

Some Centre stats

We had footfall equivalent to **7,648** visits in the last 12 months. **3,686** male (49.2%) and **3,962** female (51.8%). This represents a big change of more females using the centre. The number of overall visits again increased significantly from the previous year, indicating that we are actually supporting far more people (from **3,850** last year up to **7,648**) which we put down to our response to Covid and our response to the pandemic.. Part of this involved providing more than 9,862 food bags during the pandemic (to August 2021) This equates to approximately 39,448 meals.

Working with organisations & agencies

We continue to work with the Area Foodbank, Community 360 and Essex County Council. We have been working with all other local agencies to ensure that we sign-post clients to the most appropriate help- where we cannot offer that assistance. We are currently supporting 2 local Community Fridge projects (one of them being us!) We belong to: Braintree Community Tree, the Horizon Project, the Community Safety Hub, other crime prevention strategies and other community mental health services. In the last year we offered clients advice on 2,063 separate occasions.

More Centre stats

Our education, through the Essex Learning Partnership Fund, continues to provide learning to the most isolated and vulnerable in Essex. In 2020/21 we provided learning opportunities to over 270 individuals. Amazing as we only delivered for 7 months! We continue to be only **1** of only **3** providers working in partnership with Adult Community Learning Essex.

Even more Centre stats

Since working with Fareshare we have:

- Collected **1,040** donations to date
- **28,558kg** of food has been received
- The equivalent of **67,996** meals have been distributed
- **91,270 kg** of CO₂ savings have been made to the environment (data provided by FareShare) and we now work with Neighbourly, Greggs, Nandos and KFC

Our work with Braintree Village

Throughout the pandemic we have continued to work with Braintree Village, as part of their Community Partnership Programme. They have been phenomenal. They have supported our clients in so many ways:

- By allowing us to provide bespoke learning & support opportunities for our clients and enabling progression for them
- By linking us with their Christmas 'Giving Tree' (where in 2020 we were their chosen charity) We supported clients, care homes and their staff throughout the district
- By collaboratively sponsoring, with Tesco & Iceland, 40 full Christmas dinner hampers- from sprouts to crackers and Christmas puddings!
- By helping with the printing and distribution of our Pantry Recipe packs
- By funding much needed work of our charity

And by just 'being there' for us. By being available at the end of a telephone and for Zoom calls. To boost us and lifting our spirits. Providing us with support to continue to provide help for the disadvantaged throughout our community.

FIRST STOP CENTRE

Charity no. 803170

29 Bocking End, Braintree, Essex. CM7 9AE

Tel: 01376 346535 E-mail: firststopcentre@btconnect.com

www.firststopcentre.com



CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome to First Stop Centre's annual report for 2020/21.

It has been a demanding year, to say the least. The COVID19 pandemic obliged us to shut the Centre to visitors and clients and during the various lockdowns we were unable to provide the drop-in and hot meals facilities, training or counselling, i.e. the mainstays of our support to the people of Braintree. Thanks to the sterling efforts of our manager, Rachael Stone, and deputy manager, Jan Russell, however, we were open five days per week to provide food parcels at the door to those in need. We are very grateful to the many food stores that provided surplus and left over stocks to ensure that we were able to meet demands.

Apart from Rachael and Jan, all staff were furloughed or shielding and were kept in touch with developments, thus ensuring we would be able to resume normal activity as soon as circumstances permitted. We are now well beyond the year under review and have only recently been able to resume some of our "normal" activities but the drop-in and hot meals facilities remain in abeyance for the time being.

This report gives a flavour of the work achieved throughout the pandemic. It would not have happened without the dedication of Rachael and Jan.

Ian Wardrop
Chair of Trustees



ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Charity details

Name	First Stop Centre
Registered charity number	803170
Principal address	29 Bocking End Braintree Essex CM7 9AE

Trustees

Ian Wardrop	Chair
Moia Thorogood	Vice Chair
Tracey Radley	Treasurer
Emma Reid	Secretary

Structure and governance

The charity is a Trust and its governing document is a Constitution. Trustees are appointed by fellow trustees who, together with the Centre Manager, comprise the Management Committee. All trustees are subject to re-election at the Annual General Meeting.

The day-to-day running of First Stop Centre is the responsibility of the Centre Manager who reports to the Management Committee.

Charity's Objects

First Stop Centre is established for the public benefit with the following object:

To relieve the condition of disadvantaged persons in mid-Essex experiencing difficulties with

- homelessness
- joblessness
- substance misuse
- physical and mental health and related problems
- learning disabilities

by the provision of support services for such persons to assist them in maintaining normal relationships with and within the community in which they reside.

The trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in setting out below the main activities undertaken in furtherance of First Stop Centre's Object:

- education services, including Skills for Life, numeracy, literacy, IT
- counselling, including anger management
- To cover what was previously our 'drop-in' facility- now support with on-line UC accounts, form filling, housing support, "care-of" address, general support from staff.

Main achievements

Details of First Stop Centre's achievements and performance are set out in the Annual Report.

Financial review

The Independent Examiner's report is contained in the main body of the Annual Report. A reserve fund of approx. £50,000 is maintained as contingency in order to deal with any unexpected major expenditure.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the Annual Report as set out in this document.

March 2021

(Signed)

Ian Wardrop
Chair of Trustees

Manager's Report

In another unprecedented year I am so proud of all who are part of the First Stop team, for all they have done to support so many during a most difficult time. We were told by so many that we were the only people they spoke to or saw during the week, and that was our privilege.

We have been offered support by so many, a true community spirit has developed during what has been a most difficult time.

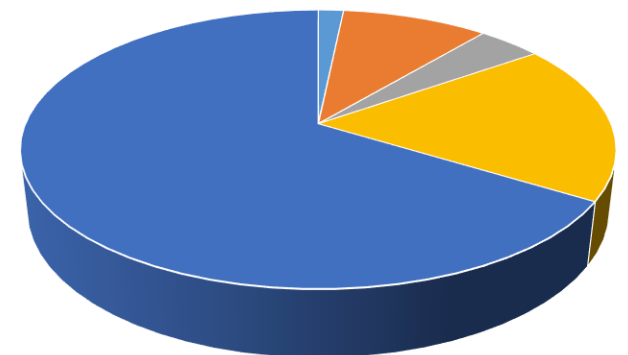
Treasurer's Report

We have had a stable financial year this year mainly due to the continued hard work put into secure funding to run projects that could directly benefit the local community and fully support the vulnerable through the pandemic.

We will continue in this vein to keep the extra support available, whilst upholding our usual funding streams and offering our full range of services where possible.

Thank you for the hard work put in by staff to secure continued funding and also looking ahead to what will be a challenging year we hope to be able to support many.

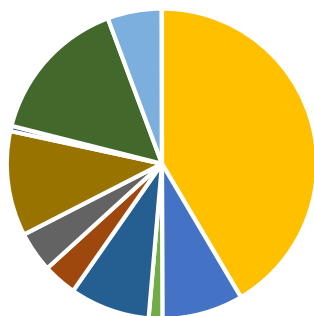
How First Stop Responded to Covid -Not including the Community Fridge



■ Post ■ Basic Skills ■ Counselling ■ Telephone ■ Advice

First Stop Centre Pre lockdown usage

■ Social
 ■ Meal
 ■ Post
 ■ Basic Skills
 ■ Counselling
 ■ Telephone
 ■ Advice

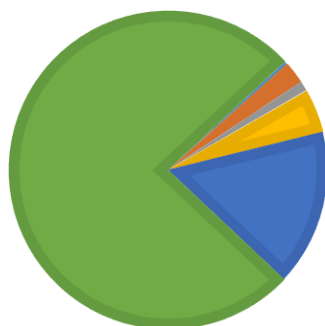


Who can benefit from First Stop services?

- Those who have a history of mental health
- Those who have learning disabilities
- Substance mis-users
- The homeless
- Single parents
- Unemployed
- Ex-offenders
- Senior citizens
- Those socially isolated
- Carers

FIRST STOP RESPONSE TO COVID 19

■ Post
 ■ Basic Skills
 ■ Counselling
 ■ Telephone
 ■ Advice
 ■ Community Fridge



How can the individual make contact with the centre?

- A person can be referred through a third party, such as: JCP, Social Services, NHS, GP surgeries, BDC, Probation Service, CAB or self-referral
- A person can use the centre for the fridge as soon as they wish and any specialised programmes (subject to availability)
- A person now needs to make an appointment to see a member of staff as the drop-in service is no longer available

Mission Statement

To work with people who are disadvantaged, in a non-judgemental way, in order to improve their lives

The Impact that First Stop Centre has had.....

A Case Study

We have been working with Brian for about a year. Previously he had always worked but he has become diabetic and this has had a bad impact on not only his health but general wellbeing. Last year we were able to support him and his family with food and this has been ongoing throughout the year. During lockdowns we delivered food to him via our wonderful volunteers and staff. This has made such a difference to him. At Christmas we were able to provide some gifts and these were a reminder that nice things happen too. Unfortunately when things seemed to be improving there were problems with his accommodation- where cladding and subsidence have become a major problem resulting in the risk of him becoming homeless. We are currently supporting Brian through this too.

Case Study Two.....

