

Stepping Stones North Wales Annual Report 2024 - 2025

**Our 40th Year of supporting adult survivors
of childhood sexual abuse, and their
freinds and loved ones, across North Wales**



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Trustees:

Mr V McAllister - Chair

Ms J Henderson - Deputy Chair

Mr N Beesley - Treasurer

Mr S Thomas - Secretary



Introduction from our Chair

It is my great pleasure to present the Annual Report for 2024–2025. This year, I have been continually inspired by the commitment and passion of our staff, volunteers, and counsellors. Their tireless efforts have ensured that Stepping Stones North Wales remains a respected leader in supporting those affected by childhood sexual violence.

We were delighted to welcome Della Austin as our new Clinical Lead this year. Della has brought a dynamic and engaging approach, reviewing our service model/offer, suggesting improvements that have genuinely enhanced our efficiency, while maintaining the highest standards of care for our clients.

Like many small charities, we have faced ongoing challenges in securing financial support this year. I therefore want to commend our CEO for his remarkable resilience and determination in navigating these pressures and successfully identifying new funding streams.

The adaptability of our team has also been truly impressive. By actively seeking and responding to client feedback, we have kept our focus firmly on their needs. The many heartfelt testimonials we receive are a testament to the life-changing impact of our services.

Our volunteers have also stepped up in remarkable ways, taking on leadership roles in programmes like Next Steps, supporting fundraising efforts, and managing our complete social media presence.

This year, we have started to see tangible results from our five-year strategy, particularly in our digital initiatives. These changes have delivered cost savings, improved client data management, and developed new skills across our staff, volunteers, and counsellors.

We have also experienced changes within our Board and core staff. I would like to thank those who have moved on for their contributions and wish them every success in the future. Our small but resolute team has managed these transitions with professionalism and grace.

Above all, I want to acknowledge our clients, whose courage and resilience continue to inspire us all. Their journeys remind us why our work is so important.

Thank you all.
diolch yn fawr iawn i bawb.



Vince McAllister
Chair of the Board of Trustees



Message from our CEO

The past year, our charity's 40th year, has been one of both remarkable achievement for Stepping Stones North Wales – a testament to the professionalism and dedication of our whole team. It has also been a year of significant challenge for the charity. As we continue our mission to support adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse, along with their friends and loved ones, across the six counties of North Wales, we have strengthened our foundations, celebrated national recognition, and have risen to the challenges of the growing financial pressures that have impacted not only our charity but the entire specialist sector.

One of the highlights of the year was the launch of our new bilingual website — a project that reflects our commitment to accessibility, visibility, and hope. The new site provides a clearer pathway for survivors seeking support, as well as better tools for partners, funders, and the public to understand the work we do and the difference it makes. The website is managed entirely by volunteers and service users, providing valuable digital skills and training opportunities and helping to improve confidence.

We were also honoured, and immensely proud, to be named a GSK Impact Award winner this year, a prestigious recognition of the quality, innovation, and life-changing impact of our services. This achievement is a testament to the dedication of our staff, volunteers, trustees, and supporters, who embody compassion and professionalism every day.

In addition, we are proud to have achieved the Survivors Trust National Service Standards, further demonstrating our commitment to best practice, safeguarding, and excellence in trauma-informed care. These milestones affirm the integrity and effectiveness of our approach, built over many years of specialist experience.

However, these successes come against a backdrop of increasing financial pressure. Like many in our sector, we face a challenging funding environment — one that threatens the sustainability of vital services for survivors. The costs of delivering specialist, trauma-informed counselling continue to rise, while available resources have not kept pace. Despite these obstacles, we remain determined to adapt, advocate, and secure the support needed to continue changing lives across North Wales.

As we look ahead and progress with the implementation of our five-year strategy, Stepping Stones North Wales will continue to evolve — strengthening partnerships, amplifying survivors' voices, and ensuring that every person who turns to us is met with understanding, safety, and hope. Our achievements this year remind us of what is possible when compassion meets commitment.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the entire Stepping Stones North Wales team, including our invaluable volunteers, for all the work that has been undertaken to support our clients and to enhance our resilience.

And, of course, I must pay tribute to the courage of the survivors who come to us for support. The impact of the trauma of childhood sexual abuse can be devastating and it takes enormous courage to make that first call for help.

Thank you to everyone who has stood with us — together, we are making a lasting difference.



Philip Eastment, Chief Executive Officer



About Stepping Stones North Wales

Stepping Stones North Wales, established in 1984, is a specialist charity that provides trauma-informed counselling, free of charge, to adults who are survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

The charity currently works with 23 self-employed counsellors working across the six counties of North Wales. All of our counsellors are BACP registered and are led by our Clinical Lead. We provide a tailored approach for clients and offer a choice of gender of counsellor, venue, and time. All of our services are available in both Welsh and English.

Throughout the 2024 – 2025 financial year, the charity has continued to provide counselling support whereby sessions are not limited to a set number of sessions per client. Instead, clients have received counselling until they feel comfortable and confident enough to end their sessions. This person-centred approach is vital to the ethos of Stepping Stones North Wales but, due to the financial challenges impacting our specialist sector, we anticipate reviewing this delivery model early in the next financial year.

Our counselling and support service is accessible to everyone engaging in our service, we also offer up to eight weeks counselling to family and friends of survivors.

In addition to counselling, we offer client support, psychoeducational courses, and group activities. For example, our Next Steps Group service is open to all clients, primarily those coming to the end of their counselling journey with us. Referral is via our counsellors and is currently held monthly in Wrexham and Rhyl. Clients enjoy various activities including sewing, pottery, art, family days out. We also offer Maths, English and IT classes in conjunction with Coleg Cambria, and these are held weekly during term time.

Art Therapy is offered to clients at different stages of counselling and allows individuals to explore their thoughts and feelings through a mixture of talking and creative methods, assisting clients who may find talking therapy not appropriate - this is offered individually or in small groups.

We work in partnership with the Live Fear Free Helpline, who offer our First Steps weekly phone call service to clients on the waiting list. Clients also have direct access to the Helpline Service via our website, 24 hours a day.

We provide appropriate information about our service with marketing materials and our professional awareness sessions enable us to provide bespoke education and knowledge regarding trauma.

Our volunteers are invaluable members of our Whole Team. We offer a range of volunteering opportunities such as becoming a volunteer mentor, supporting our Next Steps groups and administration and fundraising support. Our website and social media is managed entirely by volunteers.



2024 was our charity's 40th year of supporting adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse across North Wales

Objectives and Activities

The objects of Stepping Stones North Wales, as registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales are:

To protect and preserve the good health, both mental and physical, of persons who have been victims of childhood sexual abuse and in particular by the provision of therapeutic intervention and individual and group counselling.

To advance the education of persons working with those who have been victims of childhood sexual abuse by the provision of training, information, consultation and support.

To advance the education of the general public in relation to childhood sexual abuse, the impact of it and the need for it to be eliminated in any ways which are charitable.

To protect and preserve the good health, both mental and physical, of those in need, in particular but not limited to minority groups, by the relief of need resulting from abuse.

The Charity's key objectives and aims are:

1. To promote and preserve the good health, both the mental and physical wellbeing of adults who are survivors of childhood sexual abuse.
2. Ensuring that all our services are available in both Welsh and English, to advance the education of persons working with those who are survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

Mission:

Our mission is to empower adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse (CSA) by providing them with a range of services that supports their mental and physical wellbeing over the long-term.

Vision:

Our vision is to be able to provide adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse with the opportunity to access the support they need, when they need it, and put early intervention and prevention at the heart of everything we do.

Strategic Goal:

To extend the charity's service offer, thus empowering those we help through sustainable, client led service projects, which will provide them with long-term positive outcomes.

Our core activities during 2024/2025 are:

1. Provision of one-to-one counselling and support to survivors of child sexual abuse (CSA) and their family members, carers, and friends as appropriate, throughout the six counties of North Wales.
2. A range of group activities, including educational and psychoeducational courses, as well as resources throughout the six counties of North Wales.
3. Ensuring high quality services by running regular Practise Days and sourcing appropriate training and development opportunities for our team.
4. Delivering appropriate education and outreach sessions to professionals and other individuals / groups to raise awareness of the effects of CSA and how survivors have been affected.
5. Working within policies, procedures, ethical practice guidelines and legislation to ensure our practice is safeguarded and our clients feel safe.
6. Continually consulting with individuals engaging with our service to develop new pathways of support in a collaborative way.

The Year in Numbers

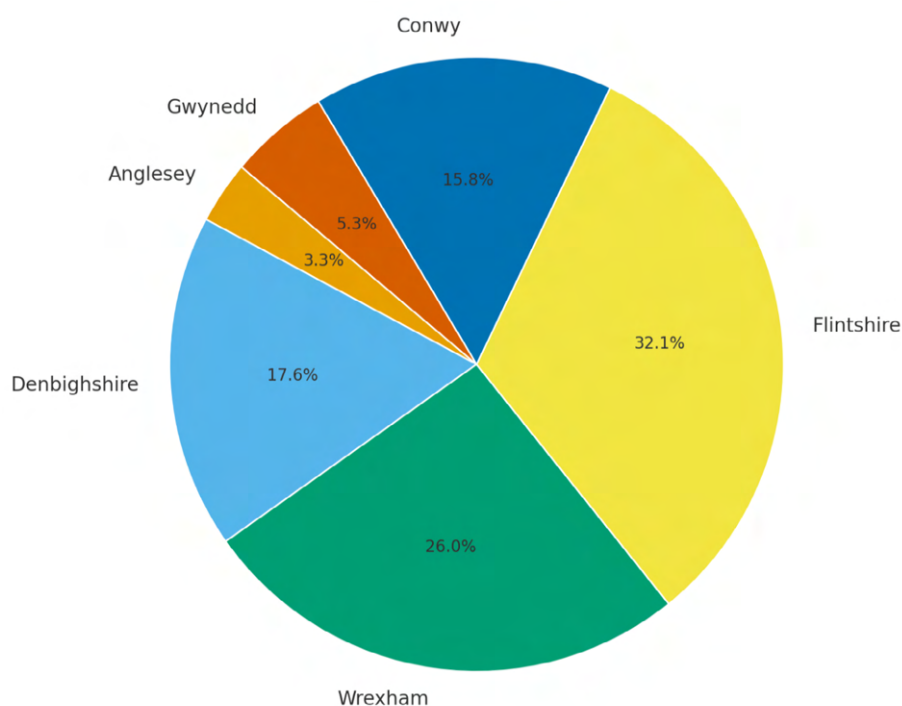
608
Individuals
Supported

468
Female

129
Male

11
Transgender
/ Non Binary
/ Intersex

Number of Clients Supported by County



380
Referrals
Female: 320
Male: 52
Transgender /
Non-Binary: 8

6532
One-to-One
Counselling
Sessions
Delivered

Support Services

We have continued to experience a steady number of referrals year on year. In February 2025, due to the financial uncertainty we were facing like so many charities, and due to an ever increasing number of referrals, the Board made the difficult decision to close our waiting list until additional funding was confirmed and whilst we implemented a new delivery model for our counselling provision. 50 clients on our waiting list were transferred to RASASC North Wales and we are grateful to the partnership and support provided by RASASC North Wales during this difficult time.

We constantly review and develop the services that we offer to our clients, looking to provide added value as well as improving our social impact; and have been able to meet the high demand for our services thanks to funding received.

During the year we experienced an increase in both the number of people engaged with our support services and the level of specialist therapeutic counselling provided. Following the recruitment of our Volunteering and Fundraising Officer in May 2024, and the securing of funding from sources such as UK Shared Prosperity Fund Denbighshire and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, we have also seen an increase in participation in our Next Steps groups, Art Therapy and Essential Skills training.

