding the new building extension and refurbishment. We felt it was crucial that their voices were heard in order to create a space that was youth-inspired and comfortable for all.



The YAB gave their opinions on features such as lighting, wall colours, flooring, textures, décor, and the ambience of the building.

With their input, we were able to choose lighting that could be dimmed depending on preference, select wall colours that they felt represented The Lowdown and were not clinical, display artwork created by our service users to welcome people into the building, and most importantly, design a space where young people can feel safe.



Wellbeing Event:

From January to July 2024, the YAB worked hard on creating, planning, and hosting a wellbeing event at Delapré Abbey.

They aimed to create something that was open to members of the public, offering advice and support for **ALL AGES**. They worked tirelessly to contact local organisations to participate in the day, gathered raffle prizes & donations, and liaised with businesses willing to contribute and support the event.

One member also dedicated their time to designing a wellbeing journal, which many young people have since received to support their daily wellbeing.

The event was a huge success in raising awareness for wellbeing, supporting local organisations, fundraising, and developing vital life skills.

A big thank you to all organisations that supported the Youth Advisory Board with this event and to our young people for their continued dedication and commitment to the YAB.





Mindspace





Community & Engagement



Fundraising

Each year, we extend our sincere gratitude to all who support The Lowdown as their chosen charity. We are fortunate to have both new and returning donors contributing significantly to assist young people on their journey towards positive mental health, emotional health, and wellbeing. Your continued support is deeply appreciated.

We are honoured to have been selected by two Golf Clubs as their Charity of the Year for 2024. Northampton Golf Club organised numerous events, including a charity dinner and a Juniors Golf Day, raising an impressive total of £7,317.38. Rushden Golf Club held a charity day in our honour and various events throughout the year, collecting £2,550.84. Crick Software also chose us as their beneficiary, hosting Bake Sales, a duvet day raffle, and a Euros Sweepstake, showcasing their commitment to our cause. We thank you all; your support not only funds our services but also raises awareness about them.

Additionally, we continued to receive ongoing support from Lani Tebbut and the 'Breaking Silence' car meets, which promote mental health through automotive events, raising £1,909.66 to date, with donations continuing to grow.

Members of The Lowdown team also actively participated in fundraising activities. Alongside Bing from Matchbox Café and Joleen Dotan, Kirsty, one of our Counsellors, and Oskar, a Youth Advisory Board member, 'Leapt for The Lowdown' by skydiving, raising a combined total of £2,865. Another significant event was The Amazing Northampton Run, where Charlene (Access and Engagement Lead) and Lisa Soper completed the 13.6-mile race, generating additional funds.



"I'm so immensely proud to be able to raise money and make this donation to a fantastic cause."

Hays Travel hosted a prize draw, raising £6,17.20 and Weston Favell Shopping Centre contributed £1,974 as part of their 50th Anniversary celebrations. Roxanne Hair Boutique organised a Wellbeing Show featuring catwalks, stalls, and a raffle, raising £685.60. We also received £2,000 from John Lewis, thanks to a nomination by a previous volunteer.

We gratefully acknowledge the return of fundraisers and donations from Northampton School for Boys Charity Week, Northampton Rotary Groups for the Santa Run in December, GXO in Wellingborough raising £2,752 during their Pride Month Celebrations, and the continuation of funding from Michael Jones Jewellers supporting Youth Activities for the third year. Your unwavering support is invaluable, and we are honoured to be consistently chosen.

We received 'Much Loved' donations and memorial contributions too. We are deeply honoured to be remembered and chosen as recipients in memory of loved ones. We also extend our thanks to those who donate monthly, purchase tickets for the Northampton Lottery, and support us at various events, fundraisers, and promotions.

We express our heartfelt appreciation to every donor, fundraiser, funder, and supporter. Your generosity is truly remarkable.



How to support us

Your support and donations are vital so we can continue to provide free services for young people. Our work helps us to increase young people's resilience and empower them to thrive and cope with challenges in their life.

There are lots of ways you can support us:

- Set up a monthly donation
- Make a one off donation
- Organise a fundraising event or activity
- Donate via JustGiving, easyfundraising or play the Northampton Lottery



JustGiving™



Or scan this QR
code to instantly
donate



Who's Who

Everyone who has worked or volunteered for The Lowdown between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025.

The Lowdown would not be what it is without our amazing team who are very flexible and constantly help us to adapt to fulfil every opportunity we get to support young people.

Staff

CEO: Sharon Womersley

Deputy CEO: Laura Simms

Office Manager: Lisa Braithwaite

Fundraising and Marketing Manager: Ellie White

Counselling and Wellbeing Services Clinical Manager:
Rachel Welsh

Support Services Manager: Helen Heng

Shift Managers: Becky Hyland, Ryan Parkinson, Meghan Wright

Administrators: Maxine Eborall, Alison Inglese, Victoria O'Shea

Participation and Wellbeing Coordinator: Rebecca Kings

Youth Services Coordinator: Kelly Emmanuel

Out There Youth Leaders: Julie Holt, Cami Martin, Sophie Turner, William Beckett, Emma Ottaway, Aimee Harrison, Maxine Eborall

RE:Start Support Workers: Carol Jeyes, Julie Holt, Lauryn Agyeman-Kyeremeh, Steph Gardner, Rebecca Townson

RE:Start Youth Engagement Worker: Emma Erickson, Rebekah Troop

Access and Engagement Lead: Charlene Ward-Greef

Project Manager: Kathryn White

Trustees

Stephen Edmonds (Chair), Andrea Martin (Vice Chair), Jonathan Smith (Treasurer), Brendan Dunphy, Georgina Bayliss, Dr Mike Scanlan, Dr Deborah Patton, Andre Gore, Damon Boughen, Will White

Honorary Presidents

Jan Jourard, Dr John Toby

Information & Guidance Drop-In Workers

Cami Martin, Eden Davies

Wellbeing Workers including Mental Health & Wellbeing Drop-In

Colette Rose, Kelly Lane, Kirsty Roberts, Kristyana Jimdar, Maxine Eborall, Meghan Wright

Mental Health & Wellbeing Drop-In Volunteers

Emma Watson, Demi Turland, Lisa Greenough, Niamh Roe, Richard Wootton

Volunteer Counsellors

Toni Allard, Geraldine Ward, Helen Shouler, Hitomi Palmer, Katie Redding, Laura Kaye, Rachael Moss, Roliste Jerman, Stephanie Clayson, Emma Rose, Adrian Shaw, Jennifer Gee, Natalie Morrison, Becca Ibbs, Colette Rose, Leanne Allsop

Paid Counsellors

Anna Tutt, Caroline Parnell, Daniel Kwakye, Da-Sheena Fulford, Nyasha Nyamariwata, Georgina Bridgewater, James Young, Kanan Robinson, Kelly Lane, Kirsty Bees, Kirsty Roberts, Krissy Jimdar, Matthew Price, Meghan Wright, Becky Hyland, Rebecca Wheeler, Rose-Marie Golaub, Ryan Parkinson, Toniiie Smith, Adrian Shaw, Jennifer Gee, Emma Rose, Toni Allard, Natalie Morrison, Becca Ibbs, Helen Shouler, Colette Rose, Roliste Jerman, Leanne Alsop, Laura Kaye

Placement Counsellors

Callum Crawford-McKellar, Camilla Cobb, Charlotte White, Charlotte Ward, Dawn Willis-Lovelock, Julie Elliott, Lucy Ananda, Niamh Roe, Sheelagh Chetwode, Teresa Marshall, Victoria O'Shea, Emma Rose, Helen Shouler, Colette Rose, Adrian Shaw, Roliste Jerman



School Outreach Counsellors & Workers

Georgina Bridgewater, Jessica Hudson, Katie Redding, Krissy Jimdar, Geraldine Hardcastle, Matt Price, Caroline Parnell

Youth Groups & Young Adult Social Workers

Georgina Bridgewater, Kirsty Roberts, Nyasha Nyamariwata, Carol Jeyes, Steph Gardner

Youth Advisory Board Leaders

Rebecca Kings, Maxine Eborall, Meghan Wright

Youth Advisory Board Members

Alice Durbala, Amy Ebanks, Ben Olson, Bushra Ahmed, Demi Turland, Ebony-Mae Palliser, Emma Watson, Erin Caspall, Ibtisam Mussa, Jennah West, Kenzo Parker Klea Tzatzos, Lisa Mayabi, Maria Marin, Matthew Hall, Nicole Ashcroft-Connolly, Oliver Munnely, Olivia Makobu, Otto Morrison, Oskar White, Ruby Cook, Shafee Jolil, Shane Gillett, Sophie Cassin, Thomas Gill, Sandie Nkomo

Clinical Supervisors

Daniel Kwakye, Matthew Price, Kelly Lane, Alison Souster, Clare Marshall and Rebecca Vivash, Charlotte Tomaselli-Halford, Catherine Bruce, Kate Williams

Other Volunteers

Jan Jourard, Georgia Mullen

Acknowledgements and Thanks

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported The Lowdown during this year.

There are so many individuals, organisations, businesses, and schools who have helped us to ensure we can provide our vital services to young people. We feel very honoured to be recognised by so many in our community.

- **Abbeyfield School**
- Ashby Computers
- **BBC Radio Northampton**
- Beckett's and Sargeant's Educational Foundation
- **Breathe HR**
- Crick Software
- **Department for Culture Media and Sport**
- Earl Spencer Primary School
- **Faraway Children's Charity**
- Free2Talk
- **Gateway HR**
- Guilsborough Academy
- **GXO Wellingborough**
- Harpole Women's Institute
- **Hays Travel**
- Hays Travel - Weston Favell
- **Jane Dollar**
- John Lewis
- **Mental Health Collaborative Northamptonshire**
- Michael Jones Jewellers
- **Milton Malsor Women's Institute**
- National Lottery
- **National Youth Agency**
- NHFT
- **Nlive Radio**
- Northampton Chronicle and Echo
- **Northampton Golf Club**
- Northampton Lottery
- **Northampton School for Boys**
- Northampton School for Girls
- **Northampton Town Council**
- Northamptonshire Community Foundation
- **Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board**
- Our Reach Collaborative Partners: Youth Works, Service Six, Time2Talk and CHAT
- **Preston Hedges Trust / Parklands Primary School**
- Public Health Northamptonshire
- **Rotary Club of Northampton Becket**
- Rotary Clubs of Northamptonshire
- **Roxanne's Hair Boutique**
- Royal and Derngate
- **Rushden Golf Club**
- Social Investment Business
- **St Andrews Healthcare**
- St James's Place Foundation
- **Surefire Creative and Santander**
- The Bridge
- **The Talent Fund**
- The University of Northampton
- **TJ Marketing**
- Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire
- **Waitrose**
- West Northants Council
- **Weston Favell Shopping Centre**
- Young Northants
- **Youth Investment Fund**





Report of the Trustees

Public Benefit

The Trustees have taken due regard of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

The Lowdown is a Mental Health charity, providing free and confidential support services for 8-25 year olds and their families in Northamptonshire. We provide a caring environment where young people are always supported in their journey towards positive emotional health and wellbeing regardless of their socio-economic circumstances, ethnicity, gender, religion, ability, sexuality, or perceived disadvantage.

We aim to help children and young people feel valued and supported so that they can live safe, happy, and healthy lives, be part of and enjoy family and community life, and achieve their full potential. The services we provide, along with our varied outreach services, not only benefit young people directly but also the wider community.

The Lowdown provides student placements for counselling and other trainees in order to develop the workforce of the future to support the escalation in demand for mental health services for children and young people.

Our anonymous service user questionnaires, regular internal reviews, and feedback from the organisations that use The Lowdown enable us to keep abreast of any gaps in youth service provision, and we continually develop our services in order to fill them. Young people are involved when introducing new services to ensure that they meet their needs.

Structure, Governance, and Management

The Lowdown is a charity governed by its constitution. The trustees are responsible for the strategic direction of The Lowdown, meeting quarterly or more frequently to review the performance of the organisation. We have a Services Committee, chaired by a mental health practitioner, to review the delivery of The Lowdown's services, and a Finance and Operations Committee, chaired by our Treasurer, to review our financial and operational performance. These committees then independently feed back to the Board of Trustees if there are any concerns.

The CEO is responsible for the day-to-day management of the organisation and is in regular contact with the Chair of Trustees/Trustees to report progress. The Lowdown became a CIO on 1st April 2022 due to the growth of the organisation.

Appointment of Trustees

New trustees are recruited for their particular expertise and knowledge. The Lowdown adheres to a policy of equal opportunities in the advertisement, selection, recruitment, and training of its trustees, and within all aspects of its service delivery.

Applicants are interviewed by the trustees and CEO, who then reach a decision as to the suitability of the candidate.

Successful candidates are inducted and appointed subject to a satisfactory DBS check and fulfilment of a three month probationary period. At the next annual general meeting, they are officially elected, and trustees are subject to re-election at our AGM as per our constitution. In accordance with good practice, governance is regularly reviewed.

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: CE027763 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1197273

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025
FOR
THE LOWDOWN**



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The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

STRATEGIC REPORT

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (the CIO) governed according to the new and more flexible Constitution dated 22 December 2021. It was established to take forward the work of the unincorporated charity with registered charity number 801886.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number

CE027753 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number

1197273

Registered office

3 Kingswell Street
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN1 1PP

Trustees

S Edmonds
G Bayliss
J Smith
A Martin
D Patton (resigned 16/9/24)
M Scanlan
B Dunphy
A Gore
D Boughen (appointed 20/1/25)
W White (appointed 28/4/25)

Auditors

Shaw Gibbs (Audit) Limited, Statutory Auditor
Eagle House
28 Billing Road
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN1 5AJ

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales, the Charities Act 2011, Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

AUDITORS

The auditors, Shaw Gibbs (Audit) Limited, Statutory Auditor, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Report of the trustees, incorporating a strategic report, approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 09/09/2025 and signed on the board's behalf by:


.....
S Edmonds - Trustee

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Lowdown (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Statement of Financial Position and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements which give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditors under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the financial statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be the override of controls by management and the understatement of revenue. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, sample testing on the posting of journals, reviewing meeting minutes, regulatory correspondence and professional fees, detailed substantive testing on the completeness of income, and reviewing accounting estimates for biases. We also review any regulatory correspondence with the Charity Commission.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

These inherent limitations are particularly significant in the case of misstatement resulting from fraud as this may involve sophisticated schemes designed to avoid detection, including deliberate failure to record transactions, collusion or the provision of intentional misrepresentations.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Shaw Gibbs (Audit) Limited

Shaw Gibbs (Audit) Limited, Statutory Auditor
Eligible to act as an auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006
Eagle House
28 Billing Road
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN1 5AJ

Date: 10 September 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	87,045	673,328	740,373	335,471
Charitable activities	4				
Charitable Activities		922,170	249,820	1,171,990	1,056,374
Investment income	3	24,543	-	24,543	7,215
Total		<u>1,013,758</u>	<u>923,148</u>	<u>1,936,906</u>	<u>1,399,060</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	5				
Charitable Activities		<u>908,302</u>	<u>277,379</u>	<u>1,186,681</u>	<u>999,812</u>
NET INCOME		104,456	645,769	750,225	399,248
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		516,931	524,643	1,041,574	642,326
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>621,387</u>	<u>1,170,412</u>	<u>1,791,799</u>	<u>1,041,574</u>

CONTINUING OPERATIONS

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	11	76,768	1,129,488	1,206,256	458,202
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	12	127,361	-	127,361	60,284
Cash at bank and in hand		835,411	40,924	876,335	780,941
		962,772	40,924	1,003,696	841,225
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	13	(418,153)	-	(418,153)	(257,853)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		544,619	40,924	585,543	583,372
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		621,387	1,170,412	1,791,799	1,041,574
NET ASSETS		621,387	1,170,412	1,791,799	1,041,574
FUNDS	15				
Unrestricted funds				621,387	516,931
Restricted funds				1,170,412	524,643
TOTAL FUNDS				1,791,799	1,041,574

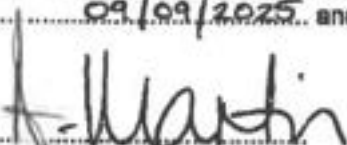
The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The members have not deposited notice, pursuant to Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006 requiring an audit of these financial statements.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 09/09/2025 and were signed on its behalf by:


A Martin - Trustee


S Edmonds - Trustee

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	<u>834 532</u>	<u>370 433</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities		<u>834 532</u>	<u>370 433</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(763,681)	(197,560)
Interest received		<u>24 543</u>	<u>7,215</u>
Net cash used in investing activities		<u>(739,138)</u>	<u>(190 345)</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		95,394	180,088
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		<u>780 941</u>	<u>600 853</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		<u>876 335</u>	<u>780,941</u>

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2025 £	2024 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	750,225	399,248
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	15,827	17,594
Interest received	(24,543)	(7,215)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(67,077)	8,867
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	<u>160,300</u>	<u>(48,061)</u>
Net cash provided by operations	<u>834,532</u>	<u>370,433</u>

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1/4/24 £	Cash flow £	At 31/3/25 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>780,941</u>	<u>95,394</u>	<u>876,335</u>
	<u>780,941</u>	<u>95,394</u>	<u>876,335</u>
Total	<u>780,941</u>	<u>95,394</u>	<u>876,335</u>

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**Basis of preparing the financial statements**

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

No material uncertainties exist in relation to going concern.

The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£).

Charity Status

The Lowdown is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Charity became a CIO on 1 April 2022.

Registered address listed in the annual report, managed and controlled by the Management Committee/Trustees named in the annual report.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the company accounting policies. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the financial statements are disclosed within the individual accounting policies below

Income

Voluntary income, including donations, legacies and grants that provide core funding or are of a general nature are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability. Investment income is brought into account on a receivable basis and dividend income on a received basis. Income from charitable activities includes income received under contract or where entitlement to grant funding is subject to specific performance conditions is recognised as earned. Grant income in this category provides funding to support performance activities and is recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Intangible Income

Intangible income, in the form of donated facilities and voluntary help etc., is not included in the financial statements since it is not considered practicable to quantify such income.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred.

Cost of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income.

Charitable activities include expenditure associated with direct services and membership support.

Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Improvements to property	- 10% on cost and over the remaining term of the lease
--------------------------	--

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued**Tangible fixed assets**

Fixtures and fittings	- 33% on cost
Computer and Office Equipment	- 50% on cost and 33% on cost

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Where parts of an item of property, plant and equipment have different useful lives, they are accounted for as separate items of property, plant and equipment.

Depreciation methods, useful lives and residual values are reviewed at each balance sheet date. The selection of these residual values and estimated lives requires the exercise of judgement. The directors are required to assess whether there is an indication of impairment to the carrying value of assets. In making that assessment, judgements are made in estimating value in use. The directors consider that the individual carrying values of assets are supportable by their value in use.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Reserves

The current reserve policy is to maintain sufficient cash flow for known commitments, and the replacement of certain assets. Grants are received at various times during the year. The required reserves are calculated based on 12 months operating costs plus 4 months direct costs.

Risk

The trustees do not believe it is subject to any substantial risk beyond the liabilities disclosed in its Annual Report and Accounts.

The organisation has public, employer insurance to protect the Charity in the case of a claim.

Financial Instruments Policy

Cash and cash equivalents in the balance sheet comprise cash at banks and in hand and short term deposits with an original maturity date of three months or less.

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in the statement of comprehensive income under administrative expenses.

Financial liabilities and equity instruments are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the entity after deducting all of its financial liabilities.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Reserves

Where the contractual obligations of financial instruments (including share capital) are equivalent to a similar debt instrument, those financial instruments are classed as financial liabilities. Financial liabilities are presented as such in the balance sheet. Finance costs and gains or losses relating to financial liabilities are included in the profit and loss account. Finance costs are calculated so as to produce a constant rate of return on the outstanding liability.

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2025 £	2024 £
Donations	121,695	32,365
Grants	<u>618,678</u>	<u>303,106</u>
	<u>740,373</u>	<u>335,471</u>

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Youth Investment Fund	618,238	301,546
NCF	<u>440</u>	<u>1,560</u>
	<u>618,678</u>	<u>303,106</u>

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2025 £	2024 £
Deposit account interest	<u>24,543</u>	<u>7,215</u>

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2025 Charitable Activities £	2024 Total activities £
Grants & Contract Services	1,150,056	999,829
Outreach Services	21,686	52,378
Other income	<u>248</u>	<u>4,167</u>
	<u>1,171,990</u>	<u>1,056,374</u>

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
LGBTQ	29,643	33,700
VCSE - Happier Families	1,900	19,950
NHFT - Espresso Yourself Cafe	58,065	61,160
NHS Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board	<u>752,521</u>	<u>657,967</u>
Carried forward	842,129	772,777

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES - continued

	2025 £	2024 £
Brought forward	842,129	772,777
Constance Travis	7,500	8,300
National Lottery	29,750	20,250
Queen's Institute	5,000	5,000
Youth Investment Fund	212,028	180,252
Northampton Town Council	10,000	10,000
St James's Place Foundation	5,000	-
West Northamptonshire Council	10,500	13,250
Michael Jones Jewellers	8,149	-
Scott Bader	-	5,000
The Access Foundation	-	5,000
The Talent Fund	20,000	-
	<u>1,150,056</u>	<u>999,829</u>

5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Support costs (see note 6) £	Totals £
Charitable Activities	<u>1,163,074</u>	<u>23,607</u>	<u>1,186,681</u>

6. SUPPORT COSTS

	Finance £	Governance costs £	Totals £
Charitable Activities	<u>1,508</u>	<u>22,099</u>	<u>23,607</u>

7. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2025 £	2024 £
Auditors' remuneration	6,240	8,280
Auditors' remuneration for non audit work	1,580	3,740
Depreciation - owned assets	<u>15,627</u>	<u>17,594</u>

8. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2025 nor for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2025 nor for the year ended 31 March 2024.

9. STAFF COSTS

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	805,905	702,037
Social security costs	61,256	51,781
Other pension costs	16,078	13,616
	<u>883,239</u>	<u>767,434</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2025	2024
Staff	<u>47</u>	<u>46</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

Key Management Remuneration in the year was £64,560 (2024: £64,539).

10. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	27,384	308,087	335,471
Charitable activities			
Charitable Activities	862,422	193,952	1,056,374
Investment income	<u>7,215</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,215</u>
Total	<u>897,021</u>	<u>502,039</u>	<u>1,399,060</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Charitable Activities	<u>792,221</u>	<u>207,591</u>	<u>999,812</u>
NET INCOME	104,800	294,448	399,248
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	412,131	230,195	642,326

10. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	516 931	524 643	1,041,574

11. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Assets under construction £	Improvements to property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer and Office Equipment £	Totals £
COST					
At 1 April 2024	197,560	285,759	4,296	13,311	500,926
Additions	<u>763 681</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>763 681</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>961 241</u>	<u>285 759</u>	<u>4 296</u>	<u>13 311</u>	<u>1 264 607</u>
DEPRECIATION					
At 1 April 2024	-	25,876	4,296	12,752	42,724
Charge for year	<u>-</u>	<u>15 068</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>559</u>	<u>15 627</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>-</u>	<u>40 744</u>	<u>4 296</u>	<u>13 311</u>	<u>58 351</u>
NET BOOK VALUE					
At 31 March 2025	<u>961 241</u>	<u>245 015</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1 206 256</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>197 560</u>	<u>260,083</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>559</u>	<u>458 202</u>

12. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	107,535	17,208
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>19 826</u>	<u>43 076</u>
	<u>127 361</u>	<u>60 284</u>

13. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	42,457	12,484
Other creditors	87,869	132,400
Deferred Income	268,552	93,839
Accrued expenses	19,275	19,130
	<u>418,153</u>	<u>257,853</u>

Deferred Income Reconciliation:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Balance brought forward	(93,839)	(91,876)
Amount released to the Statement of Financial Activities	93,839	91,876
Amount Deferred in the year	<u>(268,552)</u>	<u>(93,839)</u>
Balance carried forward	<u>(268,552)</u>	<u>(93,839)</u>

Deferred income relates to amounts receivable for the provision of services that have been invoiced in financial year ending 31 March 2025, where performance conditions will not be met until future accounting periods.

14. LEASING AGREEMENTS

Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Within one year	<u>10,304</u>	<u>5,400</u>

15. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/24	Net movement	At
	£	in funds	31/3/25
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	516,931	104,456	621,387
Restricted funds			
LGBTQ	2,872	(2,818)	54
Children in Need Youth Investment Fund Grant	6,632	(1,025)	5,607
Outbuilding	206,593	(7,946)	198,647
Leasehold Improvements - Kitchen	7,000	(1,000)	6,000
Leasehold improvements - 2 Storey Extension	301,546	618,238	919,784
Staff Development Training Fund	-	40,320	40,320
	<u>524,643</u>	<u>645,789</u>	<u>1,170,412</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,041,574</u>	<u>750,225</u>	<u>1,791,799</u>

15. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	1,013,758	(909,302)	104,456
Restricted funds			
LGBTQ	42,882	(45,700)	(2,818)
Children in Need Youth Investment Fund Grant	-	(1,025)	(1,025)
Outbuilding	-	(7,946)	(7,946)
Leasehold Improvements - Kitchen	-	(1,000)	(1,000)
Leasehold improvements - 2 Storey Extension	618,238	-	618,238
Youth Investment Fund - Revenue Funding	212,028	(212,028)	-
Staff Development Training Fund	50,000	(9,680)	40,320
	<u>923,148</u>	<u>(277,379)</u>	<u>645,769</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,936,906</u>	<u>(1,186,681)</u>	<u>750,225</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	412,131	104,800	516,931
Restricted funds			
LGBTQ	-	2,872	2,872
Children in Need Youth Investment Fund Grant	7,656	(1,024)	6,632
Outbuilding	214,539	(7,946)	206,593
Leasehold Improvements - Kitchen	8,000	(1,000)	7,000
Leasehold improvements - 2 Storey Extension	-	301,546	301,546
	<u>230,195</u>	<u>294,448</u>	<u>524,643</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>642,326</u>	<u>399,248</u>	<u>1,041,574</u>

15. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	897,021	(792,221)	104,800
Restricted funds			
LGBTQ	40,242	(37,370)	2,872
Children in Need Youth Investment Fund Grant	-	(1,024)	(1,024)
Outbuilding	-	(7,946)	(7,946)
Leasehold Improvements - Kitchen	-	(1,000)	(1,000)
Leasehold Improvements - 2 Storey Extension	301,546	-	301,546
Youth Investment Fund - Revenue Funding	<u>160,251</u>	<u>(160,251)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>502,039</u>	<u>(207,591)</u>	<u>294,448</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,399,060</u>	<u>(999,812)</u>	<u>399,248</u>

General reserve - to maintain sufficient cash flow due to time differences of grants received and expenditure paid

Leasehold Improvements - Funding to renovate and improve the kitchen facilities and create a staff area within the property, in which the charity operates. The balance on this fund represents the Net Book Value of the assets, are being depreciated over 10 years.

LGBTQ+ Support Service – Funding for youth groups and events supporting the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and questioning community for young people up to the age of 25.

Children In Need Youth Futures Funding - Building, IT and Service improvements. The balance on this fund represents the Net Book Value of the assets being depreciated over 10 years.

Outbuilding - Funding for the building of the Outbuilding at the Kingswell Street Property.

Leasehold Improvements - 2 Storey Extension - The building of the 2 storey extension to the Kingswell Street leased property.

Youth Investment Fund - Revenue Fund - Funding for Wellbeing and Youth Services to support young people.

Training Fund - Designated funding to be used to for the training of Lowdown employees.

16. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

Donations received from trustees in the year totalled £360 (2024: £330).

During the year a donation of £10,000 was received from the wife of the Chair of Trustees.

During the year a donation of £1,200 was received from the CEO of the charity.

During the year, Auction Marketer Limited, a company at which a member of the Trustees is a director, donated £2,500 towards new furniture.

Treasurer's Report and Financial Review

This year's financial statements may initially seem confusing without further explanation.

You will be aware that during this period we have been fortunate to have received capital grant monies to fund the construction of a two-storey extension to our Kingswell Street Building and to comply with accounting convention, these monies have been included in income in our Statement of Financial Activities. The accounts therefore show that total income amounted to £1.9m, a substantial increase on the previous year of £1.4m.

A more representative picture of underlying performance can be seen by stripping out the Youth Investment Fund capital monies for both the current and previous financial year, which are one off in nature, and this shows that the income of the trust from charitable activities has increased by 18% from £1.1m to £1.3m

Total funds have similarly been boosted by the capital grants and stand at £1.75m at 31st March with £1.12m of this being restricted and mostly relating to the expenditure on the building. Importantly, the amount of unrestricted funds has increased to £621k from £517k last year.

Fixed assets have increased substantially because of the expenditure on the extension from £458k to £1,206k with assets under construction standing at £961k at the year end.

Cash balances remain well managed and the balance at 31st March of £876k (2024-£780k) includes some capital element. The Flagstone Cash Deposit account opened last year to better manage our treasury function, has resulted in a valuable amount of interest received of £24k.

Staff salaries increased by 15% to £883k due to planned expansion of our services and, as ever, overheads are strictly monitored and controlled with the additional costs of operating from multiple sites now falling away.

This has been a very significant year for The Lowdown, maintaining and expanding our services whilst achieving our long-held ambition of transforming our very special building and making it fit for the future.

Our team have been magnificent in facing the many challenges which have at times seemed overwhelming. Of course, none of this would have been possible without the continuing generosity of our landlords, funders, donors, supporters and our amazing wider Lowdown family.



Jonathan Smith
Treasurer



How to get in touch with us:



Call us: 01604 634385

Monday to Friday: 9am - 5pm

Saturday: 9am-4pm



Email us:

General Enquiries:

info@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk

Fundraising, Events and Business Partnership:

elliewhite@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk

Wellbeing Services:

wellbeingservices@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk

LGBTQ+ Support Enquiries:

lgbtqsupport@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk

RE:Start Enquiries:

aislingkellygee@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk

Youth Groups Enquiries:

youthgroups@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk



How to find us:

The Lowdown, 3 Kingswell Street (off Gold Street),
Northampton NN1 1PP



Follow us on Social Media



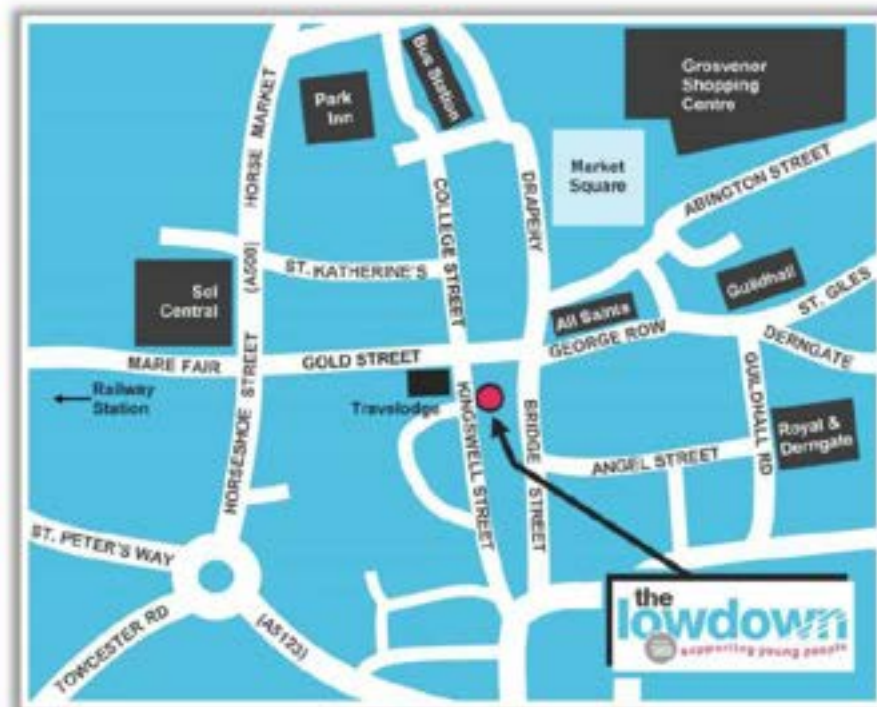
[thelowdown1989](https://www.facebook.com/thelowdown1989)



[thelowdownnn1](https://www.instagram.com/thelowdownnn1)



The Lowdown



- We are 2 mins from the North Gate Bus Station.
- If coming from Gold Street, turn at the Travelodge.
- Find the Blue Door and ring the buzzer when you arrive

For information on all our services or to
make a referral, visit our website...

www.thelowdown.info

THE LOWDOWN

England & Wales - Charity number 1197273

Accounts



celebrating
35
years

Reference and Administration



Charity Registration No:
1197273

Registered Company No:
CE027753 (England and Wales)

Address:
3 Kingswell Street (off Gold Street),
Northampton, NN1 1PP

Honorary Presidents:
Jan Jourard and Dr John Toby

Current Trustees:
Chair - Stephen Edmonds
Vice Chair - Andrea Martin
Treasurer - Jonathan Smith
Brendan Dunphy
Georgina Bayliss
Dr Mike Scanlan
Dr Martin Clarke (left October 23)
Matt Toresen MBE (left June 23)
Dr Deborah Patton
Andre Gore (joined June 23)

Bankers:
Metro Bank Northampton

Auditors:
Shaw Gibbs
(who acquired DNG Dove Naish LLP)



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2	Chairs Report	15	Accessibility	25	Report of the Trustees
3	CEO Report	16	Youth Groups	Accounts (separately numbered pages)	
4	Mission and Aims	17	Young Adult Social • LGBTQ+	26	Treasurers Report and Financial Review
5	A Year in the Life	18	OutThere Residential	27	How to Contact Us
6-7	Objectives	19	Happier Families • Mindspace		
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11	Counselling Services	23	Who's Who		
12	Re:Start	24	Acknowledgements and Thanks		
13	Youth Advisory Board (YAB)				
14	Work Experience Week				



Chairs Report

Welcome to our annual report which once again reveals that we have provided record levels of much-needed support for our young people.

Last year was very much about adopting strategies to cope with the huge level of demand for our services. This financial year we have continued with the development of our wrap around services to provide a holistic support package, tailoring our provision to the changing needs of young people with the help of our Youth Advisory Board.

The plan announced last year for the two-storey extension to our building is now a reality with the inevitable challenges that a major construction project presents, particularly disruption, but we are hopeful of a late autumn completion date and return to our much-improved facilities.

Whilst these are very exciting and positive developments for us, challenges remain, particularly the changing funding landscape, uncertainty and general financial pressures.

I would like to once again extend my heartfelt thanks to the wonderful and hugely dedicated team at The Lowdown coupled with our fantastic donors, volunteers and supporters. I hope you enjoy reading our report.



Steve Edmonds

Chair of Trustees



CEO Report

Another record-breaking year for The Lowdown with 17,688 support contacts provided for young people and their families. Whilst demand for our services has started to stabilise, the risk and complexity of the presentation from the young people we support continues to increase.

The Lowdown's strategy is based on implementing a full YIACS (Youth Information, Advice and Counselling Services) model for the young people of Northamptonshire. This framework is proven and provides a holistic approach to supporting young people with easy access, community-based services and has been developed by Youth Access (www.youthaccess.org.uk).

Youth Work and Participation Initiatives have been the focus in terms of service development. Because of this, we have launched, (thanks to Youth Investment Funding) the following new services/roles:

- **Youth Advisory Board**
- **Mindspace**
- **Youth groups (in collaboration with Free2Talk)**
- **Access and Engagement**

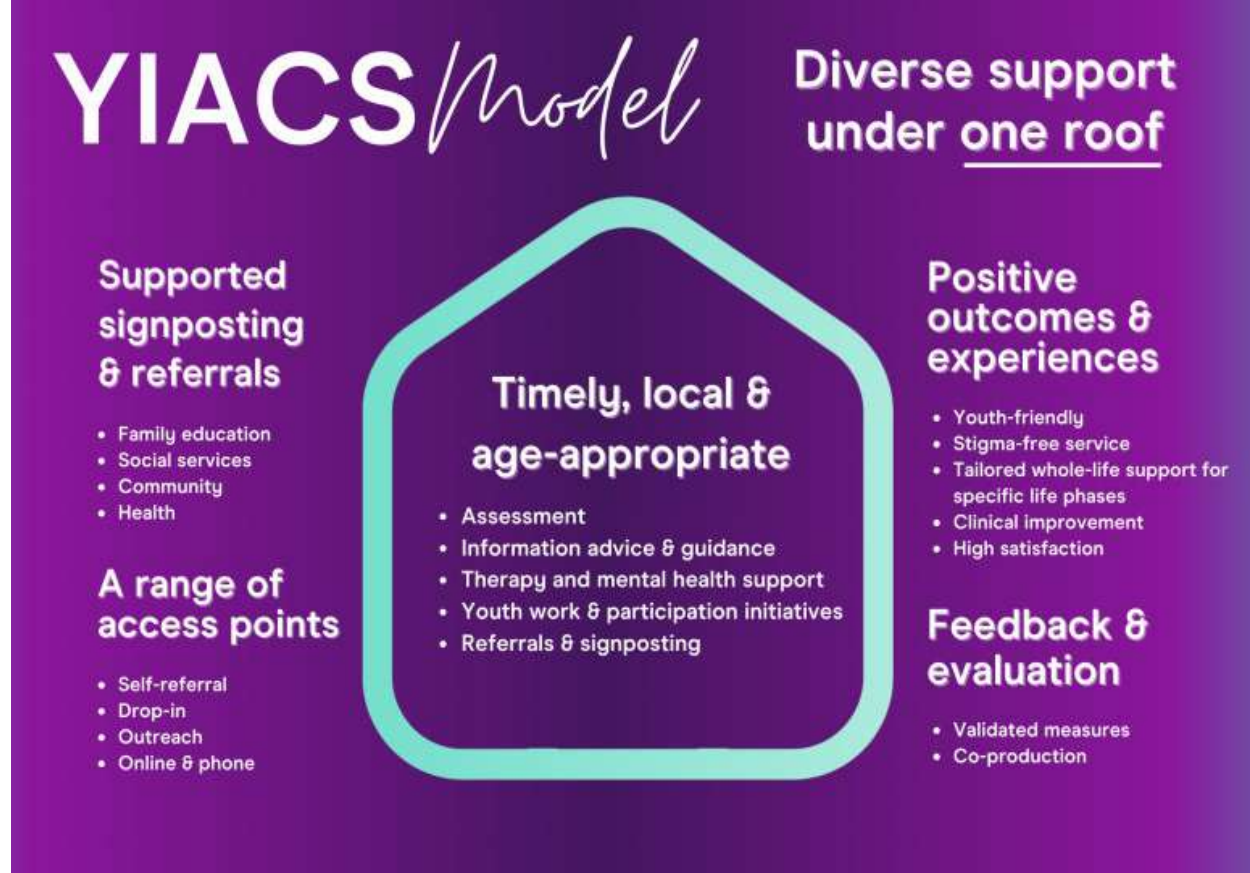
All of the above is helping us to amplify the “youth voice” to ensure our services meet young people's needs.

Further details of all the services we offer, their impact and the challenges young people are facing are detailed in this annual report.

In parallel, we are also undergoing an extensive refurbishment and extension of our 3 Kingswell Street building. Work started in January 2024, and all our services were moved out of the building so work could be completed as quickly as possible.

This work will increase the capacity of our building to be able to meet the increased demand for our services.

None of this would happen without the brilliant Lowdown team (staff, volunteers, trustees, and counselling student placements) who continue to deliver high-quality services for the young people of Northamptonshire.



One of our service user's recent quotes says it all:

“Genuinely the best mental health support that I've ever accessed.”

A huge thank you also goes to our supporters, donors, funders, and Reach partners who make all this possible.

Young people will always be at the heart of everything we do, and we will continue to strive to expand and improve our services to give young people the vital support they need.



Sharon Womersley
CEO



Who we are

A Mental Health Charity, providing free and confidential support services for 11-25 year olds in Northamptonshire.

Our Mission

To offer a caring environment where young people are always supported on their journey towards positive emotional health and wellbeing.

Our Vision

No young person should face mental health issues alone.

Our Purpose and Values

Accessible to all, welcoming, non-judgemental, safe, responsive, and adaptable.

Theory of Change

Young people have free and timely access to evidence-based early intervention services that improve their mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience.

The Lowdown changes lives and sometimes saves them.



A year in the life of



APRIL 2023

Our Youth Advisory Board was launched.



MAY 2023

Mental Health Week and IDAHOBIT* celebrations.



JUNE 2023

We took part in Northampton Carnival & launched our Wellbeing Wednesday Group.



JULY 2023

We hosted Work Experience Week for Youth Advisory Board members.



AUGUST 2023

Wellbeing Care Packages for young people funded by Northamptonshire Community Foundation.



SEPTEMBER 2023

Our Youth Groups were launched.



OCTOBER 2023

We hosted our Annual General Meeting.



NOVEMBER 2023

Our Volunteer – Steph Clayson won the Lady Juliet Townsend Award for Volunteering.



DECEMBER 2023

We took part in The Santa Run organised by The Rotary Clubs of Northampton.



JANUARY 2024

We hosted the Breaking Ground Event - Launching our building extension and renovation.



FEBRUARY 2024

First RE:Start Conference was hosted by Youth Works and us.



MARCH 2024

Sharon, our CEO, visited YPAS in Liverpool to share learnings.



*International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia.

Objectives

The Lowdown is a Mental Health Charity, providing free and confidential support services for 11- 25 year olds in Northamptonshire. Our services include Counselling, Information, Advice & Advocacy, Wellbeing, LGBTQ+, Youth Groups and Sexual Health.



Our services are developed based on the proven YIACS (Youth Information Advice and Counselling) model developed by Youth Access (youthaccess.org.uk) to provide a holistic approach to supporting young people. Part of this is ensuring that young people's voices are heard, and we are developing our services **with** young people to meet **their** needs.



Our services are easy to access, as young people can either, drop-in, self-refer or be referred by professionals such as CAMHS, schools or their GP.



We actively promote all our services in the local community so that young people and their families are aware of what we have to offer and how to access them.



Robust safeguarding procedures are implemented and regularly reviewed to ensure that any disclosures are dealt with appropriately.



The Lowdown offers unique and rewarding volunteering and personal development opportunities for young people and members of the public. We also partner with Higher Education providers, including The University of Northampton, Tresham College, Chrysalis etc. to offer placements and internships for students.



We also provide Outreach Services to schools, colleges, youth and community groups offering bespoke counselling/wellbeing support services.

Further details of our services are shown right, and **continue on the next page:**



Counselling

Supporting 11-25 year olds from the NN1–NN7 postcode area to manage and improve their mental health. Counselling can facilitate, support and empower young people to make positive changes in a safe, friendly and non-judgemental environment.

Counselling support is person-centred, with aspects of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and solution focused therapy.

We offer on average between six and twelve sessions, either face-to-face or remotely via telephone or videocall, on a wide range of issues that young people present with.

[See page 11](#)



LGBTQ+ Youth Groups

Our Out There LGBTQ+ groups offer a safe and confidential space for young people to socialise, meet like-minded people, discuss issues and take part in activities.

The Out There Junior Group is for school years 7, 8 and 9, our Youth Group is for school years 10, 11, 12 and 13, and the Out There Plus Group is for 18-25 year olds.

For parents and carers of young people in the LGBTQ+ community we offer a Facebook group that is accessed by searching for 'Out There Group Parent and Carers Support Network Northamptonshire'.

[See pages 17-18](#)

Objectives continued...



Wellbeing Services

The **'Espresso Yourself' Wellbeing Café** for 11-18 year olds offers face-to-face and remote support. These drop-in sessions with professional mental health workers offer a young person and their parents and carers a safe space to talk, be listened to and receive support. There are 9 cafés operating 6 days per week across Northamptonshire.

Mindspace

Our weekly Mindspace group for 11 to 18 year olds provides a safe space to explore emotional and personal wellbeing with activities such as relaxation, mindfulness, self-care and creativity.