We have been helping Sally for nearly a year. She is dyslexic (which was never talked about when she was at school) and this has impacted on her wellbeing all her life. Her self-confidence was so low and she really believed that she was 'unteachable'. We started by working on her confidence and looking at everything she had achieved. We have provided her with tuition for her English skills- taking things slowly but positively- then a tablet to help her practise her new skills (including IT) This will be an on-going process but we have seen such a difference in her already- Down to her hard work.

Oher good news...

We have been able to support so many people in the last 12 months. We have been lucky to be successful with funding to provide help to: hard working parents, single people, older people, those furloughed and anyone who has needed a helping hand over these difficult times. We have been struck by the generosity of those- not always able to afford things themselves. People have been supportive with their time and their energy- which is just what we have needed from time to time. From those providing bread pudding to those bringing turkey! So from all of us we would like to 'Thank' everyone who has been there.

Christmas 2020 was very different – Proving It's not always just about the learning.....

Christmas 2020 saw Braintree Village (Landsec) support us again with their Giving Tree. Even though things had been so difficult and we were in a state of lockdown for much of the year we were able to give each and every person who needed it a much needed boost of a gift. We selected a care home in Braintree and another local to us with a very personal connection with an array of gifts, most had a package of presents! We made sure that the hard working care home staff were not forgotten either, with a selection of biscuits, chocolates and other goodies. Landsec were able to lend a hand to give these out, making it even more special.

Sadly our Learners' Celebration could not go ahead and this was a difficult time for staff and so many of our clients- we really missed this special event. Through people's generosity though we supported old and new clients through difficult times- people are still talking about food hampers and gifts nearly a year on. We are hoping to do more magical things this year- although our celebration will still not go ahead as we are mindful of what Covid -19 can do, and we do not want to spoil any possible get togethers this Christmas time.

First Stop Centre Mid Essex Branch

1st April 2020 - 31 March 2021

	<u>2020/2021</u>	<u>2019/2020</u>	<u>2018/2019</u>
<u>Income</u>			
ECC/NIDC	25,410	26,922	42,126
Essex Community	7,500	0	5,000
Community 360	4,200	1,458	0
Other Funding	0	5,000	3,000
WEA	2,800	11,265	9,000
Landsec	15,000	10,777	5,000
Phoenix Futures	0	600	1,800
Interact	280	560	420
FSJ Charities	0	1,000	0
Xmas Club	0	0	600
Other Donations	24,063	12,914	12,009
Canteen Income	0	1,494	2,071
Fundraising Events	0	2,015	0
Gift Aid	0	1,281	0
Counselling Income	1,850	3,415	2,020
Miscellaneous Income	0	48	780
Pool Table Takings	0	193	377
Census	5,568	0	0
HMRC JRS GRANT	6,665	0	0
Covid-19 Response Grant	21,906		
Essex Association	5,000	0	0
Charities Aid Foundation (CAF	2,200		
Supplier Refund of Overpayment	490	62	26
Bank Interest	14	30	16
	<u>122,946</u>	<u>79,033</u>	<u>84,245</u>
<u>Expenditure</u>			
Payroll	51,720	46,449	50,153
Maintenance	482	926	280
Copier	144	288	288
New Equipment	1,686	0	677
Travel	311	476	1,034
Supervision & Training	228	507	1,365
Insurance	950	950	1,009
Utilities	2,584	2,015	1,977
IT Costs	1,371	768	24
Office expenses	266	435	198
Fundraising expenses	0	0	73
Sundry Expenses	44	445	617
Xmas Club	0	0	1,111
Xmas Hampers	0	500	0
Accounts Audit	60	50	50
Covid19 expenses	13,300	0	0
Printing/Stationery	79	136	281
	<u>73,227</u>	<u>53,947</u>	<u>59,135</u>
<u>(Deficit)/Surplus</u>	<u>49,719</u>	<u>25,087</u>	<u>25,110</u>
Fund B/F	102,995	77,908	52,798
Fund C/F	<u>152,714</u>	<u>102,995</u>	<u>77,908</u>



Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

FIRST STOP CENTRE MID-ESSEX BRANCH

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31st March 2021

**Charity no
(if any)**

Set out on pages

1-10

**Respective responsibilities
of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent
examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent examiner's
statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention other than that disclosed below

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: Lisa Brown

Date: 05/10/2021

Name: Lisa Brown MICB

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

Member of the Institute of Certified Bookkeepers.
ICB Level 1 Manual Bookkeeping
ICB Level 2 Manual Bookkeeping
ICB Level 3 Computerised Bookkeeping
ICB Level 2 Certificate in Bookkeeping
ICB Level 3 Certificate in Bookkeeping and Accounts

IER

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March 2012

Address:

5 Charnock Close

Kirby Cross

Frinton on Sea CO13 0RT

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material problems.

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.