Following a demanding and lengthy process, in February 2025 Stepping Stones North Wales attained the Survivors Trust National Service Standards, reflecting the delivery of excellent services supporting victims / survivors of sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse. This award and accreditation provides credibility and confidence in our services and continues give survivors, funders and partners alike the reassurance that the support we provide, and how we provide it, is high quality, safe and survivor led:

'It is essential that all victims/survivors of sexual violence and abuse have access to quality service provision. To support this, TST National Service Standards have been developed to provide organisations with a quality framework to support their work and to ensure their service is sensitive to the needs of their service users, such as gender, sexuality, cultural and social backgrounds. TST National Service Standards centralise the empowerment and involvement of survivors in the delivery of support and services.'

Extract from TST website: <https://thesurvivorstrust.org/national-service-standards/>



First Steps:

Stepping Stones support clients throughout their counselling with us. Following initial assessment, those who want to continue their journey are supported by our First Steps initiative, receiving a support call weekly from the Live Fear Free Helpline (WWA – Welsh Women's Aid), until their first counselling sessions starts.



Llinell Gymorth Live Fear
Byw Heb Ofn Free Helpline

0808 80 10 800

ffôn • tecst • sgwrsio byw • ebost
call • text • live chat • email

For confidential information, advice or support around domestic abuse, sexual violence or violence against women.

It is a brave decision to reach out and ask for help, our Helpline operates 24 hrs a day 365 days a year, with out of hours and weekend calls kindly supported through our valued partnership working with Welsh Women's Aid.

Art Therapy:

In March 2025 we celebrated three years of Art Therapy at Stepping Stones North Wales.

Throughout 2024 / 2025 Stepping Stones North Wales developed its Group Art Therapy service through funding secured from the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner's 'Innovate to Grow' fund. Group Art Therapy can help survivors on many different levels including slowing down thinking and relaxing the mind, helping to build confidence within an accepting group of people with similar life experiences, enjoying being creative and sharing this creativity with others, reconnecting with playfulness, and reflecting on life events in a creative and symbolic way.

"I enjoy the therapeutic aspect of working creatively with my hands, touching the materials and combining this with my thoughts and feelings. I can work at my own pace to process difficult emotions and am finding that when I make something I can see and feel, even though it is informed by trauma, the resulting work is comforting and has meaning to me. I have regained a sense of control. The holistic approach feels very healing, especially thinking about stored body memories of trauma and learning ways to regulate the nervous system."

"I am learning to be more reflective but do struggle at times with rumination and expecting too much from myself. I am learning techniques in therapy to overcome this such as gentle self-talk and breathing and body work exercises. I find sound baths therapeutic and listen to these via YouTube."

"During therapy sessions I am introduced to new thoughts and ideas. I am becoming aware that over time I am absorbing and processing these ideas on a deeper level and that this is beneficial to me."

(Art Therapist client feedback, one-to-one online, July 2024)

Next Steps:

Our Next Steps support groups continue monthly at Rhyl and Wrexham, There have been a wide variety of activities held at both groups including pottery, art therapy and chocolate making. Stepping Stones North Wales' Next Steps service is open to all clients, primarily those coming to the end of their counselling journey with us. The aim of the groups is to provide additional and continued holistic support to clients, enabling that 'next step' in support offered. Throughout the year we have held 26 Next Steps meetings at Rhyl and Wrexham supporting 28 Next Steps members.

We are presently helping the trust create a mindful meadow at The National Trust Erddig, Felin Puleston site. Our next steps members have been painting stones for the pathways and creating artwork on bird boxes, the meadow will feature a 5ft high sculpture of stones balancing and we will be able to use the garden and meadow for next steps activities.

Coleg Cambria also provide weekly education classes in maths and English with four members presently working towards level 1, which is equivalent to a GCSE grade C. Two members attending the classes have said they can now help their children with homework and that their children see them as stronger parents being students and attending college.

Feedback from individuals that attend Next Steps say it has helped build their confidence, skills and self-esteem, they have also formed bonds of friendship and for some it is their only day of meeting people. We have had new members join recently. We have been able to arrange many food parcels for clients and their families and food and toy parcels have also been provided with the support of the Salvation Army. We have a link with a charity in London who regularly donate bedding and toiletries to us for use by our clients.



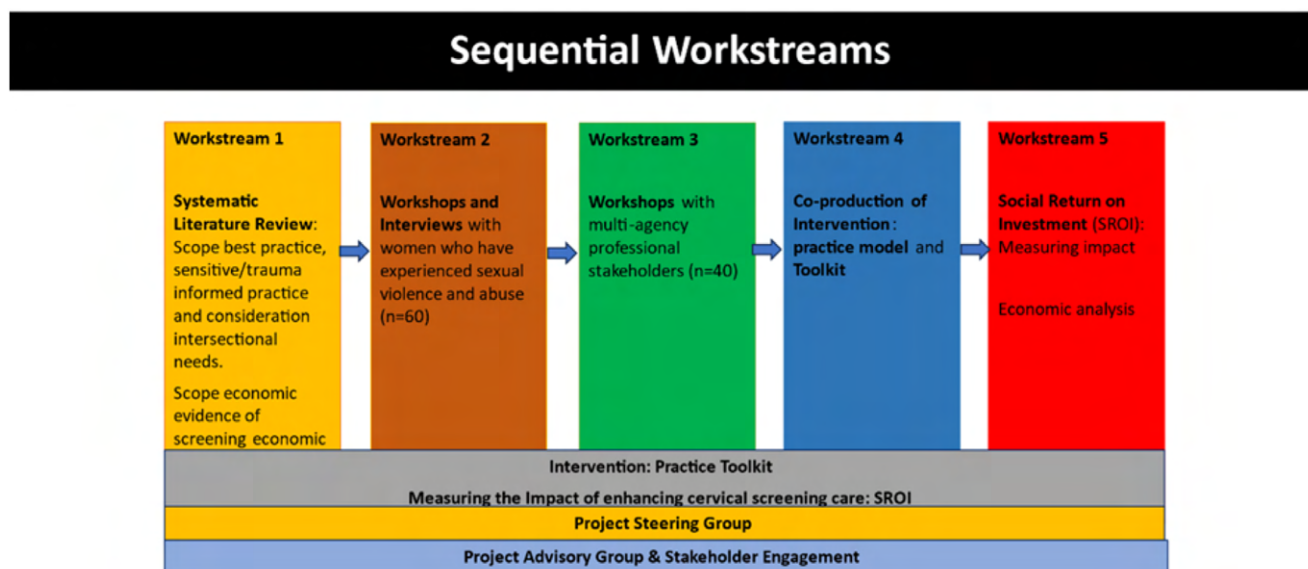
Cervical Screening Project:

The Cervical Screening Project is led by Stepping Stones North Wales. The National Institute for Health Care Research Advanced Fellowship funding has been allocated for the next 5 years, measuring the impact of enhancing cervical screening care for women who have experienced sexual violence and abuse across Wales, England and Australia. This is the first time this funding has ever come to Wales!

Stepping Stones North Wales are a key partner (as a member of both the Project Steering and Project Advisory Groups) on a successful 5-year international Advanced Fellowship, working alongside Dr Ceryl Teleri Davies, social care economist, based at the Centre for Health Economics and Medicines Evaluation, Bangor University. Stepping Stones is a central project partner, alongside several universities: Bristol, York, Swansea and Monash (Australia), clinical services: Cervical Screening Wales, MyBodyBack clinic (London), Sexual Assault Referral centre and other support services including, Welsh Women's Aid, Survivors Trust and BAWSO. The initial impetus for this study originated from female clients of Stepping-Stones, which was critical to the success of this advanced research project.

It will run from September 2024 to 2029 and will feedback to governments in the United Kingdom and Australia.

16 Stepping Stones North Wales survivors are leading as an advisory group and will be supporting this project fully, reporting back to Government. As a summary of the project, please see infographic summary of the project workstream below:



Volunteering:

Stepping Stones North Wales is fortunate to have 22 volunteers - each of them inspirational!

Our website and social media are managed entirely by volunteers.

We have 5 volunteer mentors who give wonderful support to clients in various ways, for example supporting members of Next Steps groups in Rhyl and Wrexham and also supporting clients at medical appointments and with form filling and general support requests.

We have a volunteer translator helping with Welsh translations who works closely with our digital volunteers to ensure our social media posts are bilingual. We also have fundraising volunteers who help with our crucial fundraising events.

On 6th June 2024, Community Voluntary Support Conwy Local Voluntary Council held a North Wales Volunteer Awards Evening, where awards of excellence were given to outstanding volunteers working within the charity sector. Stepping Stones North Wales saw 3 of our wonderful volunteers presented with their Volunteer Excellence Awards.



New Pathways, Stepping Stones, Umbrella Cymru & OB3 – LGBTQ+ Research Project:

Understanding the service needs of LGBTQ+ survivors of sexual violence in Wales

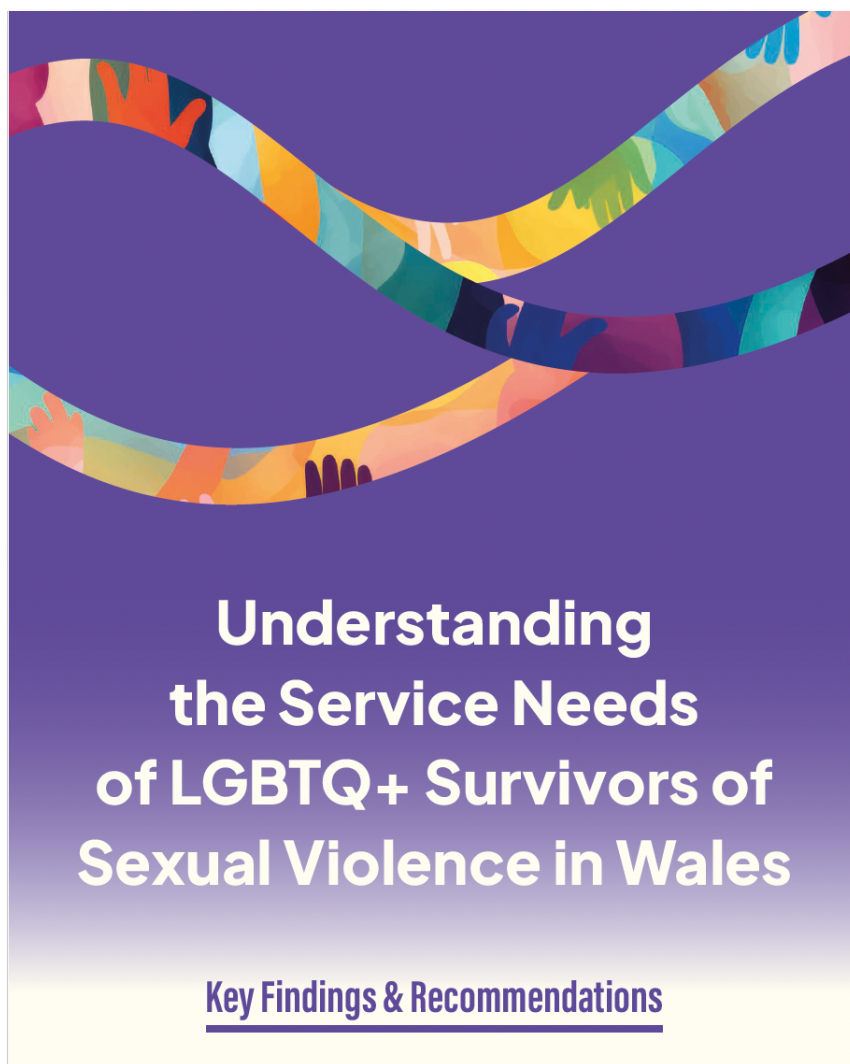
Stepping Stones North Wales was part of a consortium consisting of New Pathways, Stepping Stones North Wales, and Umbrella Cymru, supporting the delivery of a two-year pan-Wales project which aimed to inform service development for LGBTQ+ survivors of sexual violence. The project concluded in March 2025. Funded by the Home Office, it aimed to understand why people from LGBTQ+ communities seldom access sexual violence support services or report to the police.

Previous research suggests that people from LGBTQ+ communities are disproportionately affected by sexual violence. In support of this project, Stepping Stones North Wales recruited contributors, conducted interviews, and developed surveys which were vital to the success of this study.