Happier Families

A 6-week programme that supports families to learn and try out tips, skills, and tools to boost the wellbeing of individual members and the family as a whole to improve the quality of the time spent together.

See pages 19-20



Youth Voice

We have established a **Youth Advisory Board (YAB)** for 11 to 25 year olds to volunteer their time, share views on our services, building, accessibility, website, social media etc.

This helps ensure we are providing what young people need and want while offering those involved the opportunity to learn new skills, meet new people and make a difference in their community.

See page 13



Youth Groups

Our 4, weekly youth groups for 11 to 18 year olds are a place for young people to have fun and just be themselves.

It's an inclusive and safe space, a chance to meet new people and participate in fun activities; designed collaboratively with the young people that attend.

Young Adult Social Group

This free weekly group for 18 to 25 year olds is a space to meet new people and connect with others through fun activities. Our support workers are on hand if needed.

See pages 16-17



Advice and Information Services

The **RE:Start** Service is for 16 to 25 year olds and provides practical and emotional wellbeing support for young people transitioning from CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) to AMS (Adult Mental Health Services).

Our **Sexual Health Service** provides information and support on all aspects of sexual health and relationships including free condoms, pregnancy testing and chlamydia and gonorrhoea screening for 14 to 25 year olds.

See page 12



Our Impact 2023/24

2,240 young people were supported.



Through all The Lowdown services we provided
17,688 support contacts for young people and their families.

An increase of **8%** on the previous year.

Main issues >

- anxiety
- low mood
- family/relationship problems
- education and training
- sleep problems
- loneliness
- suicidal feelings
- self harm
- self-esteem
- stress

What do our service users say?

99%
would recommend our
service to others.

97%
felt they had a positive
outcome using our
services.

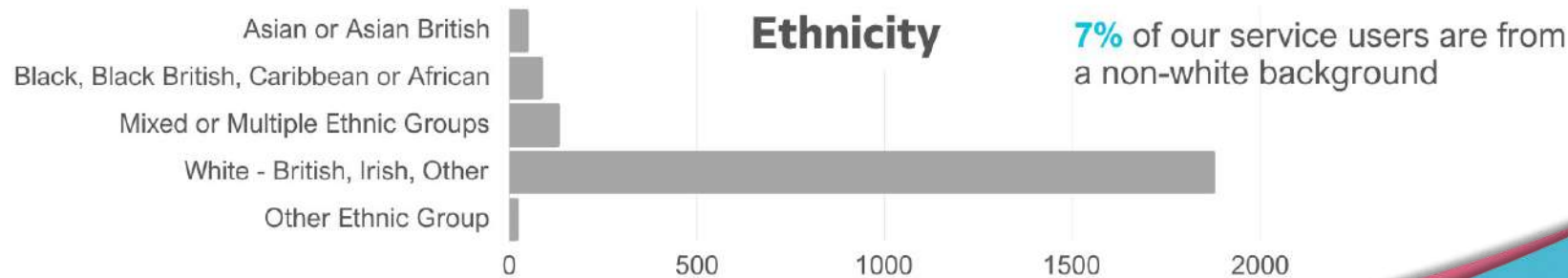
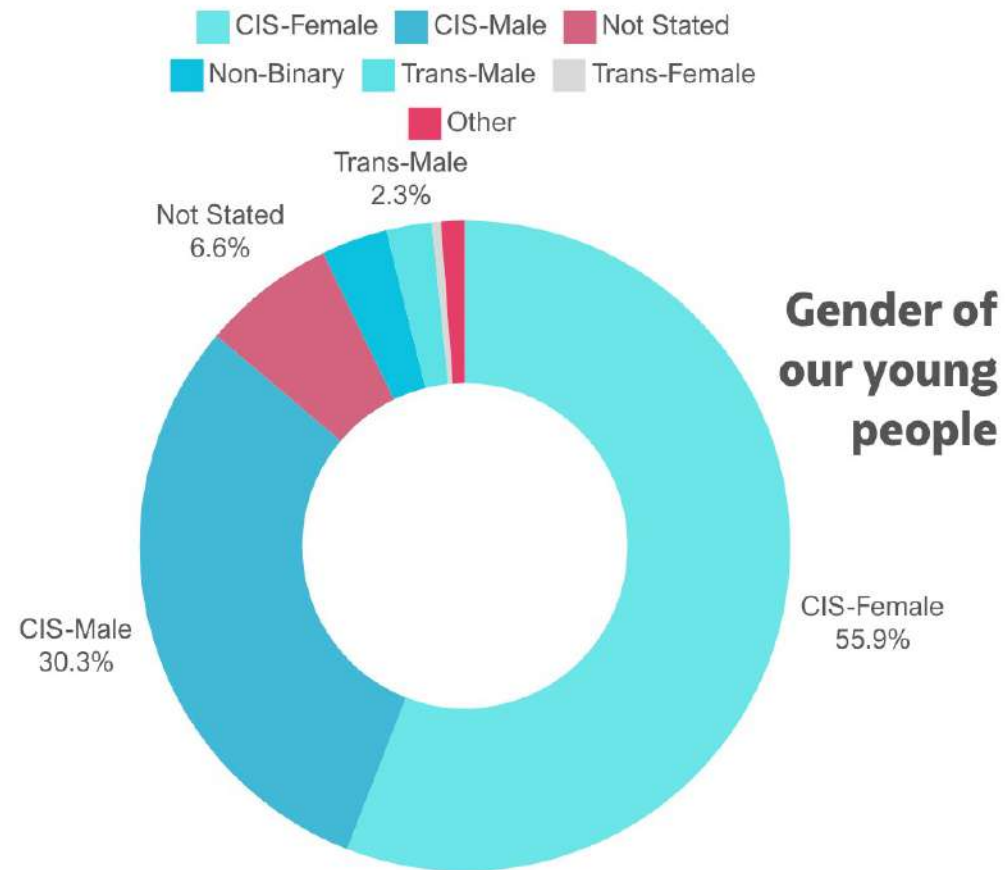
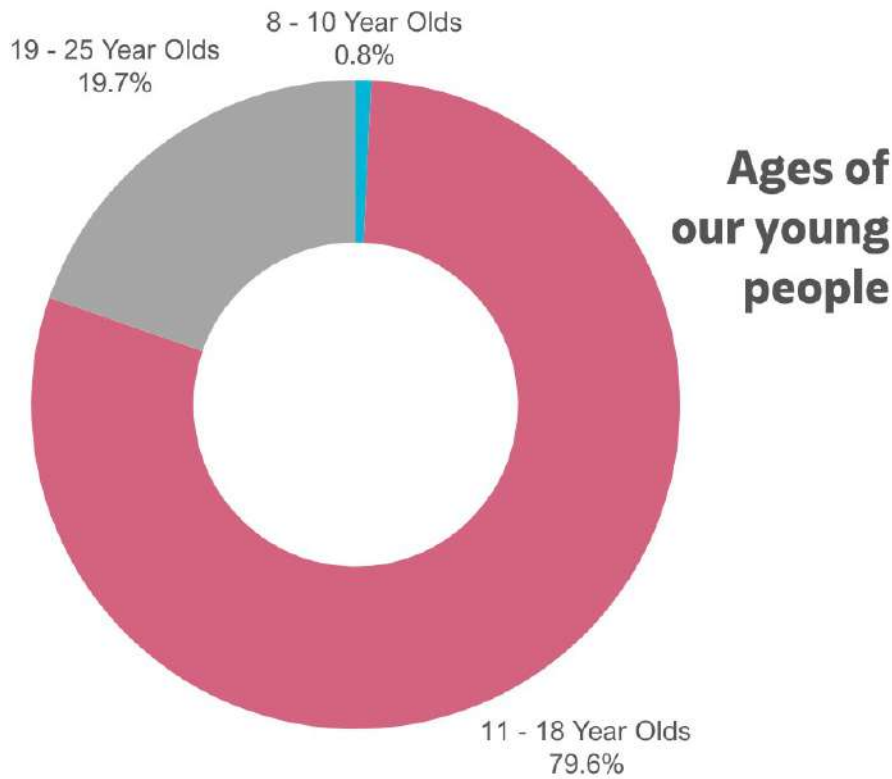
99%
found the service
accessible.

"I would definitely recommend. I think the town is so lucky to have this service. They're doing an amazing job."

- service user



Accessibility Statistics

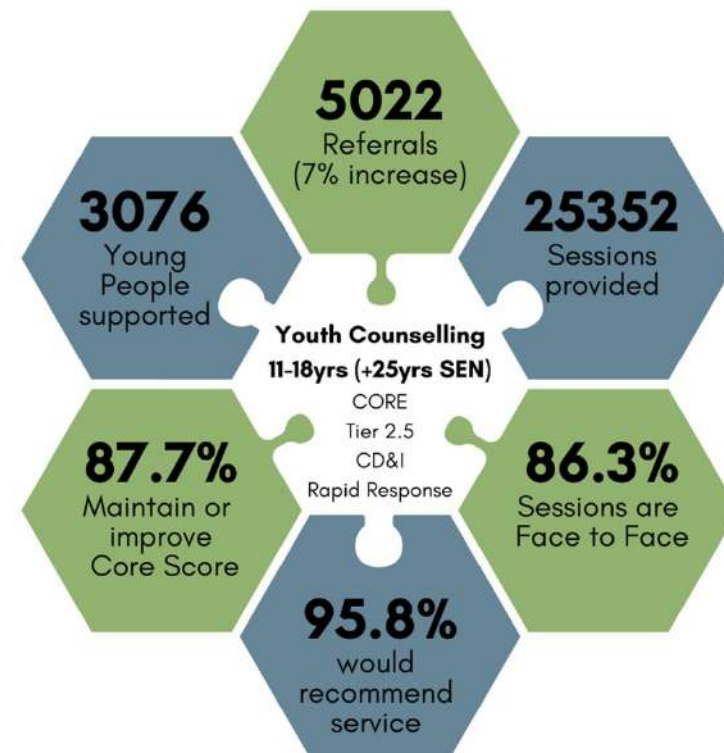
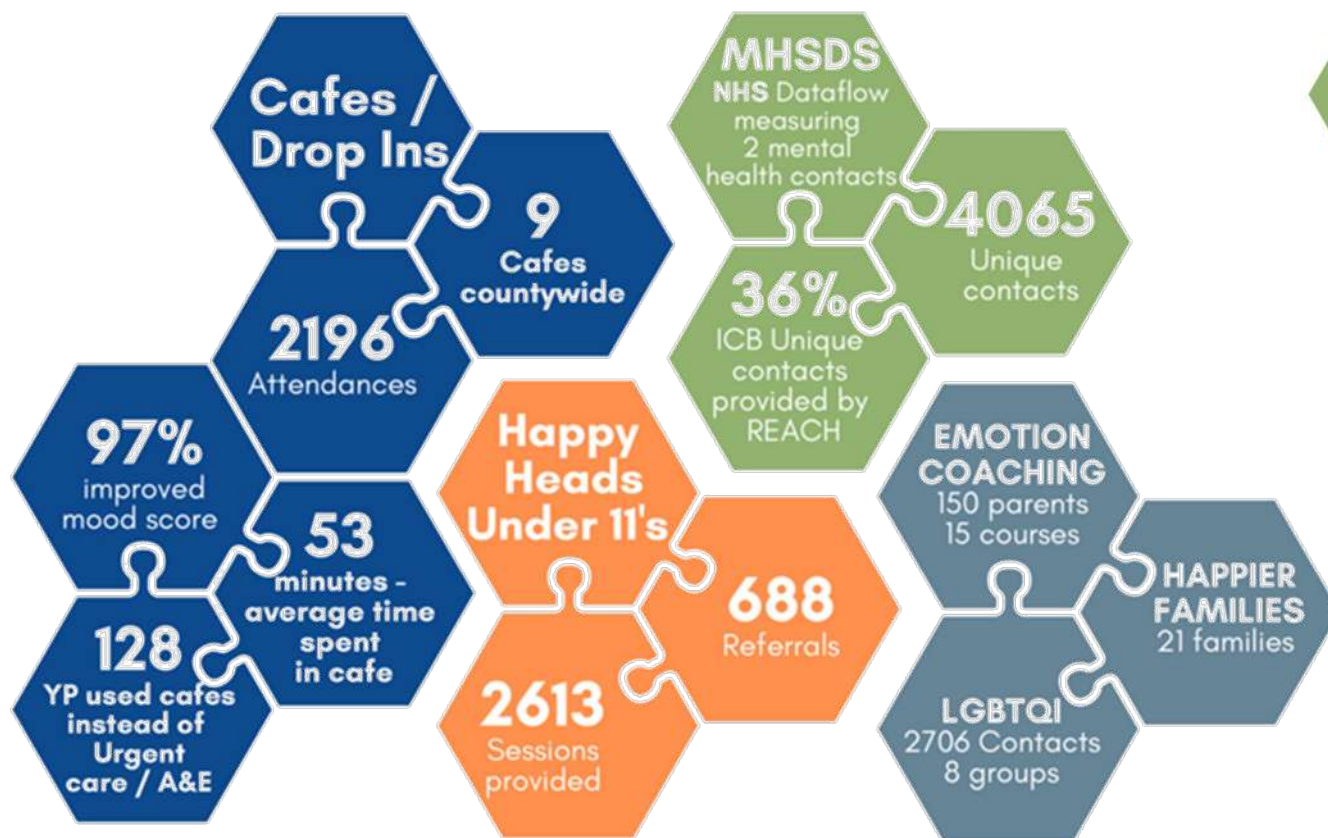




REACH

Celebrating Success

2023/2024



The **REACH Collaborative** provide professional and confidential services for young people across Northamptonshire and consists of 5 agencies:

CHAT Youth Counselling
Service Six • **The Lowdown**
Time2Talk • **Youth Works**

Counselling Service 11-18 year olds

Our counselling service for 11-18 year olds continues to provide vital support to young people facing various challenges in their lives.

Over the past year, our team has faced a significant increase in both the complexity and risk of the young people we support, continuing to highlight the need for the early intervention and preventative mental health support services we provide. Although demand has stabilised, the impact of our dedicated team's hard work and commitment has been truly remarkable when managing such risk and complexity. Despite these challenges, they maintain exceptional standards of care, offering tailored interventions and increasing our client's resilience.



Case Study:

A 16-year-old who was battling severe anxiety and self-esteem issues, came to us at a particularly dark time in her life, feeling hopeless and suicidal. Through weekly sessions, they found a lifeline. They gradually developed coping strategies and built confidence within themselves.

They are a shining example of resilience and growth, having made remarkable progress in their overall well-being and embracing a future filled with hope. Their journey underscores the profound impact of our service and the dedication of our team.

Counselling Service 19-25 year olds

Our counselling service for 19-25 year olds provides invaluable support to young adults navigating the complexities of early adulthood.

Over the past year, this service has witnessed a **staggering 47% increase** in demand, highlighting the intense challenges young adults face today, including complex mental health issues and social isolation. Despite these overwhelming pressures, our incredible team has gone above and beyond to provide accessible and effective counselling, demonstrating dedication and compassion. Their tireless efforts have been a beacon of hope for many, empowering our clients to find strength amidst adversity.



Case Study:

A 22 year old was struggling with depression and career uncertainty. Through our support, they gained clarity on their goals, coping mechanisms, and is now pursuing their passions with renewed confidence.



10163 sessions provided

1608 young people supported



“Truly I went into it not believing in therapy, but since going it's definitely changed my mind; it helped me think in such a more positive mindset...”



2385 contacts

356 young people supported



“Finding this counselling service was a game-changer for me...”

FOR BOTH SERVICES:



5 weeks

referral to treatment time



86% of clients

maintained or had improved CORE scores on completion of sessions



RE:Start

Mind | Focus | Future

Helping 16-25 year olds move forward on their mental health journey.



RE:Start

RE:Start is a practical, solution-focused service for 16 to 25 year olds with mental health challenges to support them with the transition into adulthood. Support Workers assist with accessing mental health services and therapeutic support alongside a holistic, goal-driven approach to support in all other areas of life.

This is the second year of the service and there has been a significant growth in demand and a wide range of support needs for the young people using the service. Our staff have also continued to develop their skills and knowledge to best support them. The Outcome STAR methodology is used to track the progress made.



162 new referrals

a 74% increase on the previous year

1491 contacts with young people

a 91% increase on the previous year



Case Study:

"My experience with The Lowdown RE:Start service has been inspiring for me because not only am I supported with daily tasks, I'm also more motivated to achieve my goals and aspirations!"

I felt I didn't know where to start, but the STAR method helped me look at the different aspects of my life, e.g. health, relationships, self-esteem etc. This aided me to see where I needed improvement the most, which goals were more of a priority, and over time will allow me to reflect and see my growth.

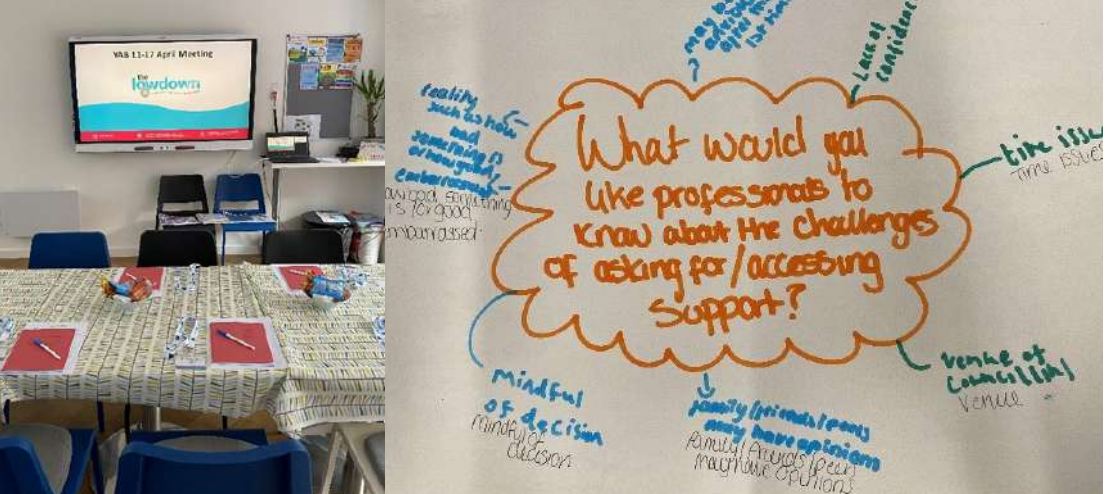
Everything is also at my pace, which has helped me take things slower, and to not put too much pressure on myself. I always feel safe, free of judgment, listened to, and my support worker always encourages me to do what I feel comfortable with.

I highly recommend this service."



"Everybody is so welcoming and approachable!"

the
lowdown
supporting young people



Youth Advisory Board (YAB)

The Youth Advisory Board was established in April 2023 and has seen 33 members aged 11-25 volunteer with this service across the year.

The YAB meet weekly to give their opinions and perspectives on topics regarding young people's mental health and help develop our services. They are vital to ensuring the youth voice is consistently represented and listened to. To show our gratitude, they have enjoyed rewards such as bowling, an escape room trip, vouchers and pizza nights.



The YAB members have had opportunities to undertake work experience, create content for our social media and take on an ambitious youth project. During work experience week the YAB visited Liverpool to meet the Young Persons Advisory Service and learn how to develop and set up our own board.

Since, we have introduced Chair and Deputy Chair positions and now have youth-led sessions where the board can discuss topics that they feel are important within adolescent mental health.



This year we have seen **253 contacts** across **65 sessions**



Case Study:

A 23 year old member can sometimes struggle with their confidence in social situations, but this year YAB has provided them with a space to work on her self-esteem and push herself in a safe environment.

Through access to mentoring, she was able to set goals and work towards them, making significant strides in her personal growth and confidence.



"I have developed lots of skills..."



Work Experience Week

Why we wanted to do our work experience at The Lowdown:

- We are all on the Youth Advisory Board and so we were all eager to get more involved.
- Each of us is interested in a career in mental health and wellbeing.
- It's a great place to be.

What we did:

Day 1

Put together wellbeing bags for young people and attended the Wellbeing Café. It was a great introduction to see what services are on offer.

Day 2

Visited YPAS (Young Person's Advisory Service) in Liverpool. This was definitely our favourite day as it was inspiring to see how they ran their services.

Day 3

Put together a YAB (Youth Advisory Board) development plan.

Day 4

Took over The Lowdown's social media. We definitely thrived on this day as we were given the freedom to use the skills we already have in a way that benefits The Lowdown.

Day 5

Attended the 'Out There' Youth Groups, where we learnt the importance of young people who identify with the LGBTQ+ community having a safe space.

Day 6

Had so much fun creating a fundraising plan for the YAB.

Days 7-8

Pulled together all that we had done into a presentation for The Lowdown's management team.



What we gained from our work experience:

- "Learning the importance of youth participation."
- "The importance of taking the time to organise fundraising events and wellbeing activities - planning is key!"
- "Different ways of using social media and events to increase visibility."
- "Everyone has different skills; we've done a lot as a team!"



Accessibility

Thanks to being awarded Youth Investment Funding, the role of Access & Engagement Lead was introduced in October 2023. The key priorities for the role are to:

- Raise awareness and promote our services within the community.
- Improve accessibility for all young people regardless of background or individual circumstances.
- Identify and address the barriers young people face in accessing our services.
- Give young people a voice to help us continue to develop the organisation and its services.
- Use any feedback to help us take positive action and maximise the impact we make on so many young people.



Impact:



- Getting young people to 'know us, before they need us' by promoting our services for young people, and professionals. We have also attended many community events, had articles in the Chronicle and Echo and have been featured on the radio.
- Networking with the many diverse communities within Northampton. Focusing on intersectionality to help identify barriers and gather feedback wherever we go.
- Developing and improving links and communication with local secondary schools, colleges and educational providers.
- Attending training sessions and conferences on Neurodiversity, health inequalities (young people and minority groups) and Equality and Diversity.
- Compiling all the learning, updates and achievements so far to create further actions to embed and support accessibility within The Lowdown.
- Improved communication about The Lowdown through websites, newsletters, apps, mental health hubs and social media.





Youth Groups

The weekly youth groups were launched in September 2023 and are run in collaboration with Free2Talk. This was in response to the real need for safe and inclusive spaces for young people to attend throughout the week.