Participants of the survey were invited to contribute their thoughts and experience by interview, at the end of the survey. All interview participants received a £25 voucher in recognition of their time.

The key findings and recommendations have been incorporated into our Whole Team training, helping Stepping Stones North Wales to become even more inclusive and welcoming.

The report can be viewed on the Stepping Stones North Wales by clicking [here](#)



Campaigning and Advocacy:

At Stepping Stones North Wales, we believe that advocacy is an essential part of our mission to support adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse. While our core focus remains delivering high-quality, trauma-informed counselling and support services, we recognise that systemic change is also needed to ensure long-term stability and sustainability for the survivors and communities we serve.

Our current funding model is largely dependent on annual grant cycles, which creates uncertainty for both our service users and our staff team. Year-to-year funding makes it difficult to plan ahead, retain skilled counsellors, and meet the growing demand for our services across North Wales. For this reason, political campaigning and engagement have become an important part of our work — ensuring that the voices of survivors and the realities of front-line organisations like ours are heard at every level of decision-making.

In October 2024, we met with Rhun ap Iorwerth MS, Leader of Plaid Cymru, and Llinos Medi, Member of Parliament for Ynys Môn, to discuss the urgent need for longer-term, sustainable funding arrangements for survivor support services. These discussions provided an opportunity to highlight the gaps in current provision, the increasing pressures on our counselling team, and the importance of trauma recovery services being recognised as an essential component of public health and wellbeing strategies.

In March 2025, we also met with Janet Finch-Saunders MS, Member of the Senedd for Aberconwy, to further raise awareness of the challenges facing third-sector organisations across North Wales. We discussed how consistent, multi-year funding could enable Stepping Stones North Wales to plan strategically, expand capacity, and continue delivering life-changing support to survivors in every county of the region.

Through this ongoing engagement with political representatives, Stepping Stones North Wales continues to advocate for a fairer, more secure funding landscape — one that recognises the lifelong impact of childhood sexual abuse and the vital importance of accessible, specialist support for survivors.



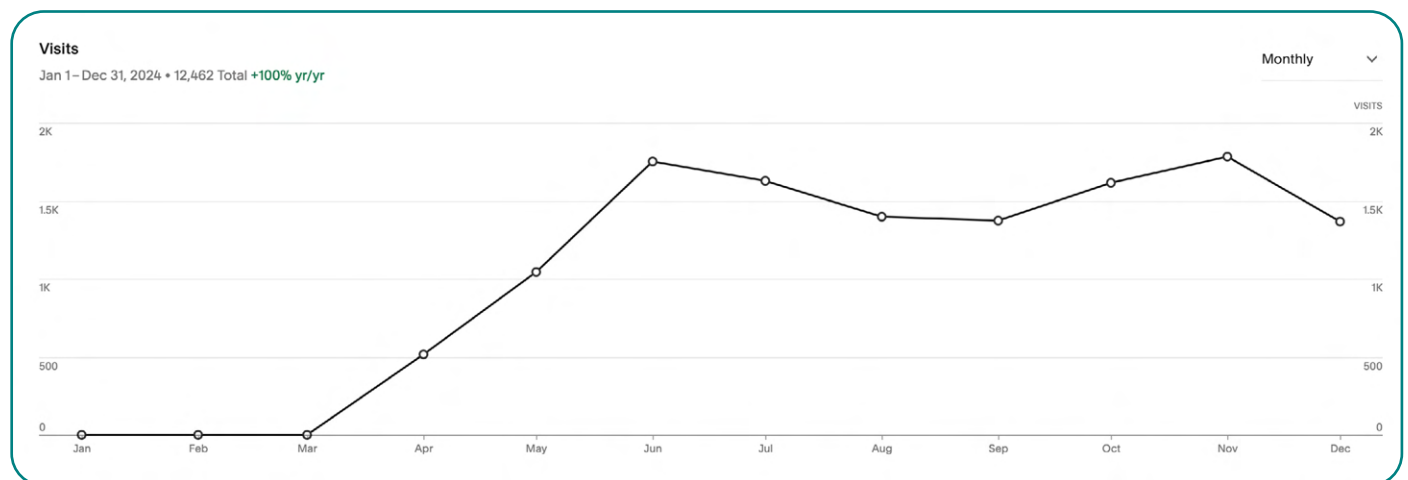
Stepping Stones North Wales staff and volunteers with Rhun ap Iorwerth MS (second from left) and Llinos Medi MP (fourth from left)

Stepping Stones North Wales' New Bilingual Website:

At Stepping After extensive consultation with service users, staff and volunteers, our new website was developed throughout April and May 2024. The decision was made to develop the website in house in order to maximise digital training opportunities for staff and volunteers to ensure that it met the charity's exact specifications.

The former website was difficult to operate, requiring external support. It was not adequately bilingual and, visually, it did not reflect our charity. The new website is managed entirely by volunteers, helping to create digital training opportunities.

With improved search engine optimisation, and through digital outreach using Meta, Stepping Stones North Wales' new website achieved a significant increase in unique visitors from roughly 500 in April 2024 to 1,749 two months later in June 2024.





[Ynghylch](#) [Ein gwasanaethau](#) [Y newyddion diweddaraf](#) [Pwy rydyn ni'n ei gefnogi](#) [Sefydliadau cefnogi Cymryd rhan](#) [Cymraeg](#)

Mynediad i'n gwasanaethau



Croeso i Cerrig Camu Gogledd Cymru

Cerrig Camu Gogledd Cymru

Cerrig Camu Mae'n cynnig cymorth a gwasanaeth cwsela proffesiynol i oedolion sy'n goroesi cam-drin rhywiol yn ystod plentynod.

Wedi'i sefydlu ym 1984, 2024 oedd ein 40fed flwyddyn o gefnogi oedolion sy'n goroesi cam-drin rhywiol yn ystod plentynod ar draws Gogledd Cymru.

Darperir ein gwasanaethau am ddim ac rydym yn gwasanaethu chwe awdurdod lleol Ynys Môn, Gwynedd, Conwy, Sir Ddinbych, Sir y Fflint a Wrecsam.

Rydym hefyd yn cynnig cefnogaeth i deulu a ffrindiau.

Cliciwch yma i ddysgu mwy amdanom ni

Safle Ymadael

Stepping Stones North Wales' new website's homepage
www.steppingstonesnorthwales.co.uk

Celebrating National Recognition: GSK IMPACT Award Winner 2025:



In March 2025, Stepping Stones North Wales was honoured to be named one of only ten winners of the 2025 GSK IMPACT Awards, delivered in partnership with The King's Fund. This prestigious national award recognises small and medium-sized charities across the UK that are doing outstanding work to improve people's health and wellbeing.

Winning this award is a significant achievement and a powerful endorsement of our work supporting adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse across North Wales. It highlights the skill, compassion, and commitment of our staff, volunteers, trustees, and supporters — all of whom make our life-changing services possible.

As part of the award, Stepping Stones North Wales received £40,000 in unrestricted funding, alongside a year of leadership development, training, and networking opportunities through The King's Fund. This investment is already helping to strengthen our organisational capacity, enhance our impact measurement, and amplify the voices of survivors in shaping our services. The GSK IMPACT Award judges praised Stepping Stones North Wales for delivering trauma-informed, high-quality counselling and support that transforms lives, while also raising awareness of the long-term effects of childhood sexual abuse. They recognised our deep community roots, robust partnerships, and dedication to ensuring that survivors feel heard, believed, and supported in their recovery.

Receiving this national recognition has been an inspiring milestone for everyone connected to Stepping Stones North Wales. It reaffirms the importance of our mission — and motivates us to continue growing, innovating, and advocating for a world where survivors can heal, rebuild, and thrive.

Judges' comments

'Stepping Stones North Wales is a charity striving for excellence in its work supporting adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse and their loved ones. While counselling remains at the heart of its services, it also supports those waiting to access its counselling service, for example by offering weekly telephone calls to everyone on the waiting list, and provides ongoing support to service users. It strives to identify underserved groups, has an incredible ability to adapt, and does vital work to address stigma surrounding childhood sexual abuse.'

Working in Partnership:

At Stepping Stones North Wales, partnership working remains at the heart of everything we do. By collaborating with a wide range of organisations, professionals, and community partners, we create opportunities for our team to learn from one another—enhancing our collective knowledge, skills, and practice.

Through these partnerships, ideas and information are shared freely, helping to foster a positive and mutually supportive environment. This collaborative approach not only strengthens our service delivery but also ensures that survivors receive the best possible support and outcomes.

Our joint efforts have led to positive results for the individuals and communities we work with, reflecting the value of shared learning and cooperation. We are deeply grateful to all our partners, supporters, and collaborators for their continued commitment and generosity. Your involvement has been instrumental in helping us make a lasting difference in the lives of survivors across North Wales.

In addition to our aforementioned partners on the LGBTQ+ Research Project and the Cervical Screening Project, we would like to thank all those who have been involved and provided their kind support.



Fundraising and Donations:



Stepping Stones North Wales is registered with the Fundraising Regulator

Sadly, adult victims / survivors of sexual abuse in childhood still need our support. We rely on donations and fundraising events to continue to provide that support and fundraising really can make a difference.

Examples of donations and fundraising achieved throughout the year include:

- A generous donation of £1000 from Ian Williams Limited, a property services company based in Wrexham and Denbighshire.
- Quiz nights.
- Carol concerts.
- Donations via Enthuse Charity Checkout, one-off donations and monthly Direct Debits.
- Stand at Pride Wrexham.
- Lotto Lwcus.
- Wheels Event: Classic cars, military vehicles, steam engines, food and live music. A family day organised by Coleg Cambria supporting three local charities, with our charity being one of them.



Stepping Stones North Wales is taking part in the Tesco Stronger Starts Community Project. Tesco Stronger Starts supports thousands of local community projects and good causes across the UK, delivered in partnership with Groundwork

UK, offering funding of up to £1,500 to support a wide range of community projects. You can support Stepping Stones by picking up a blue token at the checkout and placing the token in the box at the Tesco entrance, we have already received £5, 000 of funding and been chosen and currently featured by a further 3 Tesco stores at Prestatyn, Holywell and Flint.

We are particularly grateful for the wonderful support that Stepping Stones North Wales has received from Krystie Elleby and all the staff and customers of the King's Head in Rhuddlan. Krystie has been kindly organising Afternoon Teas in support of our charity and these events have been well attended by customers from throughout North Wales.

Corbett Sports, the largest independent betting and gaming company in Wales, established since 1947, by William Thomas Corbett, is supporting the work of Stepping Stones North Wales by hosting our charity collection tins in all their Corbett outlets in their Wrexham shops. We are delighted that such an established community Welsh company is supporting our vital work.



Client Feedback:

Our clients come to us with a variety of health and wellbeing needs, many of them trauma related, such as stress, anxiety, depression, PTSD, flashbacks, social anxiety, difficulty managing relationships and low self esteem.

The experiences our clients suffered impacts their day-to-day life, creating barriers to work, education and relationships.

The work we do, including counselling, group therapy, art therapy, psychoeducational courses and Next Steps significantly improves our client's quality of life and reduces the need for reliance on national health services.

We receive a large volume of positive feedback including thank you cards, letters and emails from our clients that demonstrate the positive impact that Stepping Stones North Wales has had on their lives. Examples include:

"Stepping Stones saved me. it may sound exaggerated but the counselling alone gave me a voice and showed me I'm believed, it also taught me coping techniques.

*"The groups after give me an escape for a few hours to be with people that I know understand my situation. the volunteers are welcoming and I honestly can say without them i'd still be stuck at home with my thoughts 24/7" **

and:

"As a childhood sexual abuse survivor I always found the thought of going to "regular" counselling too overwhelming, the knowledge that I had this "bomb to drop" that the counsellor probably wasn't expecting or may not be equipped to deal with prevented me from seeking help.

"Stepping Stones is the first time I have ever successfully engaged with counselling, knowing that my counsellor is coming in to the sessions already knowing that this is a part of my history has helped me to be able to speak to someone in a way I never have before.

"The counsellor I was assigned has been fantastic, the first time I spoke to her I was shaking like a leaf with anxiety and now a few weeks down the line I feel seen and heard and understood by her.

"I am so grateful that the counselling offered by Stepping Stones is available to me and other CSA survivors, it is invaluable to have a service like this where I felt I was starting from a base level of understanding that you wouldn't get from other counselling services."

*

* Client consent obtained.



Financial Summary

This year the charity has faced a very challenging financial environment, as it has for charities throughout our sector. Childhood sexual abuse remains shrouded in stigma and taboo, and this makes community and digital fundraising extremely challenging, increasing our dependence on public sector funding, trusts and foundations.

The entire charity sector has been hit by a perfect storm of increasing demand, increasing costs and ever-increasing competition for reduced funding levels. We have been able to deliver our services with the support of our main funders: The Ministry of Justice, the Welsh Government, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Moondance Foundation.

The testing financial environment has had a significant impact on the charity's financial accounts for 2024/25 and resulted in the decision to use a significant proportion of our reserves to meet funding shortfalls and cost pressures including increases in counselling fees, cost living increases and the uncertainty, competitiveness and delays in the funding.

Valuing our sessional counsellors, in April 2024 we implemented an increase in their session fees from £25 per session to £40 per session. Whilst this decision was both ethical and operationally essential, it resulted in our counselling fees rising from £246,200 in the previous financial year to £300,018 in the 24/25 financial year.

Our financial statements for the last financial year 2024/25, shows a deficit of £105,499. Due to our careful financial discipline, we had reserves in place that could be used to ensure that we were able to continue our essential services, and we have been able to remain debt free. Use of these reserves was a deliberate and considered decision by the Board of Trustees, taken to protect the continuity of our services while longer-term funding solutions were secured.

Recognising these ongoing challenges the charity has implemented a financial strategy to diversify income streams and increase the efficiency and reduce costs within our service provision. This strategy has been successful; we are now fully funded for the next financial year and are rebuilding our reserves. This strategy has included the following actions:

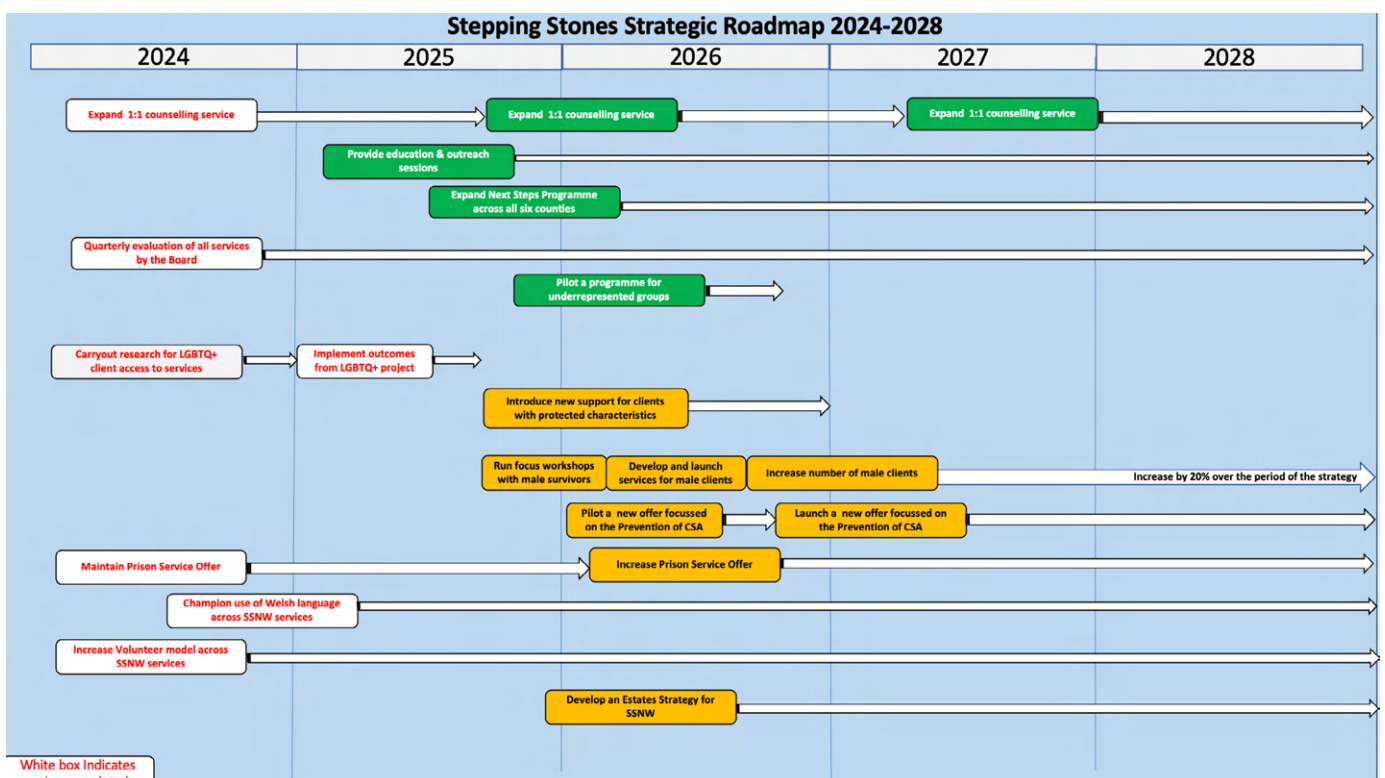
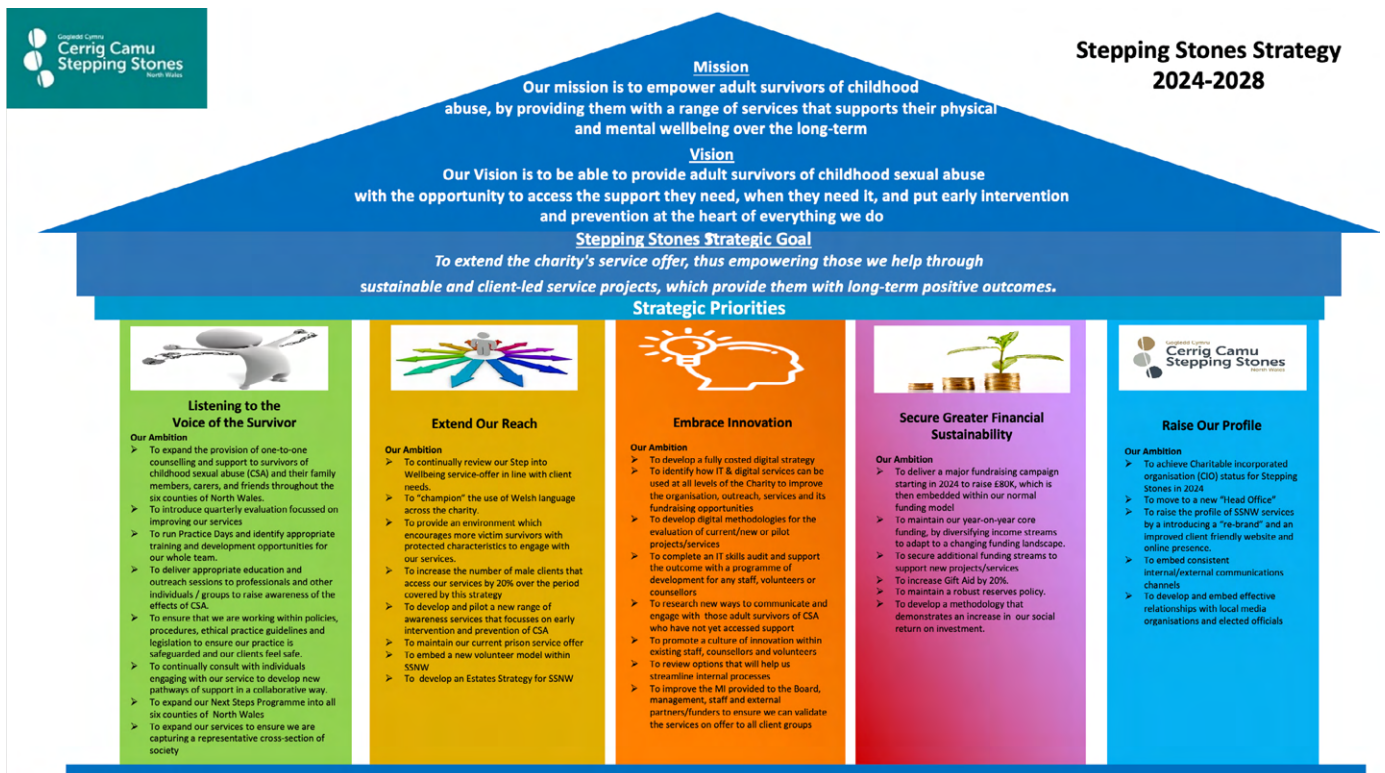
- Maximising opportunities for innovation/digitalisation
- Developing genuine long-term partnerships with trusts and foundations such as the Albert Gubay Foundation, and our new three-year relationship with the Lloyds Bank Foundation, where we also acquire an in-house skill transfer
- Reducing operating costs significantly with the launch of a new bi-lingual website, developed in-house and used to provide digital training skills to clients and volunteers. In July 2024 we also brought our IT provision in-house
- Implementing a recruitment freeze, until such time as our funding allows us to continue with our long-term operating model
- The end-to-end clinical-service provision has been reviewed to manage more effectively the counselling through-put. This involves a more rigorous review process to manage the scope of the counselling provision for clients so that clients can more speedily complete their counselling experience and move on to other therapies provided by the charity. This will reduce the average cost per client without impacting the benefits clients receive in dealing with their trauma

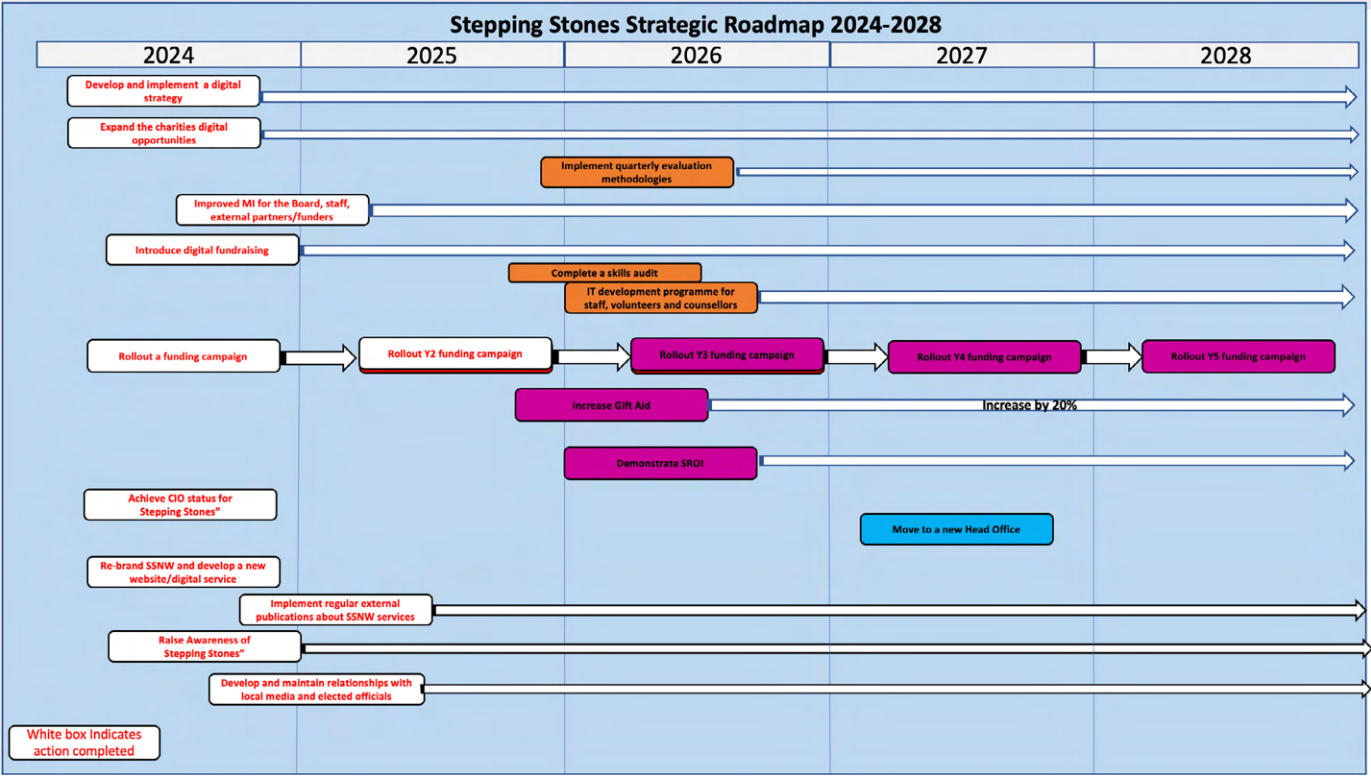
As a result of our financial strategy, and our programme of change throughout the financial year, and our relationship with our funders, we are pleased to report that the current financial year (2025/26) is already fully funded, with income secured from a range of trusted public sector partners and new funding streams including trusts and foundations.