- The groups are open to all and free to attend.
- They are a space to provide both youth work and wellbeing/therapeutic intervention if needed.
- They provide 12-week programmes that engage, inspire and empower young people to work collaboratively with workers to create youth-led sessions.
- They promote participation, positive interactions, relationship building, skill development and most importantly, allow young people to feel safe to be themselves and have fun.



476 contacts with
49 unique users

Attendance has steadily grown monthly with new young people attending every week.



Case Study:

One young person attended who is home-schooled - never leaving the house without their parent or best friend by their side.

They have attended regularly, using public transport, confidently attending on their own, engaging in all activities and recently sharing a presentation to the whole group. Their journey has been astonishing to witness.

The transition between services has also been something to be proud of, with the youth group acting as a platform to facilitate accessing further support depending on need.



Impact:

Termly evaluations see incredibly positive impact and outcomes, such as building trusted relationships, increased feelings of safety, improved self-confidence/esteem and sense of identity and belonging along with decreased isolation and social anxiety.

We have also seen improved community outcomes - changing the perception of young people, and building connections and relationships in their wider communities.

Young Adult Social

Young Adult Social Group is a weekly group for 18-25 year olds, to meet new people, connect, have fun and socialise.

The Young Adult Social Group opened at the beginning of this financial year and has slowly grown into a safe and welcoming space for young people to meet up and enjoy activities. Originally for 16 to 25 year olds, it was changed to 18 year olds upwards at the end of the financial year to ensure a fully adult space. The space has proved helpful in supporting young adults into other appropriate Lowdown services and offers a safe place for young people already in our services to build on their confidence and social skills.



197 contacts
providing support to
35 individual
service users



“I am really enjoying Social group, it has allowed me to feel

confident about going into social situations and not worry about being judged...”



Case Study:

A group member suffers from anxiety, and their neurodiversity can make friendships challenging. As one of the first users of the adult social they have built a trusting relationship with the staff so when they began to face some additional life challenges they reached out and were supported into counselling and the RE:Start service for additional support. Staff have supported them in building healthy relationships and their peers from the adult social have been a great support, bringing a smile at a difficult time.

LGBTQ+

Weekly ‘Out There’ youth groups offering a welcoming, fun, safe, inclusive space for LGBTQ+ young people to meet up, share experiences and offer and receive emotional and wellbeing support.

The groups are well attended with new people joining regularly, and in April 2024 we launched a new group in Towcester further expanding our support to South Northants. Our groups are now fully youth-led, always striving to empower our young people to take ownership, seeing a huge improvement in participation and engagement.



“I joined the Out There group when I was 13. At the time I was having some mental health problems and issues when it came to sexuality and my gender identity. The youth group has got me the bestest and the most supportive friends I’ve ever had. I have been going to the group for 3 years and it’s been the best 3 years of my life knowing I am supported by a community of people that are similar to me!”

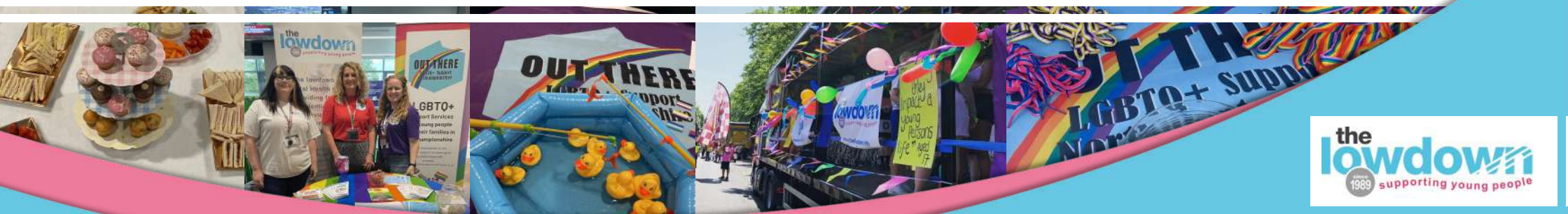


1555 contacts
with
179 unique
service users



Case Study:

A Plus member has gone from never talking in group, to hosting a Dungeons and Dragons night and regularly socialising with other members outside of group time - a huge success!



Out There Residential

What a trip! It is safe to say that the Out There residential of 2023 was a huge success! This year we went to Birmingham and the young people certainly had a good time and the leaders too.

Our Out There members are a diverse group of young people, all unique and with their own strengths and challenges. Many struggle with social anxiety, are neurodiverse and the majority have never been away from home and around groups of people with lots of noise and activity.

In the lead up to residential, we asked the young people what their goals and aspirations were and if there was anything they wanted to achieve whilst away.

The main objectives were to have fun, to feel safe, to be confident, and to socialise and have fun with friends, current and new. For some young people, it was simply just being on the trip and coping with separation anxiety and being away from home.

The feedback we had was brilliant, and we are proud to say that we achieved our goals.



“I really loved it and I feel I have grown closer to some of my friends, and as if my independence has grown since being on the residential, it really was amazing. I did have some anxiety,

but the leaders helped me to feel as comfortable as possible and I got through it!

Thank you so much Out There for the amazing opportunities and I can't wait for next year's residential!” – A young person



“I'm blown away and so happy they managed to do the whole trip. They are still on a high from it and wants to go back! They've been telling me all about it non-stop, lol.

Thanks so much. It's done their confidence the world of good. I'm so proud of them.” – A young person's parent



In addition, here's what some of the young people had to say about what they liked and achieved from their weekend away:

“Everyone being together and enjoying themselves!”

“Making friends and finding people with the same interests and humour.”

“Bonding further with the people around me.”

“Having fun and feeling safe with some great people.”

“A closer bond with people and my friends and gaining more independence.”

“Making a new friend.”

“Being more social.”

“Freedom.”



Happier Families

Happier Families has continued to work 1:1 with families providing tips and tools to improve wellbeing and overall happiness.

Our 6 week programme aims to support families with activity based sessions to learn tips, skills, and tools to boost the wellbeing of young people and their family.



Case Study:

Happier Families has enabled a young boy time to work on his confidence, recognise his strengths and reflect on his emotions.

Having learnt these skills, they have even gone on to benefit his relationship with his younger brother.



11 families
supported



“We have been given numerous skills and tools to improve our wellbeing.”

MindSpace

Our weekly MindSpace group for 11 to 18 year olds provides a safe space to explore emotional and personal wellbeing through various activities. From the activities to the lighting and music, we ensure the set-up creates a calm and welcoming space.

The group was launched in June 2023 with a 6-week programme with Word Guerilla on creative writing. With youth input, the wellbeing group was renamed MindSpace from Wellbeing Wednesday and a monthly timetable was developed to showcase activities including yoga, painting and making dreamcatchers. These changes have had a positive impact, giving a greater sense of ownership and engagement among the young people and also contributing to their overall mental wellbeing.



Case Study:

A 15 year old participant in the MindSpace group - expressed that the group provides them with a safe space where they enjoy the fun activities offered. Meeting peers outside of school who share similar feelings and experiences has been incredibly valuable for them, gaining a sense of belonging and understanding. This has significantly contributed to their overall wellbeing and happiness.



67 contacts
across the service



“Life changing...”
- Parent (of a 12 year old)



Wellbeing Café

The 'Espresso Yourself' Wellbeing Café provides young people and their families with a safe and confidential environment to talk about their feelings and life's challenges. If you're lucky, you may even get a visit from Harper our Therapy Dog!

We have worked hard this year to develop the resources available for young people in the café such as introducing Action for Happiness monthly wellbeing calendars and 10 Keys to Happier Living booklets.

We also introduced a menu of hot food and drinks to provide a welcoming space for everyone and this has significantly enhanced the overall experience and well-being of our visitors.



657 contacts (2023/24) including
49 parent/carer contacts
95% would recommend
this café to others



Case Study:

The Wellbeing Café has supported a young person facing lots of challenges in life.

When they have felt unheard and lost their key worker at school, the café has been the ideal place for them to build new trusting relationships and talk about how they are feeling.

Their parent has also been able to seek support weekly.



**"Every time I come out of the café,
I feel really positive and happy."**





Fundraising

Each year we have both new and returning supporters of The Lowdown and our services. Yet again we are blown away by the support we have had from our community who go that extra mile to help young people on their journey towards positive mental health, emotional health and wellbeing.

We were thrilled to be chosen as TJ Marketing's Charity of the Year for 2023. They held a Birthday Party Fundraiser for us in July, took part in the Amazing Northampton Run Relay Race and hosted monthly cheese events raising £804.

In 2024 we have also been chosen as Northampton Golf Club's and Rushden Golf Club's Charity of the Year. They are both already holding events and we look forward to their support over the remainder of 2024. We have also been chosen as Crick Software Ltd's charity for 2024. They are planning raffles, bake sales and auctioning a 'Duvet Day' to their employees.

We also continue to be supported by a new initiative called 'Breaking Silence' run by Lani Tebbut. It's a group of car enthusiasts supporting mental health via the world of automobiles and we have been chosen as the recipients of their fundraising. They meet once a month on a Friday at The Workbridge to showcase their automobiles, with the tag line - 'Check on your mates.' So far, they have raised £1,074.24. We are so pleased to be partnered with this new venture.

This year our very own counsellor, Adrian cycled up the Cols du Telegraph and Calibrier in the French Alps raising £2,052 for our services. This is a classic Tour de France route of 2100m of climbing over 30 km, up to 14% gradient - now that's steep! Adrian said:

 **"I'm raising money for The Lowdown as these are difficult times for all young people after the pandemic, cost of living crisis, war in Europe and climate emergency on top of the normal stresses of growing up. It's close to my heart because I know first-hand how difficult it is for teenagers to become adults, and how much counselling can help bring the calm and space needed."**

We have seen the return of fundraisers and donations from Cards Direct with their collection tins, Northampton School for Boys Charity Week, Northampton Partnership Homes, Northampton Rotary Groups for the Santa Run in December and Quaker Meeting House Northampton. We were supported again by GXO in Wellingborough raising an amazing £2,266.30 during their Pride Month Celebrations. We also received our 2nd year of funding from Michael Jones Jewellers to support Youth Activities in our Lowdown Lounge. We are so thankful for everyone's continued support; it means so much to be repeatedly chosen.

We were touched and honoured to be the charity supported by the family and friends in loving memory of Pat Markey, who sadly passed away. He was a dedicated teacher for over 30 years, and he knew that the wellbeing of young people is incredibly important. The overall total alongside a donation from the National Education Union, Northampton was £3,751.

We also had some 'Much Loved' donations. They will go towards our Out There Groups and be dedicated to providing activities to support young people in the LGBTQ+ Community.

We also give thanks to those who donate monthly, buy tickets for The Northampton Lottery, take part in easyfundraising purchases and support us at various events, fundraisers, and promotions.

Thank you to each and every one of our donors, fundraisers, funders and supporters who have contributed, you are amazing!

How Can You Support The Lowdown?

Your support and donations are vital so we can continue to provide our services for young people. Our work helps us to increase young people's resilience and equip them with the tools to help them cope with future challenges in their life.

There are lots of ways you can support us:

- Set up a monthly donation
- Make a one off donation
- Organise a fundraising event or activity
- Donate via JustGiving, easyfundraising or play The Northampton Lottery



**SCAN
ME!** >>



Or scan this QR
code to instantly
donate



DONATE



Who's Who

Everyone who has worked or volunteered for The Lowdown between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024.

The Lowdown would not be what it is without our amazing team. They constantly help us to adapt to fulfil every opportunity we get to support young people.

Staff

CEO: Sharon Womersley

Office Manager: Lisa Braithwaite

Fundraising & Marketing Manager: Ellie White

Clinical Manager: Rachel Welsh

Business Manager: Laura Simms

Support Services Manager: Helen Heng

Shift Manager: Chelsea Buswell, Becky Truman, Ryan Parkinson, Steph Gardener and Meghan Wright

Administrator: Maxine Eborall and Alison Inglese

Wellbeing Coordinator: Chelsea Buswell
(finished October 2023)

Participation and Wellbeing Coordinator: Rebecca Kings
(started November 2023)

Youth Services Coordinator: Kelly Emmanuel

LGBTQ Coordinator: Kelly Emmanuel

Out There Youth Leaders: Julie Holt, Ash Harrison, Ioana-Camelia Martin and Sophie Turner

Suicide Bereavement Support Worker: Anna Tutt
(finished May 2023)

RE:Start Support Workers: Carol Jeyes, Sophie Goode, Kirsty Bees, Julie Holt, Rebecca Kings, Laura Farmer and Rebecca Townson

Trustees

Stephen Edmonds (Chair), Andrea Martin (Vice Chair), Jonathan Smith (Treasurer), Brendan Dunphy, Dr Martin Clarke, Georgina Bayliss, Dr Mike Scanlan, Matt Toresen MBE, Dr Deborah Patton and Andre Gore

Volunteer Counsellors

Adrian Shaw, Anna Tutt, Becca Ibbs, Charlotte White, Gemma Ainge, Geraldine Ward, Hitomi Palmer, Jenny Gee, Katie Redding, Laura Kaye, Leanne Allsop, Natalie Morrison, Rachael Moss, Rebecca Wheeler, Steph Clayson and Toni Allard

Paid Counsellors

Adrian Shaw, Anna Tutt, Rebecca Ibbs, Becky Truman, Carol Jeyes, Charlotte White, Chelsea Buswell, Daniel Kwayke, Da-Sheena Fulford, Gemma Ainge, Geraldine Hardcastle, Helen Heng, Hitomi Palmer, James Young, Jenny Gee, Katie Redding, Kanan Robinson, Kelly Lane, Kenny Pang, Kirsty Roberts, Kristyana Jimdar, Laura Farmer, Laura Kaye, Leanne Allsop, Matthew Price, Meghan Wright, Natalie Morrison, Rachel Welsh, Rachael Moss, Rebecca Wheeler, Rosse-Marie Golaub, Ryan Parkinson, Sophie Goode, Steph Gardner, Toni Allard and Toniiae Smith

Placement Counsellors

Helen Shouler, Callum Crawford-McKellar, Roliste Jerman, Emma Roddis, Colette Rose, Nyasha Nyamariwata and Sophie Goode

Wellbeing Workers including Espresso Yourself Café

Emma Roddis, Niamh Roe, Karoline Bardin-Bryant, Lisa Greenough, Hazel Scott, Kelly Lane, Kristyana Jimdar, Emma Miller, Laura Farmer, Donna Shrubbs, Chelsea Buswell, Anna Tutt, Chelsea-Luca Glazebrook, Jennah West, Summer Rowe and Rebecca Kings



School Outreach Counsellors and Workers

Carol Jeyes, Gemma Ainge, Meghan Wright, Jess Hudson, Kirsty Bees, Matthew Price, Caroline Parnell, Geraldine Ward, Kelly Lane and Katie Redding

Youth Groups – Mental Health Workers

Kirsty Robers and James Young

LGBTQ+ Groups Volunteers

Callum Crawford-McKellar and Maxine Eborall

Clinical Supervisors

Matthew Price, Daniel Kwakye, Alison Souster, Clare Marshall, Kate Williams and Rebecca Vivash

Other Volunteers

Marie Wallace, Jan Jourard, Georgia Mullen and Youth Advisory Board Members



Acknowledgements and Thanks

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported The Lowdown during 2023 and 2024.

There are so many individuals, organisations, businesses, and schools who have helped us to ensure we can provide our vital services to young people. We feel very honoured to be recognised by so many in our community.

- **Beckett's and Sargeant's Educational Foundation**
- NHS – ICB and NHFT
- **Public Health Northamptonshire**
- Youth Investment Fund
- **St Andrew's Healthcare**
- West Northamptonshire Council
- **Northampton Town Council**
- Jane Dollar
- **Our Reach Partners – Youth Works, Time2Talk, Chat and Service Six**
- Dunphy Associates
- **Cards Direct**
- Guilsborough Academy
- **Abbeyfield School**
- Malcolm Arnold Academy
- **Northampton School for Girls**
- Northampton School for Boys
- **Earl Spencer Primary School**
- The Duston School
- **Pitsford School**
- Camelot – Match Funding
- **The University of Northampton**
- Free2Talk
- The Bridge
- **Northamptonshire Community Foundation**
- Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire
- **Northampton Chronicle and Echo**
- Surefire Creative (and Santander)
- **Ashby Computers**
- Gateway HR
- **BBC Radio Northampton**
- Nlive Radio
- **Northampton Partnership Homes**
- Northampton Lottery
- **Rotary Clubs of Northamptonshire**
- Rotary Club of Northampton Becket
- **Faraway Children's Charity**
- The Wilson Foundation
- **The Laing Family Trust**
- Northampton Golf Club
- **Rushden Golf Club**
- Postcode Places Trust
- **Northamptonshire Police**
- Northamptonshire Sport
- **Metro Bank**
- Department of Work and Pensions
- **GXO Logistics – Wellingborough**
- Hewitsons
- **Jogo Behaviour Support**
- **Michael Jones Jewellers**
- Bosworth Independent College
- **Northampton Partnership Homes**
- Scott Bader
- **St James Place**
- Northampton Quakers
- **The Access Group**
- T J Marketing
- **National Youth Agency**
- National Lottery Community Foundation
- **Social Investment Business**
- Mental Health Northants Collaboration (MHNC)
- **Department for Culture, Media and Sport**
- The Key Fund
- **Fusion21**
- Elaine Barratt Trust
- **Mercedes AMG**
- Kier Marriott
- **Northampton Lottery**
- Faraway Children's Charity
- **National Education Union – Northamptonshire**
- Breathe HR



Report of the Trustees

Public Benefit

The Trustees have taken due regard of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

The Lowdown is a Mental Health charity, providing free and confidential support services for 11-25 year olds and their families in Northamptonshire. We provide a caring environment where young people are always supported in their journey towards positive emotional health and wellbeing regardless of their socio-economic circumstances, ethnicity, gender, religion, ability, sexuality, or perceived disadvantage.

We aim to help children and young people feel valued and supported so that they can live safe, happy, and healthy lives, be part of and enjoy family and community life and achieve their full potential. The services we provide along with our varied outreach services, not only benefit young people directly, but also the wider community.

The Lowdown provides student placements for counselling and other trainees in order to develop the workforce of the future to support the escalation in demand for mental health services for children and young people.

Our anonymous service user questionnaires, regular internal reviews, and feedback from the organisations that use The Lowdown enable us to keep abreast of any gaps in youth service provision and we continually develop our services in order to fill them. Young people are involved when introducing new services to ensure that they meet young people's needs.

Structure, Governance, and Management

The Lowdown is a charity governed by its constitution. The trustees are responsible for the strategic direction of The Lowdown, meeting quarterly or more frequently to review the performance of the organisation. We have a Services Committee, chaired by a mental health practitioner to review the delivery of the Lowdown Services and a Finance and Operations Committee chaired by our Treasurer to review our financial and operational performance. These then independently feed back to the Board of Trustees if there are any concerns. The CEO is responsible for the day-to-day management of the organisation and is in regular contact with the Chair of Trustees/Trustees to report progress. The Lowdown became a CIO from the 1st of April 2022 due to the growth of the organisation.

Appointment of Trustees

New trustees are recruited for particular expertise and knowledge. The Lowdown adheres to a policy of equal opportunities in the advertisement, selection, recruitment, and training of its trustees, and within all aspects of its service delivery.

Applicants are interviewed by the trustees and CEO, who then reach a decision as to the suitability of the candidate.

Successful candidates are inducted and appointed subject to a satisfactory DBS check and fulfilment of a three-month probationary period. At the next annual general meeting, they are officially elected, and trustees are subject to re-election at our AGM as per our constitution. In accordance with good practice, governance is regularly reviewed.



REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: CE027753 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1197273

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024
FOR



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Notes to the Financial Statements	11 to 21
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities	22 to 23

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

STRATEGIC REPORT

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (the CIO) governed according to the new and more flexible Constitution dated 22 December 2021. It was established to take forward the work of the unincorporated charity with registered charity number 801886.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number

CE027753 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number

1197273

Registered office

3 Kingswell Street
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN1 1PP

Trustees

S Edmonds
G Bayliss
M Toresen (resigned 12/6/23)
J Smith
A Martin
M Clarke (resigned 11/10/23)
D Patton
M Scanlan
B Dunphy
A Gore (appointed 12/6/23)

Auditors

Shaw Gibbs (Audit) Limited, Statutory Auditor
Eagle House
28 Billing Road
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN1 5AJ

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024****STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales, the Charities Act 2011, Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

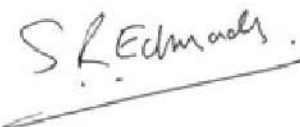
AUDITORS

The auditors, Shaw Gibbs (Audit) Limited, Statutory Auditor, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Report of the trustees, incorporating a strategic report, approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 13 September 2024 and signed on the board's behalf by:



.....
J Smith - Trustee



.....
S Edmonds - Trustee

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Lowdown (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Statement of Financial Position and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or

- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements which give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditors under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the financial statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be the override of controls by management and the understatement of revenue. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, sample testing on the posting of journals, reviewing meeting minutes, regulatory correspondence and professional fees, detailed substantive testing on the completeness of income, and reviewing accounting estimates for biases. We will also review the regulatory correspondence with the Charity Commission.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

These inherent limitations are particularly significant in the case of misstatement resulting from fraud as this may involve sophisticated schemes designed to avoid detection, including deliberate failure to record transactions, collusion or the provision of intentional misrepresentations.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Shaw Gibbs (Audit) Limited

Shaw Gibbs (Audit) Limited, Statutory Auditor
Eligible to act as an auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006
Eagle House
28 Billing Road
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN1 5AJ

Date: 13 September 2024

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	27,384	308,087	335,471	255,786
Charitable activities					
Charitable Activities	4	862,422	193,952	1,056,374	831,036
Investment income	3	<u>7,215</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,215</u>	<u>-</u>
Total		<u>897,021</u>	<u>502,039</u>	<u>1,399,060</u>	<u>1,086,822</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities					
Charitable Activities	5	<u>792,221</u>	<u>207,591</u>	<u>999,812</u>	<u>877,986</u>
NET INCOME		104,800	294,448	399,248	208,836
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>412,131</u>	<u>230,195</u>	<u>642,326</u>	<u>433,490</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>516,931</u></u>	<u><u>524,643</u></u>	<u><u>1,041,574</u></u>	<u><u>642,326</u></u>

CONTINUING OPERATIONS

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	2023 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	11	40,417	417,785	458,202	278,236
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	12	60,284	-	60,284	69,151
Cash at bank		<u>674,083</u>	<u>106,858</u>	<u>780,941</u>	<u>600,853</u>
		734,367	106,858	841,225	670,004
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	13	(257,853)	-	(257,853)	(305,914)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>476,514</u>	<u>106,858</u>	<u>583,372</u>	<u>364,090</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>516,931</u>	<u>524,643</u>	<u>1,041,574</u>	<u>642,326</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>516,931</u>	<u>524,643</u>	<u>1,041,574</u>	<u>642,326</u>
FUNDS	15				
Unrestricted funds				516,931	412,131
Restricted funds				<u>524,643</u>	<u>230,195</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>1,041,574</u>	<u>642,326</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The members have not deposited notice, pursuant to Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006 requiring an audit of these financial statements.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

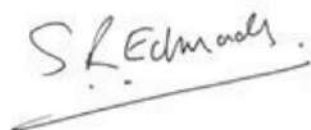
- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 13 September 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:

The notes form part of these financial statements



.....
J Smith - Trustee



.....
S Edmonds - Trustee

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	<u>370,433</u>	<u>(123,885)</u>
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		<u>370,433</u>	<u>(123,885)</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(197,560)	(255,418)
Interest received		<u>7,215</u>	<u>-</u>
Net cash used in investing activities		<u>(190,345)</u>	<u>(255,418)</u>
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		180,088	(379,303)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		<u>600,853</u>	<u>980,156</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		<u><u>780,941</u></u>	<u><u>600,853</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2024 £	2023 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	399,248	208,836
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	17,594	9,649
Interest received	(7,215)	-
Decrease in debtors	8,867	104,022
Decrease in creditors	<u>(48,061)</u>	<u>(446,392)</u>
Net cash provided by/(used in) operations	<u>370,433</u>	<u>(123,885)</u>

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1/4/23 £	Cash flow £	At 31/3/24 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank	<u>600,853</u>	<u>180,088</u>	<u>780,941</u>
	<u>600,853</u>	<u>180,088</u>	<u>780,941</u>
Total	<u>600,853</u>	<u>180,088</u>	<u>780,941</u>

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

No material uncertainties exist in relation to going concern.

The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£).

Charity Status

The Lowdown is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Charity became a CIO on 1 April 2022.

Registered address listed in the annual report, managed and controlled by the Management Committee/Trustees named in the annual report.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the company accounting policies. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the financial statements are disclosed within the individual accounting policies below

Income

Voluntary income, including donations, legacies and grants that provide core funding or are of a general nature are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability. Investment income is brought into account on a receivable basis and dividend income on a received basis. Income from charitable activities includes income received under contract or where entitlement to grant funding is subject to specific performance conditions is recognised as earned. Grant income in this category provides funding to support performance activities and is recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Intangible income

Intangible income, in the form of donated facilities and voluntary help etc., is not included in the financial statements since it is not considered practicable to quantify such income.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred.

Cost of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income.

Charitable activities include expenditure associated with direct services and membership support.

Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Improvements to property	- 10% on cost and over the remaining term of the lease
Fixtures and fittings	- 33% on cost
Computer and Office Equipment	- 50% on cost and 33% on cost

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Where parts of an item of property, plant and equipment have different useful lives, they are accounted for as separate items of property, plant and equipment.

Depreciation methods, useful lives and residual values are reviewed at each balance sheet date. The selection of these residual values and estimated lives requires the exercise of judgement. The directors are required to assess whether there is an indication of impairment to the carrying value of assets. In making that assessment, judgements are made in estimating value in use. The directors consider that the individual carrying values of assets are supportable by their value in use.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Reserves

The current reserve policy is to maintain sufficient cash flow for known commitments, and the replacement of certain assets. Grants are received at various times during the year. The required reserves are calculated based on 12 months operating costs plus 4 months direct costs.

Risk

The trustees do not believe it is subject to any substantial risk beyond the liabilities disclosed in its Annual Report and Accounts.

The organisation has public, employer insurance to protect the Charity in the case of a claim.

Financial Instruments Policy

Cash and cash equivalents in the balance sheet comprise cash at banks and in hand and short term deposits with an original maturity date of three months or less.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued**Reserves**

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in the statement of comprehensive income under administrative expenses.

Financial liabilities and equity instruments are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the entity after deducting all of its financial liabilities.

Where the contractual obligations of financial instruments (including share capital) are equivalent to a similar debt instrument, those financial instruments are classed as financial liabilities. Financial liabilities are presented as such in the balance sheet. Finance costs and gains or losses relating to financial liabilities are included in the profit and loss account. Finance costs are calculated so as to produce a constant rate of return on the outstanding liability.

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Donations	32,365	90,786
Grants	<u>303,106</u>	<u>165,000</u>
	<u>335,471</u>	<u>255,786</u>

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
NHFT - Espresso Yourself Cafe	-	5,000
Youth Investment Fund	301,546	-
Beckett's & Sargeants	-	40,000
The Beatrice Laing Trust	-	120,000
NCF	<u>1,560</u>	-
	<u>303,106</u>	<u>165,000</u>

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2024 £	2023 £
Deposit account interest	<u>7,215</u>	<u>-</u>

4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2024 Charitable Activities £	2023 Total activities £
Grants & Contract Services	999,829	782,960
Outreach Services	52,378	46,191
Other income	<u>4,167</u>	<u>1,885</u>
	<u>1,056,374</u>	<u>831,036</u>

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
LGBTQ	33,700	22,000
VCSE - Happier Families	19,950	25,975
NHFT - Espresso Yourself Cafe	61,160	68,840
NHS Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board	657,967	595,466
Aspire Higher	-	270
Thomas Brington	-	1,800
Constance Travis	8,300	1,500
National Lottery	20,250	9,990
Queen's Institute	5,000	4,995
Youth Investment Fund	160,252	249
Northampton Town Council	10,000	15,000
St James's Place Foundation	-	9,990
Goodwill Solutions	-	9,900
Faraway Children's Charity	-	2,000
West Northamptonshire Council	13,250	14,985
Scott Bader	5,000	-
The Access Foundation	<u>5,000</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>999,829</u>	<u>782,960</u>

5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Support costs (see note 6) £	Totals £
Charitable Activities	<u>982,516</u>	<u>17,296</u>	<u>999,812</u>

6. SUPPORT COSTS

	Finance £	Governance costs £	Totals £
Charitable Activities	<u>1,426</u>	<u>15,870</u>	<u>17,296</u>

7. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2024 £	2023 £
Auditors' remuneration	6,260	5,700
Auditors' remuneration for non audit work	3,740	1,500
Depreciation - owned assets	<u>17,594</u>	<u>9,649</u>

8. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2024 nor for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2024 nor for the year ended 31 March 2023.

9. STAFF COSTS

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	702,037	579,275
Social security costs	51,781	41,190
Other pension costs	<u>13,616</u>	<u>10,846</u>
	<u>767,434</u>	<u>631,311</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2024	2023
Staff	<u>46</u>	<u>35</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

9. STAFF COSTS - continued

Key Management Remuneration in the year was £64,539 (2023: £59,606).

10. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	81,944	173,842	255,786
Charitable activities			
Charitable Activities	807,036	24,000	831,036
Total	<u>888,980</u>	<u>197,842</u>	<u>1,086,822</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Charitable Activities	824,695	53,291	877,986
NET INCOME	64,285	144,551	208,836
Transfers between funds	(419)	419	-
Net movement in funds	63,866	144,970	208,836
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	348,265	85,225	433,490
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>412,131</u>	<u>230,195</u>	<u>642,326</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024
11. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Assets under construction £	Improvements to property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer and Office Equipment £	Totals £
COST					
At 1 April 2023	-	285,759	4,296	13,311	303,366
Additions	<u>197,560</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>197,560</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>197,560</u>	<u>285,759</u>	<u>4,296</u>	<u>13,311</u>	<u>500,926</u>
DEPRECIATION					
At 1 April 2023	-	10,608	4,296	10,226	25,130
Charge for year	<u>-</u>	<u>15,068</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,526</u>	<u>17,594</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>-</u>	<u>25,676</u>	<u>4,296</u>	<u>12,752</u>	<u>42,724</u>
NET BOOK VALUE					
At 31 March 2024	<u>197,560</u>	<u>260,083</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>559</u>	<u>458,202</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>-</u>	<u>275,151</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,085</u>	<u>278,236</u>

12. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	17,208	-
Other debtors	-	216
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>43,076</u>	<u>68,935</u>
	<u>60,284</u>	<u>69,151</u>

13. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	12,484	46,832
Social security and other taxes	-	13,158
Other creditors	132,400	133,784
Deferred Income	93,839	91,876
Accrued expenses	<u>19,130</u>	<u>20,264</u>
	<u>257,853</u>	<u>305,914</u>

Deferred Income Reconciliation:

	2024 £	2023 £
Balance brought forward	(91,876)	(409,441)
Amount released to the Statement of Financial Activities	91,876	409,441
Amount Deferred in the year	<u>(93,839)</u>	<u>(91,876)</u>
Balance carried forward	<u>(93,839)</u>	<u>(91,876)</u>

13. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR - continued

Deferred income relates to amounts receivable for the provision of services that have been invoiced in financial year ending 31 March 2024, where performance conditions will not be met until future accounting periods.

14. LEASING AGREEMENTS

Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Within one year	5,400	10,450
Between one and five years	-	6,300
	<u>5,400</u>	<u>16,750</u>

15. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	412,131	104,800	516,931
Restricted funds			
LGBTQ	-	2,872	2,872
Children in Need Youth Investment Fund Grant	7,656	(1,024)	6,632
Outbuilding	214,539	(7,946)	206,593
Leasehold Improvements - Kitchen	8,000	(1,000)	7,000
Leasehold improvements - 2 Storey Extension	-	301,546	301,546
	<u>230,195</u>	<u>294,448</u>	<u>524,643</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>642,326</u>	<u>399,248</u>	<u>1,041,574</u>

15. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	897,021	(792,221)	104,800
Restricted funds			
LGBTQ	40,242	(37,370)	2,872
Children in Need Youth Investment Fund Grant	-	(1,024)	(1,024)
Outbuilding	-	(7,946)	(7,946)
Leasehold Improvements - Kitchen	-	(1,000)	(1,000)
Leasehold improvements - 2 Storey Extension	301,546	-	301,546
Youth Investment Fund - Revenue Funding	<u>160,251</u>	<u>(160,251)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>502,039</u>	<u>(207,591)</u>	<u>294,448</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>1,399,060</u></u>	<u><u>(999,812)</u></u>	<u><u>399,248</u></u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/22 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31/3/23 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	347,455	65,095	(419)	412,131
NVCT Right Resolution	<u>810</u>	<u>(810)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	348,265	64,285	(419)	412,131
Restricted funds				
LGBTQ	13,544	(13,544)	-	-
Scott Bader Commonwealth	4,000	(4,000)	-	-
Children in Need Youth Investment Fund Grant	8,681	(1,025)	-	7,656
Outbuilding	50,000	164,120	419	214,539
Leasehold Improvements - Kitchen	<u>9,000</u>	<u>(1,000)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,000</u>
	<u>85,225</u>	<u>144,551</u>	<u>419</u>	<u>230,195</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>433,490</u></u>	<u><u>208,836</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>642,326</u></u>

15. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	888,980	(823,885)	65,095
NVCT Right Resolution	-	(810)	(810)
	888,980	(824,695)	64,285
Restricted funds			
LGBTQ	26,682	(40,226)	(13,544)
Scott Bader Commonwealth	-	(4,000)	(4,000)
Children in Need Youth Investment Fund Grant	-	(1,025)	(1,025)
Outbuilding	169,160	(5,040)	164,120
Leasehold Improvements - Kitchen	-	(1,000)	(1,000)
Faraway Children's Charity	2,000	(2,000)	-
	197,842	(53,291)	144,551
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,086,822</u>	<u>(877,986)</u>	<u>208,836</u>

General reserve - to maintain sufficient cash flow due to time differences of grants received and expenditure paid

NVCT Right Resolution - is for a Counselling Contract.

Leasehold Improvements - Funding to renovate and improve the kitchen facilities and create a staff area within the property, in which the charity operates. The balance on this fund represents the Net Book Value of the assets, are being depreciated over 10 years.

LGBTQ - Funding for youth services to support young people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual, transgender or questioning.

Scott Bader Commonwealth - Donation towards Sexual Health Service that we have not been able to deliver due to COVID

Children In Need Youth Futures Funding - Building, IT and Service improvements. The balance on this fund represents the Net Book Value of the assets being depreciated over 10 years.

Outbuilding - Funding for the building of the Outbuilding at the Kingswell Street Property.

Leasehold Improvements - 2 Storey Extension - The building of the 2 storey extension to the Kingswell Street leased property.

Youth Investment Fund - Revenue Fund - Funding for Wellbeing and Youth Services to support young people.

16. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

Donations received from trustees in the year totalled £330 (2023: £360).

There were no other related party transactions for either the current or prior year.

**DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	2024 £	2023 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	32,365	90,786
Grants	<u>303,106</u>	<u>165,000</u>
	335,471	255,786
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	7,215	-
Charitable activities		
Grants & Contract Services	999,829	782,960
Outreach Services	52,378	46,191
Other income	<u>4,167</u>	<u>1,885</u>
	<u>1,056,374</u>	<u>831,036</u>
Total incoming resources	1,399,060	1,086,822
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Wages	702,037	579,275
Social security	51,781	41,190
Pensions	13,616	10,846
Rent, Rates and water	25,180	7,642
Insurance	9,372	7,254
Light and heat	10,075	11,529
Telephone	6,032	6,569
Postage and stationery	4,429	3,956
Advertising	5,697	5,855
Sundries	6,305	9,036
Staff Training	9,707	10,926
Supervision Expenses	28,284	23,328
Property Repairs & Maintenance	13,448	64,189
Subscriptions and Affiliations	1,664	1,199
IT Equipment	19,507	24,676
Cleaning	20,067	20,239
Volunteers Expenses	245	388
LGBTQ	11,906	11,593
Espresso Yourself Café	3,281	1,333
Fundraising - Specific	35	180
Travel Expenses	2,333	2,225
Carried forward	945,001	843,428

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

**DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	2024 £	2023 £
Charitable activities		
Brought forward	945,001	843,428
Youth expenses	19,921	-
Improvements to property - depreciation	15,068	7,122
Computer equipment - depreciation	<u>2,526</u>	<u>2,527</u>
	982,516	853,077
Support costs		
Finance		
Bank charges	1,426	715
Governance costs		
Auditors' remuneration	6,260	5,700
Auditors' remuneration for non audit work	3,740	1,500
Accountancy and legal fees	<u>5,870</u>	<u>16,994</u>
	<u>15,870</u>	<u>24,194</u>
Total resources expended	<u>999,812</u>	<u>877,986</u>
Net income	<u>399,248</u>	<u>208,836</u>

Treasurers Report and Financial Review

The Financial Statements reflect a very successful year despite the logistical difficulties of operating from three different sites for part of the period. Thanks to the huge efforts of the team, service levels continue to be maintained while workload and funding continues to increase. As a result, The Lowdown is strengthening and consolidating its position to provide resilience and flexibility for the future.

As shown in The Statement of Financial Position, the Total Funds have improved considerably over the course of the year with Total Funds held at 31st March 2024 standing at £1,041,574 compared to the balance at 31st March 2023 of £642,326. This represents an increase in funds retained during the year of £399,248. Within the Total Funds figure are restricted funds of £524,643, the bulk of which relates to the extension and outbuilding at Kingswell Street.

The bank balance has increased from £600,853 at 31st March 2023 to £780,941 at 31st March 2024. £114,078, of this was Youth Investment Fund Grant disbursement for the ongoing extension and refurbishment of our 3 Kingswell Street premises. Reach reserves of £118,160 were also held at year end and were subsequently distributed between all Reach Partners for 24/25 funding.

In an effort to maximise the return on cash reserves and spread risk during the year we opened a Flagstone Cash Deposit Platform account.

Major capital works commenced at the Kingswell Street in January 24. The cost of this is being capitalised and is shown as Assets Under Construction in Tangible Fixed Assets Note 11 to the Financial Statements. Construction was ongoing at 31st March 2024 and the additions figure shown of £197,560 represents the value of certified works at that date.

Income from charitable activities has again grown during the year due to the sustained focus on funding and has increased by £225,338, mainly attributed to the Youth Investment Fund and additional RE:Start funding.

Donations decreased by £58,421 compared to the previous financial year. A more detailed summary of income streams can be found in Notes 2 & 3 to the Financial Statements. The net effect of this is that Total Income has increased during the year by £312,238 (29%).

Staff salaries of £767,434 increased as expected during the year due to the expansion of Lowdown services and amounted to 77% of total expenditure. This represents an increase of 22% over the previous year, due to increased staffing levels and pay reviews.

Overheads have been carefully monitored during the year and significant expense increases are related to operating from additional premises in St.Giles Street and the Innovation Centre.

The Trustees of the Lowdown would like to thank the Beckett's and Sargeant's Educational Foundation for the generous provision of the premises in Kingswell Street and permission to extensively extend and refurbish the building on their land. Thanks also to all the organisations and individuals who have made donations, given their time or supported the Lowdown in any other way.



How to get in touch with us:



Call us: 01604 634385

Monday to Friday: 9am - 5pm

Saturday: 9am-4pm



Email us:

General Enquiries:

info@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk

Fundraising, Events and Business Partnership:

elliwhite@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk

Wellbeing Services:

wellbeingservices@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk

LGBTQ+ Support Enquiries:

lgbtqsupport@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk

RE:Start Enquiries:

helenheng@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk

Youth Groups Enquiries:

youthgroups@thelowdownnorthampton.co.uk



How to find us:

The Lowdown, 3 Kingswell Street (off Gold Street),
Northampton NN1 1PP



Follow us on Social Media



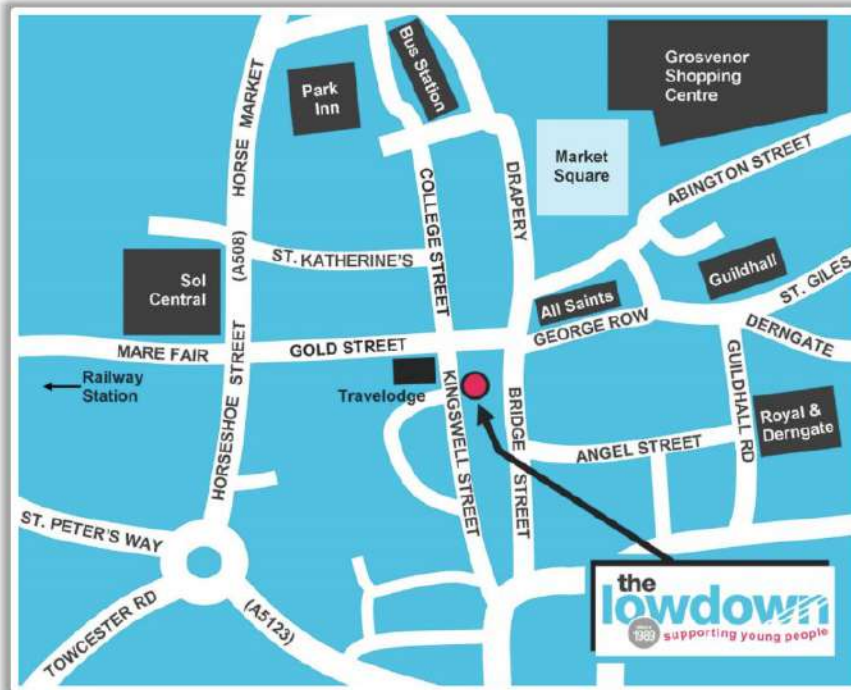
[thelowdown1989](https://www.facebook.com/thelowdown1989)



[thelowdownnn1](https://www.instagram.com/thelowdownnn1)



[The Lowdown](https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-lowdown)



- We are 2 mins from the North Gate Bus Station.
- If coming from Gold Street, turn at the Travelodge.
- Find the Red Door and ring the buzzer when you arrive

**For information on all our services or to
make a referral, visit our website...**

www.thelowdown.info

THE LOWDOWN

England & Wales - Charity number 1197273

Accounts



the
lowdown
since 1989 supporting young people

Trustees' Annual Report

2023

2022

Reference and Administration



Registered Charity number:

1197273

Registered Company number:

CE027753 (England and Wales)

Address:

3 Kingswell Street (off Gold Street),
Northampton, NN1 1PP

Honorary Presidents:

Jan Jourard
Dr John Toby

Current Trustees:

Chair – Stephen Edmonds
Vice Chair – Andrea Martin
Treasurer – Jonathan Smith
Brendan Dunphy
Georgina Bayliss
Dr Mike Scanlan
Dr Martin Clarke
Matt Toresen MBE
Dr Deborah Patton

Bankers:

Metro Bank Northampton

Auditors:

DNG Dove Naish LLP



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Chair's Report

The number of young people supported has increased by 15%.

“Thank you to the outstanding lowdown team - every one of them is special.”

The last year has seen relentless levels of demand for our services to which we have done our very best to respond and, as Sharon mentions in her CEO report, the number of support contacts over that period has increased by an astounding **36%**.

As I flagged in my introduction last year, the concerning trend is not just of sheer numbers but also the increasing complexity of issues that young people are presenting with and, regrettably, it continues unabated.

Whilst our counselling service remains the backbone of what we do, we have continued to develop additional flexible and wrap around services that can help young people who could not otherwise find this support elsewhere or where “one size doesn’t fit all”. A shining example of this is the RE:Start service, which is carrying out hugely valuable work.

Keeping pace with this relentless growth over recent years, together with the need to maintain the highest clinical standards has required considerable effort in the areas of resource management, organisational change and governance with the Leadership Team, our systems, data, finances, and board now being unrecognisable from only a few years ago.