Future Plans

Our strategy for 2024 to 2028 consists of the following strategic priority areas:

- Listening to the voice of the Survivor
- Extend our Reach
- Embrace Innovation
- Secure Greater Financial Sustainability
- Raise our Profile





Celebrating Three Years of Art Therapy at Stepping Stones North Wales





Stepping Stones North Wales
Tŷ Aurora
59 King Street
Wrexham
LL11 1HR

Registered Charity Number: 1207418

T: 01978 809 921 / 07814 358 882 | E: info@steppingstonesnorthwales.co.uk

W: steppingstonesnorthwales.co.uk

Report of the Trustees and
Unaudited Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025
for
Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Hatcher Hughes Limited
Cassidy House
Station Road
Chester
Cheshire
CH1 3DW

Contents of the Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2025

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Cash Flow Statement	9
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Notes to the Financial Statements	11 to 19
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities	20 to 21

The trustees 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).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

The Charities key objectives and aims are:

1. To promote and preserve the good health, both mental and physical wellbeing, of individuals who have been victims of childhood sexual abuse.
2. To advance the education of persons working with those who have been victims of childhood sexual abuse.

Significant activities

Our core activities are: Provision of one to one counselling and support to victims / survivors of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) and their family members, carers and friends as appropriate throughout the six counties of North Wales. We offer a range of services including:

- In-person, remote (online/phone) counselling and support
- Psychoeducational courses and resources, Step into Wellbeing
- Art Therapy
- Educational outreach sessions for professionals
- Non-therapeutic group activities
- ISVA service

Public benefit

We achieve public benefit by offering a free counselling and support service which is accessible to everyone engaging with our service, in a range of locations across North Wales. We also offer clients a choice of time availability, gender of counsellor and language in counselling sessions. The beneficiaries of the organisation's activities are adults who have been victims of childhood sexual abuse, and indirectly their families, carers and communities. Stepping Stones offers practical and emotional support and specialist counselling services through various pathways to empower people to take control of their own lives and enhance their recovery so that they can enjoy improved health and wellbeing.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Charitable activities

The past year has been a time of both challenge and achievement for Stepping Stones North Wales. Despite a difficult funding climate and increased demand for our services, we continued to provide vital, life-changing support to adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse across the six counties of North Wales.

In 2024/25, we supported 525 clients in managing/overcoming their trauma related to childhood sexual abuse, providing 6532 one-to-one counselling sessions through our free counselling and support services, ensuring that no one was turned away due to lack of funds.

In addition to our core counselling services, we have continued to develop our provision of our popular Art Therapy sessions across North Wales with funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Innovate to Grow fund being central to this development.

Through the recruitment of a Volunteering and Fundraising Officer, we have also continued to develop our Next Steps groups in Rhyl and Wrexham which offers ongoing support after the counselling sessions, providing a support group, social activities, and help to ensure that improvements are maintained, and reducing the frequency of repeat referrals.

We have continued to work in partnership with stakeholders throughout Wales and the sector. Working in partnership with New Pathways in South Wales and Umbrella Cymru we completed a research project LGBTQ+ community to co-produce a report identifying why engagement with sexual violence services from members of the LGBTQ+ community is low. As a result of this partnership, we have developed an engagement strategy, delivered across 2024/25, and are continuing to tailor our services to meet the needs of this community.

We presently have 22 volunteers, with one of our volunteer mentors now managing all of our social media sites, and we have another volunteer translator helping with Welsh translation. Recently 8 volunteers won awards at the Volunteer Awards, held at Wrexham and Conwy, during Volunteer Week.

We also work in partnership with Coleg Cambria to provide weekly education classes in Maths and English for our clients with 4 women presently working towards level 1, which is equivalent to a GCSE grade C. Two women attending the classes have said they can now help their children with homework, and that their children see them as stronger women being students and attending college.

We have been able to arrange many food parcels for clients and their families and have a link with a charity in London who regularly donates bedding and toiletries to us to pass onto our clients.

Stepping Stones North Wales has been the lead partner for a project funded by The National Institute for Health Care Research Advanced Fellowship. Funding has been allocated for the next 5 years, measuring the impact of enhancing cervical screening care for women who have experienced sexual violence and abuse across Wales, England and Australia. This is the first time this funding has ever come to Wales.

It will run from September 2024 to 2029 and will feedback to both the UK and Australian governments, with 16 survivors from Stepping Stones North Wales leading the advisory group.

In February 2025 it was confirmed that Stepping Stones North Wales was one of the ten winning charities of the 2025 King's Fund GSK Impact awards. This is a hugely prestigious award and, with over 720 entries from charities throughout the UK, our whole team is hugely proud of this success which is such a powerful reflection of the standards at which we operate and the impact of our services.

In January 2025 it was confirmed that we had passed the accreditation process with The Survivors Trust and that we have attained the Survivors Trust's National Service Standards. Again, this reflects the high operational standards of our charity.

Looking ahead, Stepping Stones North Wales remains committed to our mission of supporting survivors to rebuild their lives. With secured funding, strong governance, and a dedicated team, we are confident in our ability to deliver high-quality services, strengthen partnerships, and safeguard the charity's financial sustainability for years to come.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

This year the charity has faced a very challenging financial environment, as it has for charities throughout our sector. Childhood sexual abuse remains shrouded in stigma and taboo, and this makes community and digital fundraising extremely challenging, increasing our dependence on public sector funding, trusts and foundations. The entire charity sector has been hit by a perfect storm of increasing demand, increasing costs and ever-increasing competition for reduced funding levels.

We have been able to deliver our services with the support of our main funders: The Ministry of Justice, the Welsh Government, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Moondance Foundation.

The testing financial environment has had a significant impact on the charity's financial accounts for 2024/25 and resulted in the decision to use a significant proportion of our reserves to meet funding shortfalls and cost pressures including increases in counselling fees, cost living increases and the uncertainty, competitiveness and delays in the funding.

In April 2024 we increased the session fees paid to our counsellors from £25 per session to £40 per session. Whilst this decision was both ethical and operationally essential, it resulted in our counselling fees rising from £246,200 in the previous financial year to £300,018 in the 24/25 financial year.

Our financial statements for the last financial year 2024/25, shows a deficit of £105,499.

Due to our careful financial discipline, we had reserves in place that could be used to ensure that we were able to continue our essential services, and we have been able to remain debt free. Use of these reserves was a deliberate and considered decision by the Board of Trustees, taken to protect the continuity of our services while longer-term funding solutions were secured.

Recognising these ongoing challenges the charity has implemented a financial strategy to diversify income streams and increase the efficiency and reduce costs within our service provision, which means we are now fully funded for this financial year and are rebuilding our reserves. This has included the following actions:

- Maximising opportunities for innovation/digitalisation.
- Reviewing DEXT AI capability to simplify financial processes and reduce the resource input needed each month.
- Developing genuine long-term partnerships with trusts and foundations such as the Albert Gubay Foundation, and our new three-year relationship with the Lloyds Bank Foundation, where we also acquire an in-house skill transfer,
- Reducing operating costs significantly with the launch of a new bi-lingual website, developed in-house and used to provide digital training skills to clients and volunteers. In July 2024 we also brought our IT provision in-house,
- Implementing a recruitment freeze, until such time as our funding allows us to continue with our long-term operating model,
- The end-to-end clinical-service provision has been reviewed to manage more effectively the counselling through-put. This involves a more rigorous review process to manage the scope of the counselling provision for clients so that clients can more speedily complete their counselling experience and move on to other therapies provided by the charity. This will reduce the average cost per client without impacting the benefits clients receive in dealing with their trauma,
- Significantly developed our in-house skills and knowledge in the completion of funding bids, hence our improved financial status.

As a result of our financial strategy, and our programme of change throughout the financial year, and our relationship with our funders, we are pleased to report that the current financial year (2025/26) is already fully funded, with income secured from a range of trusted public sector partners and new funding streams including trusts and foundations.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Principal funding sources

In March 2025 we were provided with an additional £102,000 in funding from Welsh Government. This support helped to replenish our reserves and to reduce our deficit for the financial year. We are particularly grateful to the Welsh Government for this support.

We have also received invaluable financial and non-financial support from the partnerships built with the Lloyds Bank Foundation and Welsh Women's Aid; together with contributions from local providers, such as Ian Williams Builder Ltd. We are grateful to RASASC North Wales for taking 50 clients from our waiting list in March 2024 when significant spikes in demand were causing unacceptable waiting times for counselling.

We would like to thank all of those organisations and individuals who have supported our work.

Reserves policy

Our reserves are held to provide the necessary funds to continue to offer our counselling and support services, should some funding sources not be retained and/or new ones not secured.

Our reserves policy is reviewed annually in line with Charity Commission guidance and our target is with the intention of covering six months' costs, which vary from year-to-year.

At 31 March 2025, we have £173,298 in unrestricted reserves. (2024 - £248,987).

We continue to operate in an uncertain financial period, with the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and a decrease in statutory funding available. Strong competition for funding continues, and it is an ongoing challenge to try to secure funding for core running costs, alongside the funding we require for the specialist counselling and support services that we offer.

Funds in deficit

There are no funds in deficit as at 31 March 2025.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust and constitutes an unincorporated charity.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

Stepping Stones looks to recruit trustees from a variety of backgrounds who share the values of the organisation and can contribute a specific skill or experience to support the charity. We continually look to improve and supplement the trustee skill set.

The recruitment process for trustees involves the submission of an initial letter, completion of an application form, interview, satisfactory references and DBS checks. Trustees are elected to post by the board at general meetings, proposed and seconded by separate board members. External bodies are not entitled to appoint trustees.

Organisational structure

Stepping Stones North Wales was established in 1984 and became a registered charity in 1995. We have our main office base in Wrexham, including a suite of counselling rooms. We offer our service across the whole of North Wales with rented and leased rooms in all Counties. All of our services are currently available to eligible individuals free of charge. Our organisation is overseen by a Board of Trustees who are responsible for overall governance and management. We work with a team of up to 25 Professional Counsellors, Associates and Supervisors and between 15 & 30 volunteers who support our work in a variety of roles including as Mentors, Facilitators, Fundraisers, Events Management, Advocates and Administration.