The greatest continuing practical challenge continues to be that of available space and this has inevitably occupied a great deal of time and effort but, I am delighted to say that through the immense generosity of our donors, some astute planning, tenacity and good fortune we have been able to take additional space in nearby St Giles Street, develop and open the amazing Lowdown Lounge in our courtyard and, most excitingly, now plan for a major fully funded two-storey extension to our beloved historic building as well as making some very useful internal improvements.

As I touched on last year, the lowdown has transitioned from an organisation which, because of the nature of its funding, essentially could only plan a year at a time to a position where we can at last develop strategy and plan for the medium term.

As I move on to thanks, I feel that I am repeating my message from previous years but that makes it no less heartfelt. The Lowdown Lounge was many years in its gestation and at times we thought it would never happen, but it is now a wonderful addition. The Youth Investment Fund grant has turned our plan for a two-storey extension from a pipe dream into reality.

So, I need to express huge thanks and appreciation as ever to our long-term landlords Beckett’s and Sargeant’s, all of our most generous funders, fundraisers and supporters and our outstanding lowdown team – every one of them is special.

Steve Edmonds
Chair of Trustees





CEO Report

What an amazing year for the lowdown!

97% of young people had a positive outcome from using our services.

The lowdown is going from strength to strength. In this financial year we supported **2,365** young people through **16,452** support contacts which represents a **36%** increase through all the services we deliver. Most importantly, **97%** of young people found they had a positive outcome from using our services. Our impact will continue to grow as demand for our services continues to increase.

To deliver this growth we have had to make changes to our infrastructure to manage this as the lowdown building is at full capacity; with our counselling and wellbeing services alone.

At the start of this financial year, we launched the new RE:Start service, along with our Reach partner Youth Works. This service provides practical support for young people transitioning from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to Adult Mental Health Services.

This also has been a huge success and we have supported **79** young people with a wide range of support needs, from securing housing; to helping build their confidence and self-esteem. This service is already expanding to support more young people and more space was needed.

So, we leased a new property in St Giles Street; in Northampton so that the Support Services team, which includes RE:Start, Youth Services, our Support after Suicide Service, and staff team could have space both for themselves and their clients. This was a massive task as at the same time we were finalising the building of our **Lowdown Lounge**, the outbuilding in the lowdown garden which has been transformed from a “shed” to a brilliant modern space for young people. It was named the Lowdown Lounge by one of our services users.

We have also started the refurbishment of the main building with the main highlight being the conversion of a stationary cupboard into a seating area for our staff to have lunch in our newly refurbished kitchen. We are maximising every bit of space we have.

From there we move onto another extremely exciting new activity which is the development of our Youth Advisory Board (YAB). They will help us develop the lowdown to ensure it meets the needs of the young people we are supporting. We have so far recruited **20** young people to make up the board and we look forward to working with them and listening to their input over the coming year as once again there are going to be considerable changes.

In August 2022 we applied to the Youth Investment Fund for funding towards a two-storey side extension, finalising the refurbishment of the main building and developing new services.

On the 27th March 2023 it was finally publicly announced that our application had been successful! With nearly £1.3 million of funding over 3 years, **we feel like we have won the lottery!** The changes to the building will help us manage the increased demand for all our services and improve accessibility.

As we finished the financial year, we were waiting for planning permission – as we are in a listed building this process has taken longer than expected – but it was finally granted on the 3rd May 2023. Building of the extension will hopefully start in Autumn 2023 and be completed by Summer 2024.

This funding also enables us to develop new services, such as weekly youth and wellbeing groups. The Youth Advisory Board (YAB) will be instrumental in supporting the development of these new services.

These new services mean we can continue to develop wrap around support for the young people we serve. There are details of all our current services and their impact later in this report.

None of this would happen without the amazing lowdown team (including our staff, volunteers, trustees, and counselling student placements) who continue to deliver quality services for the young people of Northamptonshire. I cannot thank them enough; they are **THE BEST**.

Our supporters, donors, funders, and Reach partners have also helped to make all this possible and we really appreciate their support.

Young people remain at the heart of everything we do, and we will continue to strive to expand and improve our services to give young people the vital support they so need.

Sharon Womersley
CEO



Mission and Aims



Who we are

A Mental Health Charity, providing free and confidential support services for 11-25 year olds in Northamptonshire.

Our Mission

To offer a caring environment where young people are always supported on their journey towards positive emotional health and wellbeing.

Our Vision

No young person should experience mental health issues alone.

Our Purpose and Values

Accessible to all, welcoming, non-judgemental, safe, responsive, and adaptable.

Theory of Change

Young people have free and timely access to evidence-based early intervention services that improve their mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience.

The lowdown changes lives and sometimes saves them!

Objectives

The lowdown is a Mental Health Charity, providing free and confidential support services for 11-25 year olds in Northamptonshire.

Our services include counselling, wellbeing, LGBTQ+ support, practical support, and sexual health services. We believe there is no need for young people to experience difficult situations alone – we are here to support them.

The lowdown offers a caring environment where young people are always supported on their journey towards positive emotional health and wellbeing. The service is easy to access, as young people can either self-refer or be referred by professionals such as CAMHS, schools or their GP.

The lowdown services include:

- Our free and confidential counselling support service for 11-25 year olds. Counselling support is person-centred, with aspects of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and solution focused therapy. We offer on average between six and eight sessions, either face-to-face or remotely via telephone or videocall, on a wide range of issues.
- We have robust safeguarding procedures which are regularly reviewed to ensure that any disclosures are dealt with correctly.
- Our Espresso Yourself Café for 11-18 year olds offers face-to-face and remote support every Monday and Friday from 4.00pm-8.00pm. These drop-in sessions with professional mental health workers can offer a young person and their parents and carers a safe space to talk and be listened to and receive support.



- We also have a Parent and Carers Facebook group facilitated by our Wellbeing Co-ordinator to share experience and coping strategies with other parents and carers in need of support and provide the opportunity to learn new skills to boost their wellbeing and improve relationships.
- Our helpful website provides information on all our services and online referral forms for easy access to our services.
- Our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) services offer a safe and confidential space for young people to socialise, meet like-minded people, discuss issues and take part in activities.

The Out There Junior Group is for school years 7, 8 and 9, our Youth Group is for school years 10, 11, 12 and 13, and the Out There Plus Group is for 18-25 year olds. We also have a new group on Thursdays from 6.30pm-8.00pm for those based in Daventry. For parents and carers of young people in the LGBTQ+ community we offer a space to meet other parents/carers and receive support. They can also join the Facebook group by searching for 'Out There Group Parent and Carers Support Network Northamptonshire'.

- In collaboration with Youth Works we have our RE:Start Service to support young people making the transition from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAHMS) to Adult Mental Health Services. RE:Start is for 16-25 year olds living in Northamptonshire who need additional support with navigating mental health services or require other support services.

- Our sexual health service provides information and support on all aspects of sexual health and relationships including free condoms, pregnancy testing and chlamydia and gonorrhoea screening every Monday and Friday from 5.00pm-8.00pm.
- We have established a Youth Advisory Board for 11-25 year olds to volunteer their time to share views on our services, building, accessibility, website, social media etc. This helps to ensure we are providing what young people need and want while offering those involved the opportunity to learn new skills, meet new people and make a difference.
- Northamptonshire Support After Suicide Service is available to anyone of any age who lives in the county and who has been affected by bereavement by suicide. We are here to listen and support both emotionally and with practical issues that may follow a death by suicide or suspected suicide. This is by referral from the Coroner's Office only.
- We provide an Outreach Service to schools, colleges, youth and community groups offering bespoke support services.
- We offer unique and rewarding volunteering and personal development opportunities for members of the public. We also partner with Higher Education providers, including The University of Northampton, Tresham College, Chrysalis etc; to offer placements and internships for students.
- We actively promote our services in Northampton and surrounding areas so that young people and their families are aware of what services we offer and how to access them.



Our Impact 2022/23



2,365 young people were supported.

An increase of **15%** on the previous year.



Through all the lowdown services we provided

16,452 support contacts for young people and their families.

An increase of **36%** on the previous year.

Main issues >

- anxiety
- low mood
- family/relationship problems
- education and training
- sleep problems
- loneliness
- suicidal feelings
- self harm
- self-esteem
- stress

What do our service users say?

98%
would recommend our
service to others.

97%
felt they had a positive
outcome using our
services.

95%
found the service
accessible.

**“Every day they positively impact
a young person’s life”**
– service user aged 17



Counselling Service

11,070 counselling sessions provided for 11-25 year olds.

88% of young people reported an improved or maintained CORE score.

The lowdown's counselling service supports 11-25 year olds living in Northampton and the surrounding areas, 6 days per week. The counselling service is easy to access, as young people can either self-refer or be referred by professionals such as CAMHS, schools or their GP.

Counselling referrals increased by **13%** compared to the previous year. The combination of extra funding to meet this demand and counsellor recruitment has given us the resources to manage the high numbers of young people needing our support.

To meet the demand for our counselling service we have recruited additional Counsellors, Shift Managers and Admin staff to ensure we have a smooth-running service, look after our staff's wellbeing and, most importantly, provide a good quality service for our young people. Our Shift Managers work closely with our counsellors to support them with safeguarding and managing the complexity of issues presented by the young people. They also support our student placements, as well as booking the clients' counselling appointments, rooms etc. This ensures our counsellors can focus on the valuable work of supporting our service users. Our admin team has also expanded to support all our services and are now available 6 days a week to answer email or telephone enquiries.

Additional funding (Tier 2.5) has been allocated to Reach, by the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to support higher need clients and bridge the gap between youth counselling and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). This enables us to offer longer interventions to support the increased complexity of the issues our young people are facing.

We also have a Rapid Response counselling service providing immediate access to counselling for young people who have significantly self-harmed and/or have strong suicidal thoughts or have recently attempted suicide. Referrals are made by professionals including the lowdown, who can also escalate high risk clients to this service so they do not have to wait for support.

We also provide outreach counselling services for 11-18 year olds in four local schools, again increasing the support available for young people.

Our Therapy dog, Harper, has now been with us for 2 years, and continues to support young people within the counselling and wellbeing services. We are hugely proud to have her as part of the lowdown team. Seeing Harper provide much-needed support to young people, who would normally struggle to access talking therapy, has helped the counselling service become more accessible.

Demand for our counselling service for 19-25 year olds also continues to increase. This is a valuable service that has been provided for over 20 years and complements our RE:Start service perfectly as it enables us to provide both practical and emotional support for our service users.



Overall, we provided **11,070** counselling sessions from April 2022 to March 2023, a **31%** increase compared to the previous year. In March 2023, the referral to treatment time was **7 weeks** and **88%** of young people reported an improved or maintained CORE score, a measure of their emotional wellbeing.

The lowdown also provided **18** counselling student placements in the financial year. This is a significant investment by the lowdown team to support the students but this helps us to grow our services to meet the demand.

Thank you to our amazing counselling team for providing this vital support for young people.

Case Study:



A young female, aged 17 and of Pakistani origin, referred into the counselling service for support after a recent suicide attempt. She was feeling worthless, had suffered trauma in her life and was experiencing strong emotions. Her starting CORE score was 31 – which is severe.

A person-centred approach was used throughout counselling. She said she benefitted from having her traumatic experiences validated, as they never had been before. This was pivotal for her as she could explore her experiences without fear of being minimised or judged. Due to the suicide attempt, a safety plan was discussed and agreed with her identifying her support network, distraction techniques and an appropriate App to use as she would often isolate herself if feeling low and sometimes found talking too overwhelming.

Through the counselling sessions she began to show compassion for herself and pursue things that made her happy rather than pleasing others. Her counsellor was authentic, non-judgemental and provided unconditional positive regard, which enabled her to fully accept herself and contribute significantly to her increase in self-worth and resilience. Her counselling sessions ended positively with an ending CORE score of 8 – mild. She felt able to implement boundaries and strive for a life that made her happy. Her suicidal thoughts had completely disappeared, and her depression and anxiety had significantly reduced.

All this was achieved through 10 counselling sessions!

A selection of our clients' comments:

"I always felt safe to disclose what was bothering me."

"I've adopted a much more positive way of thinking due to this great support."

"I am more able to face feared situations, manage my anxiety, and see myself in a positive light."

"My counsellor was empathic and thoughtful."

RE:Start

A total of 93 referrals in 2022/23.

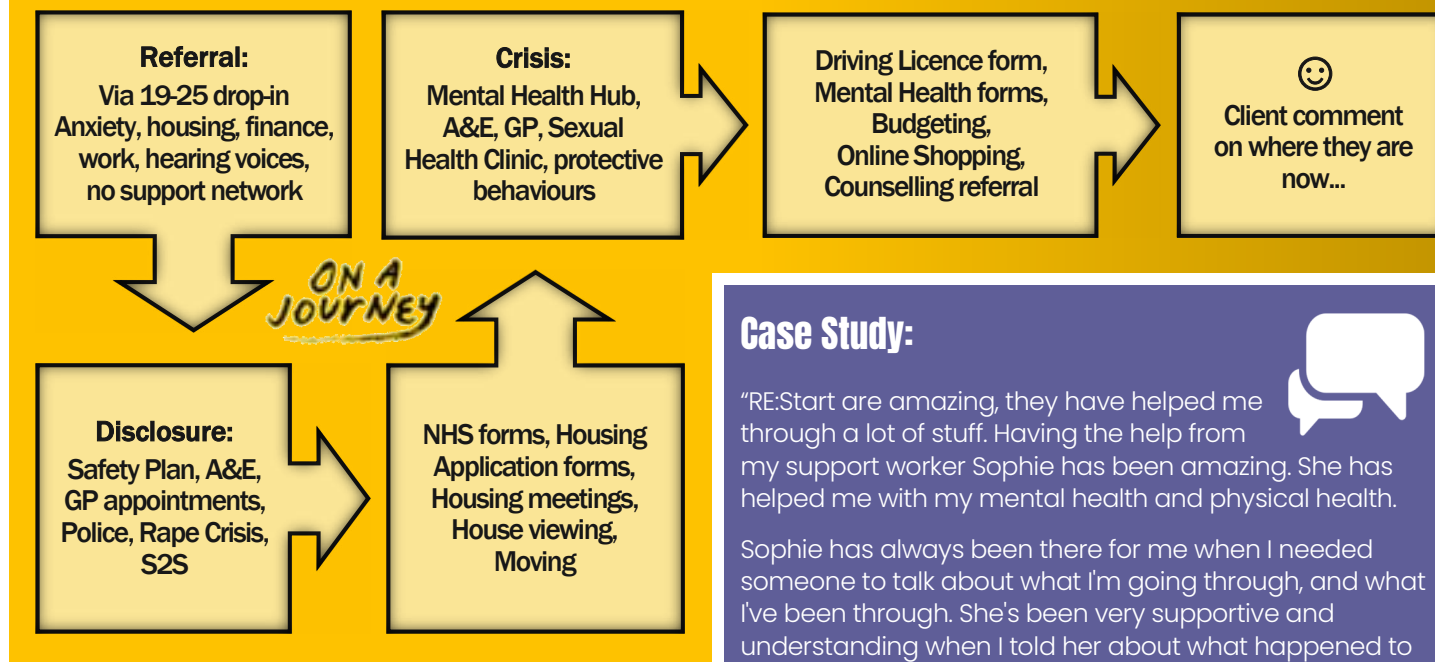
“I’m getting the help that I need to be a better person and accept myself more.”

This is an innovative new service to support young people making the transition from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS) to Adult Mental Health Services. **RE:Start** is exclusively for 16–25 year olds, who live in Northamptonshire, and need additional support with navigating mental health services

What a year it has been for RE:Start in the West Northamptonshire area. Our referrals opened on the 20th April 2022 and the service has grown in demand and structure ever since.

The RE:Start team in the West received a total of 93 referrals with 32 of those from 16 and 17 year olds and 54 from young people aged 18–25 years old. Between them **779 support sessions** were provided. The majority of young people are presenting to the service with anxiety and depression often alongside conditions such as ADHD, ASD, EUPD, Psychosis, OCD and PTSD amongst others. Coexisting with the young people’s diagnoses are experiences of historical sexual assault or abuse, historical trauma, domestic violence, issues involving immigration, housing, social isolation along with involvement from agencies such as the police and social services etc.

RE:Start clients often self-refer, but are also referred in by CAMHS, GP surgeries, the police and many other agencies across the county. We have an amazing resourceful team of support workers who work one to one with our clients and have completed a broad number of tasks including advocating, facilitating access to appointments and services, making referrals and signposting, supporting with benefits and budgeting, reducing isolation and reintegration into communities, education, employment, healthy relationships to name but a few.



We now have a team of 6 RE:Start workers – a team leader and 4 part-time workers and we were thrilled to receive additional funding from the commissioner in January 2023 to increase our team with a full-time worker.

At the beginning of the year, we struggled with a base and location for the RE:Start service with Kingswell Street at full capacity with the counselling service. After managing through the first half of the year, we moved into our beautiful office in St Giles Street with a desk for everyone and 2 consulting rooms designated for RE:Start clients. The majority of clients live within the Northampton area, but support workers have regularly met with clients across the whole of the West of Northamptonshire.

The service has increased the lowdown’s ability to offer a variety of support according to the needs and presentation of clients. Many counselling clients have benefitted from more practical longer-term support through RE:Start, and many RE:Start clients have benefitted from a therapeutic intervention from the lowdown’s counselling team alongside the practical support they were receiving.

Case Study:

“RE:Start are amazing, they have helped me through a lot of stuff. Having the help from my support worker Sophie has been amazing. She has helped me with my mental health and physical health.

Sophie has always been there for me when I needed someone to talk about what I’m going through, and what I’ve been through. She’s been very supportive and understanding when I told her about what happened to me when I was 15 years old. Sophie helped me to get the help that I needed and not to be afraid to talk about it and that’s helped me out a lot.

She’s also helped me with moving out from my parents, food shopping and appointments which I’m happy with because I don’t think I would be where I am today in a shared house and taking on responsibility. If it wasn’t for RE:Start and what they do, I still believe I would be drinking the way I was and doing nothing for myself.

I have a weekly session with Sophie, whether it’s face to face or a phone call, it helps me out a lot and I can tell her anything without being judged or anything and I can trust her. It’s a relief to tell her on a weekly basis what’s been going on or if I’m going through a really bad stage of depression, suicidal thoughts or self-harm. I’m getting the help that I need to be a better person and to accept myself more.

I’m in a better place than I was over a year ago. I still have a long way to go but I’m getting there thanks to RE:Start and Sophie, who are doing an amazing job and looking after the young people so thank you and good luck”.

Wellbeing Services

Espresso Yourself Café

1,227 support contacts provided by our wellbeing café.

96% of young people showed an improvement in their mood after attending our café.

The Espresso Yourself Café is a wellbeing drop-in service for young people aged 11–18 years old and their parents/carers. Young people can access the cafés face to face or remotely via telephone or video call.

The café is delivered in collaboration with St Andrew's Healthcare and Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT) and the Reach Partnership. There are now a total of 9 cafés across the county, operating 6 days of the week.

Our professional support workers offer a safe space, supporting service users who are struggling with their emotional wellbeing, mental health or are in crisis. They provide a listening ear, offer advice and guidance, signpost to relevant services, support with onward referrals, distractions, coping skills and so much more to meet the individual needs of young people.

We have seen our contacts grow throughout the year and, as the lowdown is the busiest café in the county, the opening of our brand-new building was a long time coming for a busy drop-in being held in a limited space.

The Lowdown Lounge (name chosen by a regular attendee of the café) opened its doors to young people in January 2023, and the impact of being in this beautiful new space has been incredible. Feedback from young people and staff has reflected a positive change in atmosphere which now is even more relaxing, calming, and enjoyable.

In February 2023, two young people started volunteering at the wellbeing café, one being a service user who has experienced counselling at the lowdown and has regularly accessed the café for further support when needed. This young person felt the positive impact of her experience at the lowdown has inspired her to give back to the charity, and even explore career options within the mental health sector.

Comments from our service users:

"We were able to chat to a member of staff who offered information about next steps as well as immediate reassurance."

"Can talk with them about everything and always listening carefully."

"Café is a good place to talk and meet people. Feeling safe and comfortable."



Walk and Talk at Espresso Yourself Café

An addition to the café in June 2022 was our walk and talk service provided by Krissy, one of the lowdown's counsellors, and her therapy dog Harper. Harper had been working at the lowdown for some time prior to this, with one-to-one counselling sessions. This has been a huge success, particularly with young people presenting with high levels of anxiety, learning difficulties and selective mutism.

Following the pandemic, the walk and talk therapy became more popular as it allowed people to access therapy face to face safely with social distancing. Walk and talk therapies fall under the eco-psychotherapy umbrella. Rather than being enclosed in a room, sitting in designated chairs, which can feel quite intense for some people having a counsellor sitting opposite them. Walking alongside each other can feel, for some, more equal and less formal.

We are always looking at different ways we can offer support for young people and felt this would fit well within our wellbeing café. Weather dependent, Krissy can take a young person out with Harper for a walk.

“The young person finds a lot of comfort spending time with Harper, the therapy dog.”

If the weather is not suitable, young people can work with Harper in a one-to-one session at the lowdown, giving them the opportunity to gain support in a less formal environment.



Case Study:



An 11-year-old male with a diagnosis of autism and suspected ADHD was struggling with attending school, relationships with peers, and had challenges at home. His mum brought him to the café, as he loves dogs and loved meeting Harper.

To begin with, we would sit in the room with the lights off and the LED sky lights on while classical modern music played softly in the background. The young person would play with Harper while Mum and I (Krissy) spoke about how they had been doing at home and at school.

This support progressed to the young person taking her out for a walk and talk. He was always excited to take Harper out, and demonstrated real awareness and consideration of risks, and looking after himself and Harper whilst walking.

This young person finds a lot of comfort in spending time with Harper and taking her for a walk; it is calming for him, and on returning to the lowdown conversations are opened, with mum present as well, about what is worrying him, and together we found solutions which helped him.

Using this service, he found a comfortable space to explore his worries, and improve communication and build on his relationship with his mum.