We actively seek collaborative opportunities with relevant charities and other organisations.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity number

1043390

Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Report of the Trustees
for the year ended 31 March 2025

Principal address

59 King Street
Wrexham
LL11 1HR

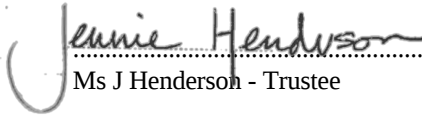
Trustees

Ms J Henderson
Mr N Beesley
Mrs J Williams (resigned 28.5.24)
Ms K McCall (resigned 26.11.24)
Mr V McAllister
Mr S Thomas (appointed 8.10.24)

Independent Examiner

Nina Hughes
Hatcher Hughes Limited
Cassidy House
Station Road
Chester
Cheshire
CH1 3DW

Approved by order of the board of trustees on2nd September 2025..... and signed on its behalf by:


.....
Ms J Henderson - Trustee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Stepping Stones North Wales CIO (the Trust) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since your charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a listed body. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Nina Hughes

Hatcher Hughes Limited
Cassidy House
Station Road
Chester
Cheshire
CH1 3DW

9/3/2025

Date:

Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	31.3.25 Total funds £	31.3.24 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	387,197	67,809	455,006	454,831
Other trading activities	3	3,124	-	3,124	-
Investment income	4	3,092	-	3,092	4,820
Other income		1,625	-	1,625	1,470
Total		<u>395,038</u>	<u>67,809</u>	<u>462,847</u>	<u>461,121</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	5	1,846	-	1,846	-
Charitable activities					
Counselling	6	468,881	97,619	566,500	520,631
Other		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,974</u>
Total		<u>470,727</u>	<u>97,619</u>	<u>568,346</u>	<u>525,605</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(75,689)	(29,810)	(105,499)	(64,484)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		248,987	32,889	281,876	346,360
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>173,298</u></u>	<u><u>3,079</u></u>	<u><u>176,377</u></u>	<u><u>281,876</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

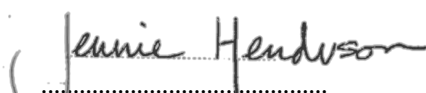
Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Balance Sheet

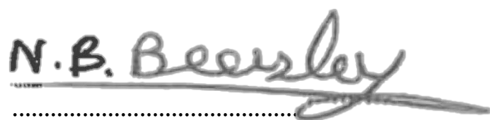
31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	31.3.25 Total funds £	31.3.24 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	11	804	-	804	5,837
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	12	134,762	-	134,762	41,416
Cash at bank and in hand		72,534	3,079	75,613	267,272
		<u>207,296</u>	<u>3,079</u>	<u>210,375</u>	<u>308,688</u>
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	13	(34,802)	-	(34,802)	(32,649)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>172,494</u>	<u>3,079</u>	<u>175,573</u>	<u>276,039</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>173,298</u>	<u>3,079</u>	<u>176,377</u>	<u>281,876</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>173,298</u>	<u>3,079</u>	<u>176,377</u>	<u>281,876</u>
FUNDS	14				
Unrestricted funds				173,298	248,987
Restricted funds				3,079	32,889
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>176,377</u>	<u>281,876</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 2nd September 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:



 Ms J Henderson - Trustee



 Mr N Beesley - Trustee

Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Cash Flow Statement
for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	(193,827)	(49,909)
Interest paid		147	(5,060)
Net cash used in operating activities		(193,680)	(54,969)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(1,071)	(2,248)
Interest received		3,092	4,820
Net cash provided by investing activities		2,021	2,572
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		(191,659)	(52,397)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		267,272	319,669
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		75,613	267,272

The notes form part of these financial statements

Notes to the Cash Flow Statement
for the year ended 31 March 2025

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

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Net expenditure for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	(105,499)	(64,484)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	6,104	8,915
Interest received	(3,092)	(4,820)
Interest paid	(147)	5,060
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(93,346)	14,591
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	2,153	(9,171)
Net cash used in operations	<u>(193,827)</u>	<u>(49,909)</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>267,272</u>	<u>(191,659)</u>	<u>75,613</u>
	<u>267,272</u>	<u>(191,659)</u>	<u>75,613</u>
Total	<u>267,272</u>	<u>(191,659)</u>	<u>75,613</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2025

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.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets

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

Plant and machinery - 25% on cost

Taxation

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

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Donations	2,176	12,031
Grants	452,830	442,800
	<u>455,006</u>	<u>454,831</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES - continued

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

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Ministry of Justice		
	101,800	129,207
Welsh Government		
	43,380	43,380
OPCC North Wales	49,617	99,182
LLoyds Bank Foundation	-	25,000
North Wales Commissioners	-	107,983
Gwynt Y Mor Grant	25,000	-
Welsh Womens' Aid	-	4,000
New Pathways	10,070	30,000
Co-op Community Fund	-	4,048
Moon Dance Foundation	54,814	-
Cloth Workers Foundation	4,000	-
Denbighshire Key Fund	4,500	-
Welsh Church Acts Fund	450	-
Denbighshire People & Skills Fund	13,949	-
GSK Impact Award	40,000	-
Welsh Government (WL1)	102,000	-
Tesco	3,250	-
	<u>452,830</u>	<u>442,800</u>

UNRESTRICTED AND RESTRICTED FUNDS

Ministry of Justice

Ministry of Justice - £101,800.

The grant was received to provide funds for running services to support survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

WELSH GOVERNMENT

This is a revenue grant to fund our core counselling services.

WELSH GOVERNMENT (WL1)

Received to maintain our core counselling services.

OPCC NORTH WALES

Funding of £43,027 to provide counselling and support services to adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse and £6,590 restricted funding for the provision of Art Therapy.

NEW PATHWAYS

This was funding received from a Lead Partner towards a LGBTQ+ Research Project.

MOON DANCE FOUNDATION

Received to maintain our core counselling services.

CLOTHWORKERS FOUNDATION

Restricted funding towards the cost of our Oasis database software.

DENBIGHSHIRE KEY FUND

Restricted funding to be applied to our brand and website design.

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES - continued

WELSH CHURCH ACTS FUND

Restricted funding contributing to our Nex Steps Activity.

DENBIGHSHIRE PEOPLE & SKILLS FUND Restricted funding contributing to our Next Steps Activity.

GSK IMPACT AWARD

An impact award for excellence in service provision.

TESCO

Restricted funding contributing to our Next Steps Activity.

3. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Fundraising events	3,124	-
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Deposit account interest	3,092	4,820
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

5. RAISING FUNDS

Raising donations and legacies

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Fundraising costs	1,846	-
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

6. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs	Support costs (see note 7)	Totals
	£	£	£
Counselling	518,405	48,095	566,500
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

7. SUPPORT COSTS

	Management £	Finance £	Governance costs £	Totals £
Counselling	<u>42,162</u>	<u>(147)</u>	<u>6,080</u>	<u>48,095</u>

Support costs, included in the above, are as follows:

Management

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	Counselling	Total
	£	activities
Wages	39,716	£
Rent	2,025	37,033
Light and Heat	421	2,025
	<u>42,162</u>	<u>401</u>
	<u>42,162</u>	<u>39,459</u>

Finance

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	Counselling	Total
	£	activities
Bank Charges	(147)	£
Fraud - Stolen funds	-	86
	<u>(147)</u>	<u>4,974</u>
	<u>(147)</u>	<u>5,060</u>

Governance costs

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	Counselling	Total
	£	activities
Accountancy and legal fees	6,080	£
	<u>6,080</u>	<u>4,890</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

During the year ended 31 March 2025 trustees' expenses paid totalled £793. (2024 - £799)

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

9. STAFF COSTS

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Wages and salaries	158,864	148,133
Social security costs	9,860	8,906
Other pension costs	3,903	3,666
	<u>172,627</u>	<u>160,705</u>

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

	31.3.25	31.3.24
Management	-	2
Administration and Finance	-	2
Volunteering and Fundraising	-	1
ISVA and Step into Wellbeing	-	3
Cleaning	-	1
	<u>-</u>	<u>9</u>

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

10. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	316,113	138,718	454,831
Investment income	4,820	-	4,820
Other income	1,470	-	1,470
Total	<u>322,403</u>	<u>138,718</u>	<u>461,121</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Counselling	414,802	105,829	520,631
Other	4,974	-	4,974
Total	<u>419,776</u>	<u>105,829</u>	<u>525,605</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	<u>(97,373)</u>	<u>32,889</u>	<u>(64,484)</u>
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	346,360	-	346,360
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>248,987</u>	<u>32,889</u>	<u>281,876</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

11. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Plant and machinery £
COST	
At 1 April 2024	38,277
Additions	1,071
At 31 March 2025	39,348
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 April 2024	32,440
Charge for year	6,104
At 31 March 2025	38,544
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2025	804
At 31 March 2024	5,837

12. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Trade debtors	133,672	40,896
Other debtors	1,090	520
	134,762	41,416

13. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Trade creditors	4,740	3,691
Taxation and social security	4,495	-
Other creditors	25,567	28,958
	34,802	32,649

14. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.24 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.25 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	248,987	(75,689)	173,298
Restricted funds			
TESCO	-	3,079	3,079
Welsh Womens Aid	4,000	(4,000)	-
New Pathways	28,889	(28,889)	-
	32,889	(29,810)	3,079
TOTAL FUNDS			
	281,876	(105,499)	176,377

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

14. 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	395,038	(470,727)	(75,689)
Restricted funds			
OPCC North Wales	6,590	(6,590)	-
TESCO	3,250	(171)	3,079
Welsh Womens Aid	-	(4,000)	(4,000)
New Pathways	10,070	(38,959)	(28,889)
Clothworkers Grant	4,000	(4,000)	-
Denbighshire Key Fund	4,500	(4,500)	-
GYM Gwynt Y Mor	25,000	(25,000)	-
Welsh Church Acts Fund	450	(450)	-
Denbighshire Skills & People Fund	13,949	(13,949)	-
	<u>67,809</u>	<u>(97,619)</u>	<u>(29,810)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>462,847</u>	<u>(568,346)</u>	<u>(105,499)</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	346,360	(97,373)	248,987
Restricted funds			
Welsh Womens Aid	-	4,000	4,000
New Pathways	-	28,889	28,889
	<u>-</u>	<u>32,889</u>	<u>32,889</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>346,360</u>	<u>(64,484)</u>	<u>281,876</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

14. 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	322,403	(419,776)	(97,373)
Restricted funds			
Ministry of Justice	7,836	(7,836)	-
OPCC North Wales	96,882	(96,882)	-
Welsh Womens Aid	4,000	-	4,000
New Pathways	30,000	(1,111)	28,889
	<u>138,718</u>	<u>(105,829)</u>	<u>32,889</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>461,121</u></u>	<u><u>(525,605)</u></u>	<u><u>(64,484)</u></u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.4.23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.25 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	346,360	(173,062)	173,298
Restricted funds			
TESCO	-	3,079	3,079
	<u>346,360</u>	<u>(169,983)</u>	<u>176,377</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>346,360</u></u>	<u><u>(169,983)</u></u>	<u><u>176,377</u></u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

14. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	717,441	(890,503)	(173,062)
Restricted funds			
Ministry of Justice	7,836	(7,836)	-
OPCC North Wales	103,472	(103,472)	-
TESCO	3,250	(171)	3,079
Welsh Womens Aid	4,000	(4,000)	-
New Pathways	40,070	(40,070)	-
Clothworkers Grant	4,000	(4,000)	-
Denbighshire Key Fund	4,500	(4,500)	-
GYM Gwynt Y Mor	25,000	(25,000)	-
Welsh Church Acts Fund	450	(450)	-
Denbighshire Skills & People Fund	13,949	(13,949)	-
	206,527	(203,448)	3,079
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>923,968</u>	<u>(1,093,951)</u>	<u>(169,983)</u>

15. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2025

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	2,176	12,031
Grants	452,830	442,800
	455,006	454,831
Other trading activities		
Fundraising events	3,124	-
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	3,092	4,820
Other income		
Room rentals	1,625	1,470
Total incoming resources	462,847	461,121
EXPENDITURE		
Raising donations and legacies		
Fundraising costs	1,846	-
Charitable activities		
Wages	119,148	111,100
Social security	9,860	8,906
Pensions	3,903	3,666
Insurance	1,478	2,254
Light and heat	2,385	2,272
Telephone	3,670	3,520
Postage and stationery	1,143	1,745
Sundries	4,025	3,897
Professional Fees	2,531	6,709
Memberships	1,165	1,675
Rent & Rates	13,194	12,458
Training	860	4,683
Travel expenses	2,670	6,523
Counselling & supervision fees	300,018	246,200
IT charges	8,537	10,556
Repairs and maintenance	2,583	3,518
Agency staff costs	-	23,619
Consultancy fees	1,678	701
Room Hire	16,995	13,279
Oasis database software	16,458	-
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	6,104	8,915
	518,405	476,196
Support costs		

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2025

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Support costs		
Management		
Wages	39,716	37,033
Rent	2,025	2,025
Light and Heat	421	401
	42,162	39,459
Finance		
Bank Charges	(147)	86
Fraud - Stolen funds	-	4,974
	(147)	5,060
Governance costs		
Accountancy and legal fees	6,080	4,890
	568,346	525,605
Total resources expended		
Net expenditure	(105,499) 	(64,484)

Report of the Trustees and
Unaudited Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025
for
Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Hatcher Hughes Limited
Cassidy House
Station Road
Chester
Cheshire
CH1 3DW

Contents of the Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2025

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Balance Sheet	8
Cash Flow Statement	9
Notes to the Cash Flow Statement	10
Notes to the Financial Statements	11 to 19
Detailed Statement of Financial Activities	20 to 21

The trustees 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).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

The Charities key objectives and aims are:

1. To promote and preserve the good health, both mental and physical wellbeing, of individuals who have been victims of childhood sexual abuse.
2. To advance the education of persons working with those who have been victims of childhood sexual abuse.