Sexual Health Service

Since relaunching our sexual health service, we have had 255 individual contacts.

In June 2022, we reopened our sexual health services, after closing them in 2020 during the coronavirus pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, our sexual health services were one of our most popular as young people found it helpful to access them in a non-clinical setting. They preferred a service which is young person friendly, safe, and non-judgemental so it was important to bring this back.

Our sexual health service now runs on Mondays and Fridays between 5.00pm-8.00pm during the Espresso Yourself Café, offering free condoms, pregnancy testing and chlamydia and gonorrhea testing for young people aged 14-25. We can also support young people with onward referrals and someone to talk to, give advice and support.



Wellbeing Outreach

Through our outreach work during this year, we have supported a total of 54 young people.

The wellbeing team has been busy with outreach work this year. We have delivered bespoke assemblies and workshop sessions to several local schools and community organisations including:

- Scouts Group
- Northampton Saints Foundation
- The Clipper Group
- Blackpool inspirations
- The Duston School

Through activities, interactive discussions and psycho-education, our assemblies and workshop sessions can be tailored to the needs of the group, and aim to improve wellbeing in an engaging way, whilst also informing young people of the support on offer at the lowdown.

Happier Families

The Happier Families Programme is a countywide service and delivered as part of the Reach Collaborative. It aims to help families by supporting them to learn about and try out tips, skills, and tools to boost wellbeing both individually and as families, and to improve the quality of the time they spend together.

It provides a toolkit to help participants:

- Explore ways to build their own and others' happiness.
- Learn tips to try when struggling.
- Build happier relationships.
- Enjoy family time together more.

The programme entails 6 facilitator-led workshops, each focusing on one of the 10 Keys to Happier Living as developed by Action for Happiness.

Our team delivered two programmes with two primary schools between April and August 2022 which were the final few months of the pilot stage of this project, supporting a total of 14 families across both programmes.

In addition, 79 drop-in sessions were held in these final stages of the pilot phase.

August 2022 saw the end of the pilot stage of this Happier Families Project, with Phase Two launching in September 2022. Phase Two has provided the opportunity to work one-to-one with families, and further flexibility with activities.

Since the launch of Phase Two, we have delivered 6 programmes, one to a group of families at a primary school, and others involving one-to-one work with families.

The drop-in element of this project has been removed since the start of Phase Two. The lowdown has numerous drop-ins internally where young people can be supported, however we felt it was important to continue the support for parents and provide a drop-in for them. This is provided in the Espresso Yourself Café.

Happier Families attendees' comments:

"It has helped my family to talk more and brought us closer."

"It has helped with using different techniques on how to manage emotions."

"Gave us tools to be more mindful and present with each other."

"Helped us to better our communication and understanding... To think about ourselves and our lives more positively."

Youth Advisory Board

The lowdown is an ever-growing service, and with constant changes and developments to the organisation, it was time for us to get young people more involved in this.

At the latter end of 2022 work began with research, plans and preparations for the lowdown's first Youth Advisory Board (YAB). The YAB will be a group of young people selected to represent the voice of young people, to share their feedback, ideas and views on our services and to support the development of the lowdown and the services it provides.

By setting up a Youth Advisory Board, the lowdown will develop a greater awareness of the issues affecting the community and youth, as seen from the perspective of the young people within the community. The members will provide a fresh energy and perspective which will make for innovative ideas and solutions.

In February 2023 we launched recruitment for young people aged 11-25 to become a part of the board, and in March we began our selection process. We received a remarkable 27 applications from young people wanting to join our new Youth Advisory Board.

Watch this space...

LGBTQ+ Services

Out There

1,332 contacts across all the groups, supporting 115 young people.

The last year has been a huge success again for Out There in Northampton, embedding and growing our Junior group and expanding into Daventry. We continued the fun with our second residential, another prom and more Pride events.

Over the year the Northampton group ran 144 sessions across the three age groups – Out There Juniors, Out There Youth and Out There Plus with 1,332 contacts made with 115 different young people.

We expanded into Daventry starting with holding a Big Gay Picnic in partnership with Daventry Mind in June to build awareness of the LGBTQ+ community in that area and gauge the demand for an Out There group along with engaging with the local secondary schools. Out There Daventry was launched on 3rd November 2022. It takes place on Thursday nights during term time at the Mind building and so far has held 18 sessions, making 85 contacts with 19 individual young people.

Another Out There swim was held in April and we attended the HeadFest Event and I'm Still Me virtual conference in May. June brought us the Big Gay Picnic in Daventry and Northampton Pride where 21 of our Out There Northampton young people paraded along with 12 young people from the Out There Wellingborough group. Our stall was as popular as ever, selling the usual flags and laces along with our talented young people's jewellery and art, turning over £900 meaning a profit of around £300 going back into the Out There groups.



In July we threw our annual Prom in the lowdown garden, which was swiftly followed by our second residential, this time held at the University of Nottingham with 21 young people and 5 leaders attending. Fun was had row boating, t-shirt designing and competing in our sports day. In August we attended the very warm Deanshanger Pride and September had us heading off on a train with 14 young people and 4 leaders to join the Birmingham Pride Parade. Our legendary Halloween party was the highlight of October and in November, as well as the Daventry group launching, **Out There, the Northampton service, turned 10 years old** and was celebrated with the most amazing birthday cake. Our Christmas dinner and party games for 30 young people finished off the year and made way for a more relaxed start to 2023.

We gave a warm welcome to Callum, our volunteer Youth Leader, and Ash, Sophie and Cami as paid Youth Leaders. In March we also welcomed Kelly to the team as our Youth Services Co-ordinator who will manage the day-to-day running of our LGBTQ+ services and be involved in some exciting projects happening later in 2023. Kelly is an ex-volunteer Youth Leader, and we are very excited to have her back on the team. Sadly, Parker left us in August to be closer to family and take on a new exciting LGBTQ+ role in Nottingham. Will has also left us and moved up to Manchester. He has been an integral part of the growth of the Out There service; the residential, parent and carers group and GSRD training would not have been possible without his input and dedication to the group. Will's absence will be felt greatly by leaders and young people alike; however, I am sure his impact will be felt for a long time to come. We wish both Parker and Will all the best on their new adventures.



Quotes from our Group members:

"I am so glad for the friends I have gained while being here, everyone is so nice and so lovely."

"From having attended The Out There Youth Group for almost 4 years now, I can say that it has been the most supportive group I have been able to be a part of, and they have provided both support, and community in the times I have needed it most. Group has been a big part of figuring out my identity and my true self, and they have been there to support me through it."

"The activities and trips they have provided has also helped me to develop stronger bonds with the friends I have made there, most of which I have had since joining, and continue to talk to outside of group."

"I would recommend this group, and I have done to a few people over the years. Group is a welcoming, friendly and supportive community, and I have thoroughly enjoyed attending, and even with the recent move to Uni, I still look forward to attending every time I come back home."

Northamptonshire Support after Suicide Service

One of our clients sent Anna, our Support Worker, the following letter. Her partner died by suicide, and this is her story.

Warning. This is a very emotional read...

"The Northamptonshire Coroner's Office referred me to your service. Quickly I received communication from Anna and an appointment was arranged for me to see her.

On the day of the appointment I was completely broken, I did not know how I was going to even begin to accept and understand what had just happened.

I walked into the lowdown and was greeted and asked to sit in the reception area. Everyone who walked through said hello to me providing a reassuring smile that put me at ease. Anna then came and introduced herself and took me into a private room. Within a very short period of time, I was able to share with her how I was feeling, I felt completely listened to, she took in absolutely everything I said to her, providing reassurance, support and guidance during the session. I spent a very long time with Anna during that appointment, not once did I feel rushed. She sensed that I needed the time, and she gave it to me. I felt so comfortable, I literally shared everything with her that day.

Following the meeting I felt overwhelmed, but validated, completely listened to. Finally, someone understood where I was coming from.

Anna ensured I was safe and in a good frame of mind to leave, and checked on me to ensure I was home safe.

Anna explained so much about suicide, things I did not know, how would I, I never had to deal with something so tragic before. She advised me to trust me and my own instincts and not take in other people's judgements but for me to come to my own conclusions so that I could then begin to accept what had happened.

Following the initial meeting Anna and I spoke frequently either by telephone calls, text messages and emails. She kept in contact with me, particularly on key dates, she never missed one.

Although this may sound strange, but it was almost like **I had my own Guardian Angel by my side reassuring me that there was going to be a better day**, and somehow, I was going to get through this.

I have worked in the care sector for 26 years mainly within managerial positions. I can say without any question that **Anna is the most caring, compassionate, considerate, kind, committed professional I have ever met**. Without doubt I can say that **she saved my life**. I am here because of her. She helped me to accept what had happened and find a way to carry it.

I am still on a very long road; Anna gave me the tools to somehow drag myself to a year since his passing. Although I now have a diagnosis of PTSD, I am getting out of bed every day, I am working full time, I am socialising, I am attending regular group and individual sessions and I am living. Without doubt, I am now his eyes and ears.

I recently took a trip to Scotland and wanted to share the below photograph with you. I was there and so was he. Without Anna all of this would not have been possible, and I cannot thank her enough for all the support she has given me.

Anna kept telling me "You can do this", she was right."

A picture that says a thousand words!



Fundraising

We have had a fun-filled year of fundraising and events to raise funds and awareness for our services.

Yet again we are blown away by the support we have had from people in our community who go above and beyond to help young people on their journey towards positive emotional health and wellbeing.

- We were delighted to be chosen as Starting Off's "Charity of the Year" which raised both awareness and funds with them taking part in the Santa Run both this year and the previous one.
- We were thankful to be chosen again by Northampton Partnership Homes who raised **£2,843.49** from various fundraisers including a Bake Off.

We are always delighted to be supported by local businesses and this year did not disappoint.

- We had donations from Hewitsons, The Department for Work and Pensions, and Michael Jones Jeweller agreed to support the lowdown with **£5,000 per annum** for the next 3 years to support new youth activities in the Lowdown Lounge.
- We also received a donation of **£1,900** from Kevin Matthews Funeral Services who said such kind words (below) about our services;

"All too often, as a community, we see the devastating consequences of the growing mental health crisis. That's why we are supporting the lowdown in their work with children and young adults. If, together, we can change the path that one individual is taking, we have the responsibility to try. Thank you to the lowdown for all you do."

- Zapato Lounge raised **£122** during their LoungeAid month in June and GXO in Wellingborough held events during Pride Month raising **£600**.



- We were also supported by a local artist, Sophie Slade, who raffled off one of her original paintings and held an exhibition to raise funds.

We have seen the return of fundraisers and donations from:

- Sign In App who donated profits during Pride Month, Cards Direct with their collection tins, Waitrose (both Kingthorpe and Wootton Stores), Northampton School for Boys Charity Week, Northampton Rotary Groups for the Santa Run in December, Northampton College with bake sales and Jogo Behaviour Support's annual conference.

We are so thankful for the continued support; it means so much to be repeatedly chosen.

- We were touched and honoured to be the charity supported by the family and friends in loving memory of Eamonn 'Fitzy' Fitzpatrick, who sadly passed away in November 2022. Eamonn supported the lowdown for many years by donating, helping with fundraising, and campaigning to help young people's mental health and wellbeing.
- Due to a family member using our services, three courageous sisters from 'Team Sister Act' abseiled the Express Lift Tower raising over **£1,600**.

We also give thanks to those who donate monthly, buy tickets for the Northampton Lottery, took part in Amazon Smile and easyfundraising purchases and support us at various events, fundraisers; and promotions.

Thank you to each and every one of our donors, fundraisers, funders and supporters who have contributed, you are amazing!



How to Support the lowdown



Your support and donations are vital so we can continue to provide our services for young people. Our work helps us to increase young people's resilience and equip them with the tools to help them cope with future challenges in their life.

There are lots of ways you can support us:

- Set up a monthly donation
- Make a one-off donation
- Organise a fundraising event or activity
- Donate via JustGiving, PayPal or play The Northampton Lottery



Or scan this QR code
to instantly donate





Who's Who?

A list of all those who have worked or volunteered for the lowdown between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023.

The lowdown would not be what it is without our amazing team who are flexible and constantly help us to adapt to fulfil every opportunity we get to support young people.

Staff

CEO – Sharon Womersley

Office Manager – Lisa Braithwaite

Fundraising & Marketing Manager – Ellie White

Clinical Manager – Rachel Welsh

Business Manager – Laura Simms

Support Services Manager – Helen Heng

Shift Managers – Chelsea Buswell, Becky Truman, Ryan Parkinson and Steph Gardner

Administrators – Maxine Eborall and Alison Inglese

Wellbeing Co-ordinator – Chelsea Buswell

Youth Services Co-ordinator – Kelly Emmanuel

LGBTQ+ Co-ordinators – Kathryn Parker, Helen Heng and Kelly Emmanuel

Out There Youth Leaders – Julie Holt, William Beckett, Ash Harrison, Ioana-Camelia Martin and Sophie Turner

Suicide Bereavement Support Worker – Anna Tutt

RE:Start Support Workers – Carol Jeyes, Sophie Goode, Kirsty Bees, Gemma Cort, Rebecca Kings and Laura Farmer

Trustees

Stephen Edmonds (Chair), Andrea Martin (Vice Chair), Jonathan Smith (Treasurer), Brendan Dunphy, Dr Martin Clarke, Georgina Bayliss, Dr Mike Scanlan, Matt Toresen MBE and Dr Deborah Patton

Counsellors

Catherine Burrows, Caroline Parnell, Adrian Shaw, Carol Jeyes, Ciara Cummings, Da-Sheena Fulford, Daniel Kwakye, Helen Heng, Hitomi Palmer, James Young, Jennifer Gee, Kanan Robinson, Kelly Lane, Kenny Pang, Kirsty Roberts, Kirsty Bees, Kristyana Jimdar, Laura Cooper, Matthew Price, Meghan Wright, Rebecca Wheeler, Rose-Marie Golaub, Toniiae Smith, Natalie Morrison, Rachael Moss, Stephanie Clayson, Chelsea Buswell, Laura Kaye, Leanne Allsop, Rachel Welsh, Ryan Parkinson, Stephanie Gardner, Anna Tutt, Gemma Ainge, Laura Farmer and Sophie Goode

Placement Counsellors

Abbie Anderson, Charlotte White, Gemma Ainge, Geraldine Ward, Katie Redding, Laura Farmer, Laura Kaye, Leanne Allsop, Rebecca Ibbs, Natalie Morrison, Rachael Moss, Stephanie Clayson, Helen Shouler, Anna Tutt, Becky Truman, Sophie Goode, Ryan Parkinson and Callum Crawford-McKellar

School Outreach Counsellors and Workers

Carol Jeyes, Chelsea Buswell, Gemma Ainge, Kelly Lane, Kirsty Roberts, Kirsty Bees, Matthew Price, Meghan Wright and Rebecca Ibbs

Wellbeing Workers (including Espresso Yourself Café)

Elizabeth Johnson, Emma Roddis, Emma Miller, Hazel Scott, Helen Shouler, Karoline Bardin-Bryant, Niamh Roe, Chelsea Buswell, Ciara Cummings, Da-Sheena Fulford, Kelly Lane, Kirsty Roberts, Kristyana Jimdar, Laura Farmer, Meghan Wright and Donna Shrubbs

LGBTQ+ Groups Volunteers

Maxine Bannard, Callum Crawford-McKellar, Adelaide Essex and Alex Webber

Clinical Supervisors

Alison Souster, Clare Marshall, Daniel Kwakye, Kate Williams and Matthew Price

Other Volunteers

Marie Wallace

Acknowledgements and Thanks

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported the lowdown during 2022 and 2023. There are so many individuals, organisations, businesses, and schools who have helped us to ensure we can provide our vital services to young people. We feel very honoured to be recognised by so many in our community.

- Beckett's and Sargeant's Educational Foundation
- NHS - ICB and NHFT
- St Andrew's Healthcare
- West Northamptonshire Council
- Northampton Town Council
- Youth Investment Fund
- Jane Dollar
- Our Reach Partners - Youth Works, Time2Talk, Chat and Service Six
- Rotary Club of Northampton Becket
- Dunphy Associates
- Cards Direct
- Guilsborough Academy
- Abbeyfield School
- Malcolm Arnold Academy
- Northampton School for Girls
- Northampton School for Boys
- Earl Spencer Primary School
- Campion School
- The Duston School
- The University of Northampton
- Tresham College
- Chrysalis
- Free2Talk
- The Bridge
- Northamptonshire Community Foundation
- Voluntary Impact Northamptonshire
- Northampton Chronicle and Echo
- The Thomas Brington Foundation
- Surefire Creative and Santander
- Ashby Computers
- Gateway HR
- BBC Radio Northampton
- Nlive Radio
- NPH (Northampton Partnership Homes)
- Northampton Lottery
- Rotary Clubs of Northamptonshire
- Rotary Club of Northampton
- Rotary Club of Northampton West
- Blackpool Inspirations
- Sir Thomas White Northampton Charity
- Goodwill Solutions
- Faraway Children's Charity



- Arnold Clark Community Fund
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- The Wilson Foundation
- The Laing Family Trusts
- Postcode Places Trust
- Coral Samuel Charitable Trust
- Northamptonshire Sport
- Metro Bank
- The Department for Work and Pensions
- Sign In App
- Hewitsons
- Jogo Behaviour Support
- Kevin Matthews Funeral Services
- Michael Jones Jeweller
- Bosworth Independent College
- Northampton Partnership Homes
- Scott Bader
- St James's Place
- Waitrose - Kingsthorpe and Wootton Branches
- Northampton Quakers
- Skipton Building Society
- Zapato Lounge

Report of the Trustees

Public Benefit

The Trustees have taken due regard of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

The lowdown is a Mental Health charity, providing free and confidential support services for 11-25 year olds and their families in Northamptonshire. Our services include counselling, wellbeing, LGBTQ+ support, practical support and sexual health services. These services are provided free of charge and provide a caring environment where young people are fully supported in their journey towards positive emotional health and wellbeing regardless of their socio-economic circumstances, ethnicity, gender, religion, ability, sexuality, or perceived disadvantage.

We aim to help children and young people feel valued and supported so that they can live safe, happy, and healthy lives, be part of and enjoy family and community life and achieve their full potential. The services we provide at the lowdown, along with our varied outreach services, not only benefit young people directly, but also the wider community.

The lowdown provides student placements for counselling trainees in order to develop the workforce of the future to support the escalation in demand for mental health services for children and young people.

Our anonymous service user questionnaires, regular internal reviews, and feedback from the organisations that use the lowdown enable us to keep abreast of any gaps in youth service provision and we continually develop our services in order to fill any such gaps. Surveys are also carried out when introducing new services to ensure that these services fulfil young people's needs.

Appointment of Trustees

New trustees are recruited by advertisements placed with the local volunteering centre, and organisations targeted for particular expertise and knowledge. The lowdown adheres to a policy of equal opportunities in the advertisement, selection, recruitment, and training of its trustees, and within all aspects of its service delivery.

Applicants are interviewed by the trustees and CEO, who then reach a decision as to the suitability of the candidate.

Successful candidates are appointed subject to a satisfactory DBS check and fulfilment of a three-month probationary period. At the next annual general meeting, they are officially elected, and all trustees are subject to re-election at our AGM in line with our constitution.

All trustees receive a copy of the lowdown Trustees' Handbook. In accordance with good practice, governance is regularly reviewed.

continued...



**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

STRATEGIC REPORT**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT****Governing document**

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (the CIO) governed according to the new and more flexible Constitution dated 22 December 2021. It was established to take forward the work of the unincorporated charity with registered charity number 801886.

The Charity became a CIO on 1 April 2022. The financial statements for the CIO represent the combined assets, liabilities and funds of the two legal entities as though they have always been part of the same organisation. The balance sheet for the unincorporated charity will show zero funds at the end of the accounting period, having effectively transferred those to the CIO.

The trustees consider this approach to be consistent with the requirements of the Charities SORP (FRS 102) and it provides a clear comparative of the financial activities and financial position with previous reporting periods. This treatment is appropriate because the CIO was formed expressly to take over the work of the charity, the two entities have the same name and address and are party to the same organisation, and there is no significant change to the beneficiaries, purposes or control of the organisation.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**Registered Company number**

CE027753 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number

1197273

Registered office

3 Kingswell Street
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN1 1PP

Trustees

S Edmonds
G Bayliss
M Toresen (resigned 12/6/23)
J Smith
A Martin
M Clarke
D Patton
M Scanlan
B Dunphy
A Gore (appointed 12/6/23)

Auditors

DNG Dove Naish LLP, Statutory Auditor
Eagle House
28 Billing Road
Northampton
Northamptonshire
NN1 5AJ

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees (who are also the directors of The Lowdown for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

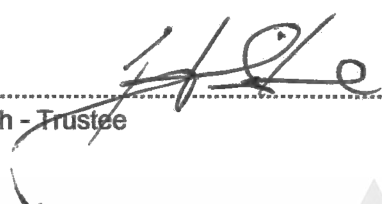
In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

AUDITORS

The auditors, DNG Dove Naish LLP, Statutory Auditor, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Report of the trustees, incorporating a strategic report, approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 5 September 2023 and signed on the board's behalf by:


J Smith - Trustee

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LOWDOWN

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Lowdown (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustees is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- the charitable company has not kept adequate accounting records; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LOWDOWN

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditors under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the financial statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be the override of controls by management and the understatement of revenue. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, sample testing on the posting of journals, reviewing meeting minutes, regulatory correspondence and professional fees, detailed substantive testing on the completeness of income, and reviewing accounting estimates for biases. We will also review the regulatory correspondence with the Charity Commission.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

These inherent limitations are particularly significant in the case of misstatement resulting from fraud as this may involve sophisticated schemes designed to avoid detection, including deliberate failure to record transactions, collusion or the provision of intentional misrepresentations.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LOWDOWN

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

DNG Dove Naish LLP

DNG Dove Naish LLP, Statutory Auditor

Eligible to act as an auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Eagle House

28 Billing Road

Northampton

Northamptonshire

NN1 5AJ

Date: 6 September 2023



	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	81,944	173,842	255,786	127,308
Charitable activities	3				
Charitable Activities		<u>807,036</u>	<u>24,000</u>	<u>831,036</u>	<u>581,898</u>
Total		<u>888,980</u>	<u>197,842</u>	<u>1,086,822</u>	<u>709,206</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	4				
Charitable Activities		<u>824,695</u>	<u>53,291</u>	<u>877,986</u>	<u>485,271</u>
NET INCOME					
Transfers between funds	14	<u>64,285</u> <u>(419)</u>	<u>144,551</u> <u>419</u>	<u>208,836</u> <u>-</u>	<u>223,935</u> <u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		<u>63,866</u>	<u>144,970</u>	<u>208,836</u>	<u>223,935</u>
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>348,265</u>	<u>85,225</u>	<u>433,490</u>	<u>209,555</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>412,131</u></u>	<u><u>230,195</u></u>	<u><u>642,326</u></u>	<u><u>433,490</u></u>

CONTINUING OPERATIONS

All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

The notes form part of these financial statements

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	10	48,041	230,195	278,236	32,467
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	11	69,151	-	69,151	173,173
Cash at bank		<u>600,853</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>600,853</u>	<u>980,156</u>
		670,004	-	670,004	1,153,329
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	12	(305,914)	-	(305,914)	(752,306)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>364,090</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>364,090</u>	<u>401,023</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>412,131</u>	<u>230,195</u>	<u>642,326</u>	<u>433,490</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>412,131</u>	<u>230,195</u>	<u>642,326</u>	<u>433,490</u>
FUNDS	14				
Unrestricted funds				412,131	348,265
Restricted funds				<u>230,195</u>	<u>85,225</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>642,326</u>	<u>433,490</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The members have not deposited notice, pursuant to Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006 requiring an audit of these financial statements.