Significant activities

Our core activities are: Provision of one to one counselling and support to victims / survivors of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) and their family members, carers and friends as appropriate throughout the six counties of North Wales. We offer a range of services including:

- In-person, remote (online/phone) counselling and support
- Psychoeducational courses and resources, Step into Wellbeing
- Art Therapy
- Educational outreach sessions for professionals
- Non-therapeutic group activities
- ISVA service

Public benefit

We achieve public benefit by offering a free counselling and support service which is accessible to everyone engaging with our service, in a range of locations across North Wales. We also offer clients a choice of time availability, gender of counsellor and language in counselling sessions. The beneficiaries of the organisation's activities are adults who have been victims of childhood sexual abuse, and indirectly their families, carers and communities. Stepping Stones offers practical and emotional support and specialist counselling services through various pathways to empower people to take control of their own lives and enhance their recovery so that they can enjoy improved health and wellbeing.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Charitable activities

The past year has been a time of both challenge and achievement for Stepping Stones North Wales. Despite a difficult funding climate and increased demand for our services, we continued to provide vital, life-changing support to adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse across the six counties of North Wales.

In 2024/25, we supported 525 clients in managing/overcoming their trauma related to childhood sexual abuse, providing 6532 one-to-one counselling sessions through our free counselling and support services, ensuring that no one was turned away due to lack of funds.

In addition to our core counselling services, we have continued to develop our provision of our popular Art Therapy sessions across North Wales with funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Innovate to Grow fund being central to this development.

Through the recruitment of a Volunteering and Fundraising Officer, we have also continued to develop our Next Steps groups in Rhyl and Wrexham which offers ongoing support after the counselling sessions, providing a support group, social activities, and help to ensure that improvements are maintained, and reducing the frequency of repeat referrals.

We have continued to work in partnership with stakeholders throughout Wales and the sector. Working in partnership with New Pathways in South Wales and Umbrella Cymru we completed a research project LGBTQ+ community to co-produce a report identifying why engagement with sexual violence services from members of the LGBTQ+ community is low. As a result of this partnership, we have developed an engagement strategy, delivered across 2024/25, and are continuing to tailor our services to meet the needs of this community.

We presently have 22 volunteers, with one of our volunteer mentors now managing all of our social media sites, and we have another volunteer translator helping with Welsh translation. Recently 8 volunteers won awards at the Volunteer Awards, held at Wrexham and Conwy, during Volunteer Week.

We also work in partnership with Coleg Cambria to provide weekly education classes in Maths and English for our clients with 4 women presently working towards level 1, which is equivalent to a GCSE grade C. Two women attending the classes have said they can now help their children with homework, and that their children see them as stronger women being students and attending college.

We have been able to arrange many food parcels for clients and their families and have a link with a charity in London who regularly donates bedding and toiletries to us to pass onto our clients.

Stepping Stones North Wales has been the lead partner for a project funded by The National Institute for Health Care Research Advanced Fellowship. Funding has been allocated for the next 5 years, measuring the impact of enhancing cervical screening care for women who have experienced sexual violence and abuse across Wales, England and Australia. This is the first time this funding has ever come to Wales.

It will run from September 2024 to 2029 and will feedback to both the UK and Australian governments, with 16 survivors from Stepping Stones North Wales leading the advisory group.

In February 2025 it was confirmed that Stepping Stones North Wales was one of the ten winning charities of the 2025 King's Fund GSK Impact awards. This is a hugely prestigious award and, with over 720 entries from charities throughout the UK, our whole team is hugely proud of this success which is such a powerful reflection of the standards at which we operate and the impact of our services.

In January 2025 it was confirmed that we had passed the accreditation process with The Survivors Trust and that we have attained the Survivors Trust's National Service Standards. Again, this reflects the high operational standards of our charity.

Looking ahead, Stepping Stones North Wales remains committed to our mission of supporting survivors to rebuild their lives. With secured funding, strong governance, and a dedicated team, we are confident in our ability to deliver high-quality services, strengthen partnerships, and safeguard the charity's financial sustainability for years to come.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

This year the charity has faced a very challenging financial environment, as it has for charities throughout our sector. Childhood sexual abuse remains shrouded in stigma and taboo, and this makes community and digital fundraising extremely challenging, increasing our dependence on public sector funding, trusts and foundations. The entire charity sector has been hit by a perfect storm of increasing demand, increasing costs and ever-increasing competition for reduced funding levels.

We have been able to deliver our services with the support of our main funders: The Ministry of Justice, the Welsh Government, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Moondance Foundation.

The testing financial environment has had a significant impact on the charity's financial accounts for 2024/25 and resulted in the decision to use a significant proportion of our reserves to meet funding shortfalls and cost pressures including increases in counselling fees, cost living increases and the uncertainty, competitiveness and delays in the funding.

In April 2024 we increased the session fees paid to our counsellors from £25 per session to £40 per session. Whilst this decision was both ethical and operationally essential, it resulted in our counselling fees rising from £246,200 in the previous financial year to £300,018 in the 24/25 financial year.

Our financial statements for the last financial year 2024/25, shows a deficit of £105,499.

Due to our careful financial discipline, we had reserves in place that could be used to ensure that we were able to continue our essential services, and we have been able to remain debt free. Use of these reserves was a deliberate and considered decision by the Board of Trustees, taken to protect the continuity of our services while longer-term funding solutions were secured.

Recognising these ongoing challenges the charity has implemented a financial strategy to diversify income streams and increase the efficiency and reduce costs within our service provision, which means we are now fully funded for this financial year and are rebuilding our reserves. This has included the following actions:

- Maximising opportunities for innovation/digitalisation.
- Reviewing DEXT AI capability to simplify financial processes and reduce the resource input needed each month.
- Developing genuine long-term partnerships with trusts and foundations such as the Albert Gubay Foundation, and our new three-year relationship with the Lloyds Bank Foundation, where we also acquire an in-house skill transfer,
- Reducing operating costs significantly with the launch of a new bi-lingual website, developed in-house and used to provide digital training skills to clients and volunteers. In July 2024 we also brought our IT provision in-house,
- Implementing a recruitment freeze, until such time as our funding allows us to continue with our long-term operating model,
- The end-to-end clinical-service provision has been reviewed to manage more effectively the counselling through-put. This involves a more rigorous review process to manage the scope of the counselling provision for clients so that clients can more speedily complete their counselling experience and move on to other therapies provided by the charity. This will reduce the average cost per client without impacting the benefits clients receive in dealing with their trauma,
- Significantly developed our in-house skills and knowledge in the completion of funding bids, hence our improved financial status.

As a result of our financial strategy, and our programme of change throughout the financial year, and our relationship with our funders, we are pleased to report that the current financial year (2025/26) is already fully funded, with income secured from a range of trusted public sector partners and new funding streams including trusts and foundations.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Principal funding sources

In March 2025 we were provided with an additional £102,000 in funding from Welsh Government. This support helped to replenish our reserves and to reduce our deficit for the financial year. We are particularly grateful to the Welsh Government for this support.

We have also received invaluable financial and non-financial support from the partnerships built with the Lloyds Bank Foundation and Welsh Women's Aid; together with contributions from local providers, such as Ian Williams Builder Ltd. We are grateful to RASASC North Wales for taking 50 clients from our waiting list in March 2024 when significant spikes in demand were causing unacceptable waiting times for counselling.

We would like to thank all of those organisations and individuals who have supported our work.

Reserves policy

Our reserves are held to provide the necessary funds to continue to offer our counselling and support services, should some funding sources not be retained and/or new ones not secured.

Our reserves policy is reviewed annually in line with Charity Commission guidance and our target is with the intention of covering six months' costs, which vary from year-to-year.

At 31 March 2025, we have £173,298 in unrestricted reserves. (2024 - £248,987).

We continue to operate in an uncertain financial period, with the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and a decrease in statutory funding available. Strong competition for funding continues, and it is an ongoing challenge to try to secure funding for core running costs, alongside the funding we require for the specialist counselling and support services that we offer.

Funds in deficit

There are no funds in deficit as at 31 March 2025.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust and constitutes an unincorporated charity.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

Stepping Stones looks to recruit trustees from a variety of backgrounds who share the values of the organisation and can contribute a specific skill or experience to support the charity. We continually look to improve and supplement the trustee skill set.

The recruitment process for trustees involves the submission of an initial letter, completion of an application form, interview, satisfactory references and DBS checks. Trustees are elected to post by the board at general meetings, proposed and seconded by separate board members. External bodies are not entitled to appoint trustees.

Organisational structure

Stepping Stones North Wales was established in 1984 and became a registered charity in 1995. We have our main office base in Wrexham, including a suite of counselling rooms. We offer our service across the whole of North Wales with rented and leased rooms in all Counties. All of our services are currently available to eligible individuals free of charge. Our organisation is overseen by a Board of Trustees who are responsible for overall governance and management. We work with a team of up to 25 Professional Counsellors, Associates and Supervisors and between 15 & 30 volunteers who support our work in a variety of roles including as Mentors, Facilitators, Fundraisers, Events Management, Advocates and Administration.

We actively seek collaborative opportunities with relevant charities and other organisations.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity number

1043390

Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Report of the Trustees
for the year ended 31 March 2025

Principal address

59 King Street
Wrexham
LL11 1HR

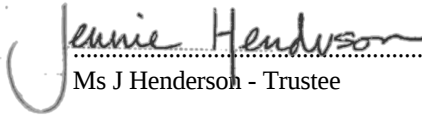
Trustees

Ms J Henderson
Mr N Beesley
Mrs J Williams (resigned 28.5.24)
Ms K McCall (resigned 26.11.24)
Mr V McAllister
Mr S Thomas (appointed 8.10.24)

Independent Examiner

Nina Hughes
Hatcher Hughes Limited
Cassidy House
Station Road
Chester
Cheshire
CH1 3DW

Approved by order of the board of trustees on2nd September 2025..... and signed on its behalf by:


.....
Ms J Henderson - Trustee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Stepping Stones North Wales CIO (the Trust) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since your charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a listed body. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Nina Hughes

Hatcher Hughes Limited
Cassidy House
Station Road
Chester
Cheshire
CH1 3DW

9/3/2025

Date:

Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	31.3.25 Total funds £	31.3.24 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	387,197	67,809	455,006	454,831
Other trading activities	3	3,124	-	3,124	-
Investment income	4	3,092	-	3,092	4,820
Other income		1,625	-	1,625	1,470
Total		<u>395,038</u>	<u>67,809</u>	<u>462,847</u>	<u>461,121</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	5	1,846	-	1,846	-
Charitable activities					
Counselling	6	468,881	97,619	566,500	520,631
Other		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,974</u>
Total		<u>470,727</u>	<u>97,619</u>	<u>568,346</u>	<u>525,605</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(75,689)	(29,810)	(105,499)	(64,484)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		248,987	32,889	281,876	346,360
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>173,298</u></u>	<u><u>3,079</u></u>	<u><u>176,377</u></u>	<u><u>281,876</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

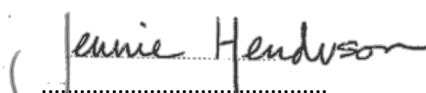
Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Balance Sheet

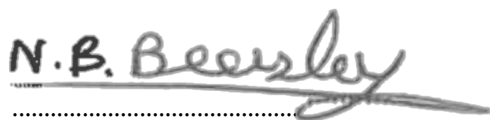
31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	31.3.25 Total funds £	31.3.24 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	11	804	-	804	5,837
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	12	134,762	-	134,762	41,416
Cash at bank and in hand		72,534	3,079	75,613	267,272
		<u>207,296</u>	<u>3,079</u>	<u>210,375</u>	<u>308,688</u>
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	13	(34,802)	-	(34,802)	(32,649)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>172,494</u>	<u>3,079</u>	<u>175,573</u>	<u>276,039</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>173,298</u>	<u>3,079</u>	<u>176,377</u>	<u>281,876</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>173,298</u>	<u>3,079</u>	<u>176,377</u>	<u>281,876</u>
FUNDS	14				
Unrestricted funds				173,298	248,987
Restricted funds				3,079	32,889
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>176,377</u>	<u>281,876</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 2nd September 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:



 Ms J Henderson - Trustee



 Mr N Beesley - Trustee

Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Cash Flow Statement
for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	(193,827)	(49,909)
Interest paid		147	(5,060)
Net cash used in operating activities		(193,680)	(54,969)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(1,071)	(2,248)
Interest received		3,092	4,820
Net cash provided by investing activities		2,021	2,572
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		(191,659)	(52,397)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		267,272	319,669
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		75,613	267,272

The notes form part of these financial statements

Notes to the Cash Flow Statement
for the year ended 31 March 2025

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

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Net expenditure for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	(105,499)	(64,484)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	6,104	8,915
Interest received	(3,092)	(4,820)
Interest paid	(147)	5,060
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(93,346)	14,591
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	2,153	(9,171)
Net cash used in operations	<u>(193,827)</u>	<u>(49,909)</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>267,272</u>	<u>(191,659)</u>	<u>75,613</u>
	<u>267,272</u>	<u>(191,659)</u>	<u>75,613</u>
Total	<u>267,272</u>	<u>(191,659)</u>	<u>75,613</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2025

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.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets

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

Plant and machinery - 25% on cost

Taxation

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

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Donations	2,176	12,031
Grants	452,830	442,800
	<u>455,006</u>	<u>454,831</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES - continued

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

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Ministry of Justice		
	101,800	129,207
Welsh Government		
	43,380	43,380
OPCC North Wales	49,617	99,182
LLoyds Bank Foundation	-	25,000
North Wales Commissioners	-	107,983
Gwynt Y Mor Grant	25,000	-
Welsh Womens' Aid	-	4,000
New Pathways	10,070	30,000
Co-op Community Fund	-	4,048
Moon Dance Foundation	54,814	-
Cloth Workers Foundation	4,000	-
Denbighshire Key Fund	4,500	-
Welsh Church Acts Fund	450	-
Denbighshire People & Skills Fund	13,949	-
GSK Impact Award	40,000	-
Welsh Government (WL1)	102,000	-
Tesco	3,250	-
	<u>452,830</u>	<u>442,800</u>

UNRESTRICTED AND RESTRICTED FUNDS

Ministry of Justice

Ministry of Justice - £101,800.

The grant was received to provide funds for running services to support survivors of childhood sexual abuse.

WELSH GOVERNMENT

This is a revenue grant to fund our core counselling services.

WELSH GOVERNMENT (WL1)

Received to maintain our core counselling services.

OPCC NORTH WALES

Funding of £43,027 to provide counselling and support services to adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse and £6,590 restricted funding for the provision of Art Therapy.

NEW PATHWAYS

This was funding received from a Lead Partner towards a LGBTQ+ Research Project.

MOON DANCE FOUNDATION

Received to maintain our core counselling services.

CLOTHWORKERS FOUNDATION

Restricted funding towards the cost of our Oasis database software.

DENBIGHSHIRE KEY FUND

Restricted funding to be applied to our brand and website design.

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES - continued

WELSH CHURCH ACTS FUND

Restricted funding contributing to our Nex Steps Activity.

DENBIGHSHIRE PEOPLE & SKILLS FUND Restricted funding contributing to our Next Steps Activity.

GSK IMPACT AWARD

An impact award for excellence in service provision.

TESCO

Restricted funding contributing to our Next Steps Activity.

3. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Fundraising events	3,124	-
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Deposit account interest	3,092	4,820
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

5. RAISING FUNDS

Raising donations and legacies

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Fundraising costs	1,846	-
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

6. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs	Support costs (see note 7)	Totals
	£	£	£
Counselling	518,405	48,095	566,500
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

7. SUPPORT COSTS

	Management £	Finance £	Governance costs £	Totals £
Counselling	<u>42,162</u>	<u>(147)</u>	<u>6,080</u>	<u>48,095</u>

Support costs, included in the above, are as follows:

Management

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	Counselling	Total
	£	activities
Wages	39,716	£
Rent	2,025	37,033
Light and Heat	421	2,025
	<u>42,162</u>	<u>401</u>
	<u>42,162</u>	<u>39,459</u>

Finance

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	Counselling	Total
	£	activities
Bank Charges	(147)	£
Fraud - Stolen funds	-	86
	<u>(147)</u>	<u>4,974</u>
	<u>(147)</u>	<u>5,060</u>

Governance costs

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	Counselling	Total
	£	activities
Accountancy and legal fees	6,080	£
	<u>6,080</u>	<u>4,890</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

During the year ended 31 March 2025 trustees' expenses paid totalled £793. (2024 - £799)

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

9. STAFF COSTS

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Wages and salaries	158,864	148,133
Social security costs	9,860	8,906
Other pension costs	3,903	3,666
	<u>172,627</u>	<u>160,705</u>

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

	31.3.25	31.3.24
Management	-	2
Administration and Finance	-	2
Volunteering and Fundraising	-	1
ISVA and Step into Wellbeing	-	3
Cleaning	-	1
	<u>-</u>	<u>9</u>

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

10. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	316,113	138,718	454,831
Investment income	4,820	-	4,820
Other income	1,470	-	1,470
Total	<u>322,403</u>	<u>138,718</u>	<u>461,121</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Counselling	414,802	105,829	520,631
Other	4,974	-	4,974
Total	<u>419,776</u>	<u>105,829</u>	<u>525,605</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	<u>(97,373)</u>	<u>32,889</u>	<u>(64,484)</u>
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	346,360	-	346,360
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>248,987</u>	<u>32,889</u>	<u>281,876</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

11. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Plant and machinery £
COST	
At 1 April 2024	38,277
Additions	1,071
At 31 March 2025	39,348
DEPRECIATION	
At 1 April 2024	32,440
Charge for year	6,104
At 31 March 2025	38,544
NET BOOK VALUE	
At 31 March 2025	804
At 31 March 2024	5,837

12. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Trade debtors	133,672	40,896
Other debtors	1,090	520
	134,762	41,416

13. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Trade creditors	4,740	3,691
Taxation and social security	4,495	-
Other creditors	25,567	28,958
	34,802	32,649

14. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.24 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.25 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	248,987	(75,689)	173,298
Restricted funds			
TESCO	-	3,079	3,079
Welsh Womens Aid	4,000	(4,000)	-
New Pathways	28,889	(28,889)	-
	32,889	(29,810)	3,079
TOTAL FUNDS	281,876	(105,499)	176,377

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

14. 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	395,038	(470,727)	(75,689)
Restricted funds			
OPCC North Wales	6,590	(6,590)	-
TESCO	3,250	(171)	3,079
Welsh Womens Aid	-	(4,000)	(4,000)
New Pathways	10,070	(38,959)	(28,889)
Clothworkers Grant	4,000	(4,000)	-
Denbighshire Key Fund	4,500	(4,500)	-
GYM Gwynt Y Mor	25,000	(25,000)	-
Welsh Church Acts Fund	450	(450)	-
Denbighshire Skills & People Fund	13,949	(13,949)	-
	<u>67,809</u>	<u>(97,619)</u>	<u>(29,810)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>462,847</u>	<u>(568,346)</u>	<u>(105,499)</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	346,360	(97,373)	248,987
Restricted funds			
Welsh Womens Aid	-	4,000	4,000
New Pathways	-	28,889	28,889
	<u>-</u>	<u>32,889</u>	<u>32,889</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>346,360</u>	<u>(64,484)</u>	<u>281,876</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

14. 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	322,403	(419,776)	(97,373)
Restricted funds			
Ministry of Justice	7,836	(7,836)	-
OPCC North Wales	96,882	(96,882)	-
Welsh Womens Aid	4,000	-	4,000
New Pathways	30,000	(1,111)	28,889
	<u>138,718</u>	<u>(105,829)</u>	<u>32,889</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>461,121</u></u>	<u><u>(525,605)</u></u>	<u><u>(64,484)</u></u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.4.23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.25 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	346,360	(173,062)	173,298
Restricted funds			
TESCO	-	3,079	3,079
	<u>346,360</u>	<u>(169,983)</u>	<u>176,377</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>346,360</u></u>	<u><u>(169,983)</u></u>	<u><u>176,377</u></u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the year ended 31 March 2025

14. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	717,441	(890,503)	(173,062)
Restricted funds			
Ministry of Justice	7,836	(7,836)	-
OPCC North Wales	103,472	(103,472)	-
TESCO	3,250	(171)	3,079
Welsh Womens Aid	4,000	(4,000)	-
New Pathways	40,070	(40,070)	-
Clothworkers Grant	4,000	(4,000)	-
Denbighshire Key Fund	4,500	(4,500)	-
GYM Gwynt Y Mor	25,000	(25,000)	-
Welsh Church Acts Fund	450	(450)	-
Denbighshire Skills & People Fund	13,949	(13,949)	-
	<u>206,527</u>	<u>(203,448)</u>	<u>3,079</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>923,968</u>	<u>(1,093,951)</u>	<u>(169,983)</u>

15. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2025

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	2,176	12,031
Grants	452,830	442,800
	455,006	454,831
Other trading activities		
Fundraising events	3,124	-
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	3,092	4,820
Other income		
Room rentals	1,625	1,470
Total incoming resources	462,847	461,121
EXPENDITURE		
Raising donations and legacies		
Fundraising costs	1,846	-
Charitable activities		
Wages	119,148	111,100
Social security	9,860	8,906
Pensions	3,903	3,666
Insurance	1,478	2,254
Light and heat	2,385	2,272
Telephone	3,670	3,520
Postage and stationery	1,143	1,745
Sundries	4,025	3,897
Professional Fees	2,531	6,709
Memberships	1,165	1,675
Rent & Rates	13,194	12,458
Training	860	4,683
Travel expenses	2,670	6,523
Counselling & supervision fees	300,018	246,200
IT charges	8,537	10,556
Repairs and maintenance	2,583	3,518
Agency staff costs	-	23,619
Consultancy fees	1,678	701
Room Hire	16,995	13,279
Oasis database software	16,458	-
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	6,104	8,915
	518,405	476,196
Support costs		

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

Stepping Stones North Wales CIO

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 March 2025

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Support costs		
Management		
Wages	39,716	37,033
Rent	2,025	2,025
Light and Heat	421	401
	42,162	39,459
Finance		
Bank Charges	(147)	86
Fraud - Stolen funds	-	4,974
	(147)	5,060
Governance costs		
Accountancy and legal fees	6,080	4,890
	568,346	525,605
Total resources expended		
Net expenditure	(105,499) 	(64,484)