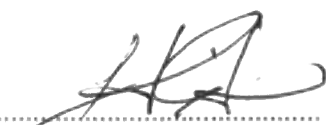
The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

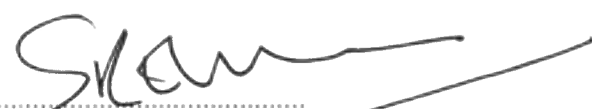
- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 5 September 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:

The notes form part of these financial statements

continued...


.....
J Smith - Trustee


.....
S Edmonds - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	<u>(123,885)</u>	<u>811,204</u>
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities		<u>(123,885)</u>	<u>811,204</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		<u>(255,418)</u>	<u>(36,501)</u>
Net cash used in investing activities		<u>(255,418)</u>	<u>(36,501)</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		<u>(379,303)</u>	<u>774,703</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		<u>980,156</u>	<u>205,453</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		<u>600,853</u>	<u>980,156</u>

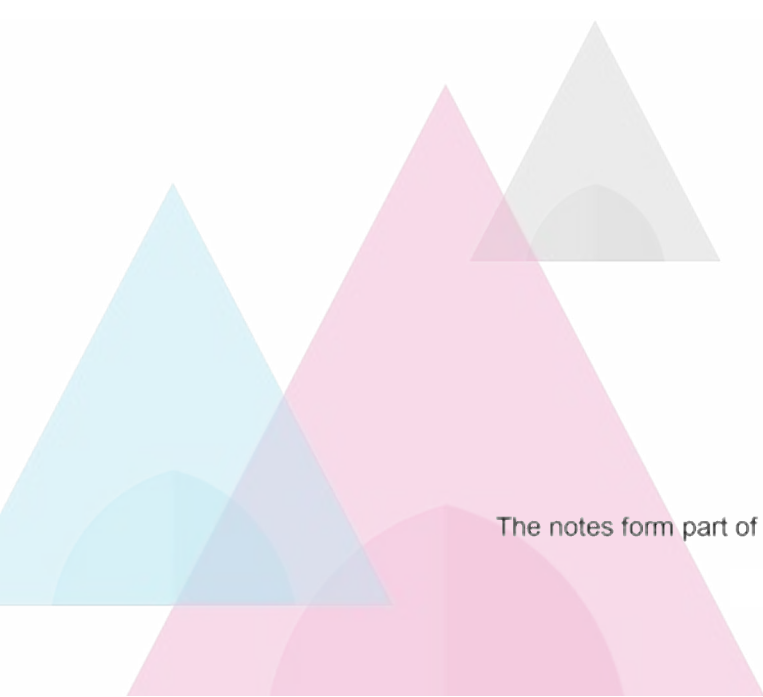
The notes form part of these financial statements

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2023 £	2022 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	208,836	223,935
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	9,649	4,993
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	104,022	(70,998)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(446,392)	653,274
Net cash (used in)/provided by operations	<u>(123,885)</u>	<u>811,204</u>

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1/4/22 £	Cash flow £	At 31/3/23 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank	<u>980,156</u>	<u>(379,303)</u>	<u>600,853</u>
	<u>980,156</u>	<u>(379,303)</u>	<u>600,853</u>
Total	<u>980,156</u>	<u>(379,303)</u>	<u>600,853</u>


 The notes form part of these financial statements

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

No material uncertainties exist in relation to going concern.

The presentation currency of the financial statements is the Pound Sterling (£).

Charity Status

The Lowdown is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Charity became a CIO on 1 April 2022. The financial statements for the CIO represent the combined assets, liabilities and funds of the two legal entities as though they have always been part of the same organisation. The balance sheet for the unincorporated charity will show zero funds at the end of the accounting period, having effectively transferred those to the CIO.

Registered address listed in the annual report, managed and controlled by the Management Committee/Trustees named in the annual report.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the company accounting policies. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the financial statements are disclosed within the individual accounting policies below

Income

Voluntary income, including donations, legacies and grants that provide core funding or are of a general nature are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability. Investment income is brought into account on a receivable basis and dividend income on a received basis. Income from charitable activities includes income received under contract or where entitlement to grant funding is subject to specific performance conditions is recognised as earned. Grant income in this category provides funding to support performance activities and is recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Intangible income

Intangible income, in the form of donated facilities and voluntary help etc., is not included in the financial statements since it is not considered practicable to quantify such income.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred.

Cost of generating funds are those costs incurred in attracting voluntary income.

Charitable activities include expenditure associated with direct services and membership support.

Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

continued...

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued**Tangible fixed assets**

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Improvements to property	- 10% on cost
Fixtures and fittings	- 33% on cost
Computer and Office Equipment	- 50% on cost and 33% on cost

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Where parts of an item of property, plant and equipment have different useful lives, they are accounted for as separate items of property, plant and equipment.

Depreciation methods, useful lives and residual values are reviewed at each balance sheet date. The selection of these residual values and estimated lives requires the exercise of judgement. The directors are required to assess whether there is an indication of impairment to the carrying value of assets. In making that assessment, judgements are made in estimating value in use. The directors consider that the individual carrying values of assets are supportable by their value in use.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Reserves

The current reserve policy is to maintain sufficient cash flow for known commitments, and the replacement of certain assets. Grants are received at various times during the year.

Risk

The trustees do not believe it is subject to any substantial risk beyond the liabilities disclosed in its Annual Report and Accounts.

The organisation has public, employer insurance to protect the Charity in the case of a claim.

Financial Instruments Policy

Cash and cash equivalents in the balance sheet comprise cash at banks and in hand and short term deposits with an original maturity date of three months or less.

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in the statement of comprehensive income under administrative expenses.

continued...

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued**Reserves**

Financial liabilities and equity instruments are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the entity after deducting all of its financial liabilities.

Where the contractual obligations of financial instruments (including share capital) are equivalent to a similar debt instrument, those financial instruments are classed as financial liabilities. Financial liabilities are presented as such in the balance sheet. Finance costs and gains or losses relating to financial liabilities are included in the profit and loss account. Finance costs are calculated so as to produce a constant rate of return on the outstanding liability.

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations	90,786	127,308
Grants	<u>165,000</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>255,786</u>	<u>127,308</u>

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
NHFT - Espresso Yourself Cafe	5,000	-
Beckett's & Sargeants	40,000	-
The Beatrice Laing Trust	<u>120,000</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>165,000</u>	<u>-</u>

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	2023	2022
	Charitable Activities	Total activities
	£	£
Grants & Contract Services	782,960	536,241
Outreach Services	46,191	45,657
Other income	<u>1,885</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>831,036</u>	<u>581,898</u>

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
LGBTQ	22,000	20,000
VCSE - Happier Families	25,975	19,013
NHFT - Espresso Yourself Cafe	68,840	46,755
NHS Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board	595,466	371,514
Children in Need Youth Investment Fund Grant	-	19,094
Aspire Higher	<u>270</u>	<u>8,445</u>
Carried forward	712,551	484,821

continued...

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES - continued

	2023 £	2022 £
Brought forward	712,551	484,821
Garfield Weston	-	15,000
Thomas Brington	1,800	4,950
Constance Travis	1,500	1,500
National Lottery	9,990	9,990
Queen's Institute	4,995	19,980
Youth Investment Fund	249	-
Northampton Town Council	15,000	-
St James's Place Foundation	9,990	-
Goodwill Solutions	9,900	-
Faraway Children's Charity	2,000	-
West Northamptonshire Council	14,985	-
	<u>782,960</u>	<u>536,241</u>

4. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Support costs (see note 5) £	Totals £
Charitable Activities	<u>853,077</u>	<u>24,909</u>	<u>877,986</u>

5. SUPPORT COSTS

	Finance £	Governance costs £	Totals £
Charitable Activities	<u>715</u>	<u>24,194</u>	<u>24,909</u>

6. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2023 £	2022 £
Auditors' remuneration	5,700	2,200
Accountancy Fees - non Audit work	1,500	1,100
Depreciation - owned assets	<u>9,649</u>	<u>4,993</u>

continued...

7. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

8. STAFF COSTS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries	579,275	299,175
Social security costs	41,190	17,286
Other pension costs	10,846	5,199
	<u>631,311</u>	<u>321,660</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2023	2022
	35	23

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

Key Management Remuneration in the year was £59,606 (2022: £45,314). The increase was due to an increase in working hours.

9. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	66,923	60,385	127,308
Charitable activities			
Charitable Activities	<u>537,804</u>	<u>44,094</u>	<u>581,898</u>
Total	<u>604,727</u>	<u>104,479</u>	<u>709,206</u>
EXPENDITURE ON Charitable activities			
Charitable Activities	<u>439,352</u>	<u>45,919</u>	<u>485,271</u>
NET INCOME	165,375	58,560	223,935
Transfers between funds	<u>(166)</u>	<u>166</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds	165,209	58,726	223,935
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	183,056	26,499	209,555

continued...

9. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	348,265	85,225	433,490

10. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Improvements to property £	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer and Office Equipment £	Totals £
COST				
At 1 April 2022	34,857	4,296	8,795	47,948
Additions	<u>250,902</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,516</u>	<u>255,418</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>285,759</u>	<u>4,296</u>	<u>13,311</u>	<u>303,366</u>
DEPRECIATION				
At 1 April 2022	3,486	4,296	7,699	15,481
Charge for year	<u>7,122</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,527</u>	<u>9,649</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>10,608</u>	<u>4,296</u>	<u>10,226</u>	<u>25,130</u>
NET BOOK VALUE				
At 31 March 2023	<u>275,151</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,085</u>	<u>278,236</u>
At 31 March 2022	<u>31,371</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,096</u>	<u>32,467</u>

11. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	-	162,864
Other debtors	216	-
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>68,935</u>	<u>10,309</u>
	<u>69,151</u>	<u>173,173</u>

continued...

12. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	46,832	18,782
Social security and other taxes	13,158	8,496
Other creditors	133,784	297,844
Deferred Income	91,876	409,441
Accrued expenses	<u>20,264</u>	<u>17,743</u>
	<u>305,914</u>	<u>752,306</u>

Deferred Income Reconciliation:

	2023 £	2022 £
Balance brought forward	(409,441)	(90,758)
Amount released to the Statement of Financial Activities	409,441	90,758
Amount Deferred in the year	<u>(91,876)</u>	<u>(409,441)</u>
Balance carried forward	<u>(91,876)</u>	<u>(409,441)</u>

Deferred income relates to amounts receivable for the provision of services that have been invoiced in financial year ending 31 March 2023, where performance conditions will not be met until future accounting periods.

13. LEASING AGREEMENTS

Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Within one year	10,450	-
Between one and five years	<u>6,300</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>16,750</u>	<u>-</u>

continued...

14. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/22 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31/3/23 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	347,455	65,095	(419)	412,131
NVCT Right Resolution	810	(810)	-	-
	348,265	64,285	(419)	412,131
Restricted funds				
LGBTQ	13,544	(13,544)	-	-
Scott Bader Commonwealth	4,000	(4,000)	-	-
Children in Need Youth Investment Fund Grant	8,681	(1,025)	-	7,656
Outbuilding	50,000	164,120	419	214,539
Leasehold Improvements - Kitchen	9,000	(1,000)	-	8,000
	85,225	144,551	419	230,195
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>433,490</u>	<u>208,836</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>642,326</u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	888,980	(823,885)	65,095
NVCT Right Resolution	-	(810)	(810)
	888,980	(824,695)	64,285
Restricted funds			
LGBTQ	26,682	(40,226)	(13,544)
Scott Bader Commonwealth	-	(4,000)	(4,000)
Children in Need Youth Investment Fund Grant	-	(1,025)	(1,025)
Outbuilding	169,160	(5,040)	164,120
Leasehold Improvements - Kitchen	-	(1,000)	(1,000)
Faraway Children's Charity	2,000	(2,000)	-
	197,842	(53,291)	144,551
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,086,822</u>	<u>(877,986)</u>	<u>208,836</u>

continued...

14. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/21 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31/3/22 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	176,326	171,295	(166)	347,455
NVCT Right Resolution	810	-	-	810
NHS Northants - Resources and Training	2,800	(2,800)	-	-
Sir Thomas White	3,120	(3,120)	-	-
	<u>183,056</u>	<u>165,375</u>	<u>(166)</u>	<u>348,265</u>
Restricted funds				
LGBTQ	22,499	(8,955)	-	13,544
Scott Bader Commonwealth	4,000	-	-	4,000
Children in Need Youth Investment Fund Grant	-	8,515	166	8,681
Outbuilding	-	50,000	-	50,000
Leasehold Improvements - Kitchen	-	9,000	-	9,000
	<u>26,499</u>	<u>58,560</u>	<u>166</u>	<u>85,225</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>209,555</u>	<u>223,935</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>433,490</u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	604,727	(433,432)	171,295
NHS Northants - Resources and Training	-	(2,800)	(2,800)
Sir Thomas White	-	(3,120)	(3,120)
	<u>604,727</u>	<u>(439,352)</u>	<u>165,375</u>
Restricted funds			
LGBTQ	25,385	(34,340)	(8,955)
Children in Need Youth Investment Fund Grant	19,094	(10,579)	8,515
Outbuilding	50,000	-	50,000
Leasehold Improvements - Kitchen	10,000	(1,000)	9,000
	<u>104,479</u>	<u>(45,919)</u>	<u>58,560</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>709,206</u>	<u>(485,271)</u>	<u>223,935</u>

General reserve - to maintain sufficient cash flow due to time differences of grants received and expenditure paid

Fundraising LGBTQ - is fundraising for the LGBTQ project

continued...

14. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

NVCT Right Resolution - is for a Counselling Contract.

NHS Northants - Resources & Training funds are for LGBTQ awareness, training, Self-Harm and Emotional Wellbeing Resources and development for Reach.

Sir Thomas White - is for a Counselling Contract.

Outbuilding Extension - to provide additional space to expand our services

Leasehold Improvements - Funding to renovate and improve the kitchen facilities and create a staff area within the property, in which the charity operates. The balance on this fund represents the Net Book Value of the assets, are being depreciated over 10 years.

LGBTQ - Funding for youth services to support young people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual, transgender or questioning.

Scott Bader Commonwealth - Donation towards Sexual Health Service that we have not been able to deliver due to COVID

VCSE Happier Families - funds are for Family Work, drop-ins and group work.

NHS Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board - to provide immediate one to one counselling.

Children In Need Youth Futures Funding - Building, IT and Service improvements. The balance on this fund represents the Net Book Value of the assets, are being depreciated over 10 years.

Outbuilding - Funding for the building of the Outbuilding at the Kingswell Street Property.

Transfers between funds

Transfer between the General Fund and the Outbuilding Fund, represents a small overspend of £419. (2022: Children In Need Youth Fund £166)

15. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

Donations received from trustees in the year totalled £360 (2022: £350).

There were no other related party transactions for either the current or prior year.

Treasurers Report and Financial Review

for the year ended 31st March 2023

Facing the future from a position of considerable strength and flexibility.

With the vagaries of Covid-19 restrictions behind us, but perhaps partly due to those restrictions, the team have found themselves faced with a hugely expanded workload during the year.

Needless to say, they have all risen to the challenge and have made amazing efforts to maintain service levels while at the same time continuing to source and secure funding. The lowdown is now facing the future from a position of considerable strength and flexibility to offer whatever services are needed over the coming year.

As shown in The Statement of Financial Position, the Total Funds have again improved over the course of the year with Total Funds held at 31st March 2023 standing at **£642,326**. This compares to the balance at 31st March 2022 of **£433,490**, giving an increase in funds retained during the year of **£208,836**. Within the Total Funds figure are restricted funds of **£230,195** which is the current value of the Lowdown Lounge.

The bank balance has fallen from **£980,156** at 31st March 2022 to **£600,853** at 31st March 2023, a drop of **£379,303** which is mainly due to two major factors. During the year, capital expenditure was undertaken at a cost of **£250,902**. At 31st March 2022 there was a large sum of monies held which represented advance payments for contracts, shown in creditors, which had not yet been fulfilled at that point. This advance payment has not repeated at the current year end and the difference is therefore shown as a cash outflow of **£317,565**. These sums have been somewhat offset by the surplus for the year and other movements, further details are enumerated in the Statement of Cash Flows.

The major capital work carried out at the Kingswell Street premises during the year was the build and commission of the Lowdown Lounge.

The cost of this, together with a new intercom system and fitted desks for the main building, totalling **£250,902** has been capitalised as Improvements to Property. Other items of equipment purchased were an interactive display board and free-standing tables for the Lowdown Lounge which make up the **£4,516** capitalised as Office Equipment. Each of these are shown in the Tangible Fixed Assets Note 10 to the Financial Statements.

Income from charitable activities has again grown significantly during the year due to the sustained focus on funding applications and has increased by **£249,138** compared to the previous year. Donations have also increased by **£128,478**. A more detailed summary of income streams can be found in Notes 2 & 3 to the Financial Statements. The net effect of this is that Total Income has increased during the year by **£377,616 (53%)**.

Having reached a point where there is enough resource and stability to make longer term plans, one of the first strategic decisions has been to formalise the structure of the lowdown and the rates at which staff are paid.

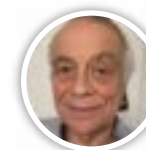
Where practicable, counsellors have been offered employment contracts and all wage rates have been adjusted to better reflect the industry rate for the work performed. Hopefully this will provide more security for staff and serve as an indication of the high regard in which we hold all of them. The cost of staff salaries and counsellors continues to be the largest item of expenditure and during the year this amounted to **75%** of total expenditure. The cost of salaries and counsellors amounted to **£654,639** for the year which represents an increase of **76%** over the previous year, due to increased staffing levels and pay increases.

Overheads have been carefully monitored during the year and significant expense increases are related to the opening and running of the premises in St Giles Street, property repairs at Kingswell Street and audit fees.

The Trustees of the lowdown would like to thank the Beckett's and Sargeant's Educational Foundation for the generous provision of the premises in Kingswell Street, and also all the organisations and individuals who have made donations, given their time or supported the lowdown in any other way.

A special thank you this year must go to the funders who have made the Lowdown Lounge possible. They are the Beatrice Laing Trust, Beckett's and Sargeant's, The Wilson Foundation and Michael Jones Jeweller – they have provided a fantastic resource for us with this facility. It is already making a huge difference to the young people we support who are greatly benefiting from it.

Jonathan Smith
Treasurer



How to Contact Us



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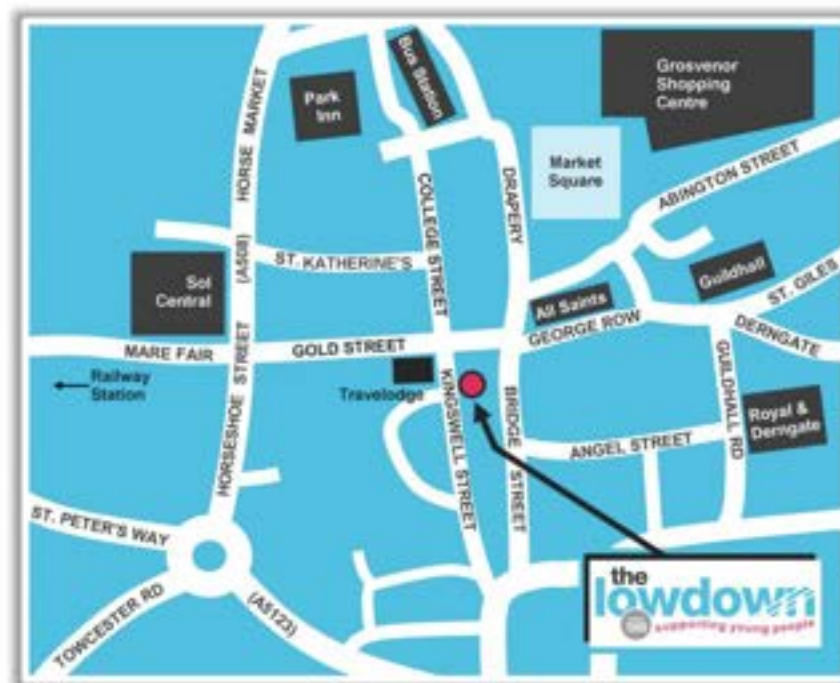
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- We are 2 mins from the North Gate Bus Station.
- If coming from Gold Street, turn at the Travelodge.
- Find the Red Door and ring the buzzer when you arrive.

**For information on all our services or to
make a referral, visit our website...**

www.thelowdown.info

