



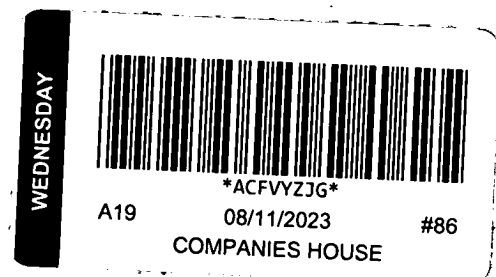
**SUPPORTING AND  
EMPOWERING  
REFUGEES**

**BRITISH REFUGEE COUNCIL**

**Registered Charity No. 1014576  
Registered Company No. 2727514**

**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**



# **BRITISH REFUGEE COUNCIL**

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## **Chief Executive's Introduction**

It has been a watershed year for our cause at the Refugee Council. The government's new legislation to deny the men, women and children who reach our shores in search of safety the right to seek asylum in the UK and ship them across the globe to Rwanda, is a historic moment: It must be seen for what it is: an inhumane response that effectively rips up our commitment to the UN refugee convention, of which the UK was a founding signatory in 1951 and which led to the creation of the Refugee Council in the same year.

And it must be seen for what it would mean. The convention was founded on the basic principles of international solidarity and responsibility-sharing. To withdraw from it in all but name would be a shift towards aggressive unilateralism.

Time after time, our asylum system counts the numbers, but fails to see the faces of very terrified and vulnerable people. Over the last year we have seen rising distress, trauma and anxiety amongst those we work with stranded in basic hotel accommodation as a direct consequence of the government's draconian approach. Young people have self-harmed and gone missing. The human consequences can't be under-estimated. We have had to respond to an asylum system that is chaotic, disorderly and far from fit for purpose. Children and families have been left to sleep on the floor for days on end, having taken dangerous journeys to reach our shores. Tens of thousands have been left in limbo for months and years, awaiting a decision on their asylum claim.

We exposed the true scale of the backlog in asylum claims and mounted a concerted influencing campaign to get the government to act. It contributed to the Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, making a personal commitment to clear the backlog in so called legacy cases within 12 months. This was a significant victory and, if delivered well, will make a huge difference to the lives of so many vulnerable people. The country's response to welcome nearly 200,000 Ukrainians has been in marked contrast to the government's harsh rhetoric on asylum. We mobilised new services to meet their needs and sought to direct help at those particularly facing hardship, who arrived with family visas and were eligible for less support. Our rapid response was supported by a record fundraising appeal for the Refugee Council.

We continue to make great progress in delivering our strategy to 2025. A key commitment was to take forward a new cross organisational approach to refugee involvement; we launched a purposeful strategy and delivery plan, recruiting a new Head of Refugee Involvement role to lead the work on our leadership team. We have made further strides in developing our organisational systems and processes – designing a bespoke hybrid working model, procuring a new IT provider, DBS system, payroll provider and digital HR system. We also rolled out a hardware refresh of our IT kit and established an action plan to improve our data protection.

We operate in a world of both chaos and complexity with our cause, one of the most political of our time. I am very proud of our staff and volunteers who are navigating this terrain with resilience and passion that is truly humbling. For it is our staff, volunteers, supporters and partners who make us who we are, and deserve huge credit in the achievements of the last 12 months.

# Strategic Report

## Objectives and Activities

### Objectives

The objectives of the Refugee Council, set out in our governing documents, are:

- to provide relief for refugees and their dependents who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress;
- to preserve and protect the physical and mental health of refugees and their dependents;
- to advance the education and training of refugees and their dependents in need thereof so as to advance them in life and assist in their rehabilitation within a new community;
- to promote research into the condition of life of refugees throughout the world and ways of providing charitable relief for them, and to publish the results of all such research; and
- to advance public education about the position of refugees and the situations which give rise to refugee movements.

The Refugee Council aims to deliver these objectives through the provision of high-quality services to refugees and asylum seekers to ensure that they fully understand their rights and responsibilities in the UK, obtain access to the legal, counselling, housing, employment, education and health care services they need, and are able to integrate successfully into British society. The charity also aims to promote positive images of refugees and asylum seekers, and to campaign and advocate to ensure that the rights enshrined in national and international law are not eroded.

Our Vision, Purpose, and Values, as set out in our new Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025 are:

### Our Vision

Refugees are welcome to live safe and fulfilling lives contributing to the UK.

### Our Purpose

To work with refugees to transform their experience of seeking protection in the UK.

### Our Values

<b>Inclusion</b>	We are <b>inclusive</b> . We work with - not for - refugees and people seeking asylum, so they have an equal voice, co-producing projects and ensuring their expertise and experiences are at the heart of what we do.
<b>Collaboration</b>	We are <b>collaborative</b> . Working with others is a priority in order to have the collective impact that is vital to achieve policy and practice reform.
<b>Courage</b>	We speak <b>truth to power</b> . We always stand up for what we believe is the right thing to do to transform the experiences of those seeking protection in our country.
<b>Respect</b>	We are <b>respectful</b> of all those we interact with. We treat everyone – our staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, partners and people we disagree with – with the same respect, professionalism and understanding.

## **Refugee Council's Strategic Plan to 2025**

In June 2021, our Board signed off our new strategy to 2025. Our Strategic Ambitions, and how we will achieve them, are set out below:

### **Ambition 1:**

**We will successfully press Government and other agencies to take action that significantly improves refugee protection.**

- Playing a leading role in securing one or more policy or legal 'landmark-wins' that materially improve the experience of refugees or people seeking asylum.
- Dynamic campaigning, alongside our allies, to reverse the hostile environment imposed on those coming to our country.
- Making measurable progress in the fight to reduce poverty and hardship for refugees.

### **Ambition 2:**

**We will significantly improve access to quality support for refugees in crisis and those seeking to integrate into the UK.**

- Ensuring that refugees receive early access to information, advice and support to prevent or de-escalate crisis.
- Working with refugees to build on their strengths and resilience and develop the skills, knowledge and experience to integrate and contribute within their local communities.
- Strengthening local support systems by working with refugees and partners to improve service quality.

### **Ambition 3:**

**We will successfully influence improved public attitudes to refugees in new and imaginative ways to reform the hostile environment that impacts their lives.**

- Building a much wider base of public support around the shared values of humanity, compassion and justice.
- Inspiring a diverse, active coalition of supporters from across society to champion our calls for change.
- Ensuring the voices and stories of those with lived experience of the refugee protection system are at the centre of the design and delivery of our communications and campaigning.

### **Foundational Enabler 1:**

**We will ensure people with lived experience of refugee protection are at the heart of what we do by developing a whole organisation approach to their engagement and involvement in our work.**

- Co-design solutions with people with lived experience, alongside refugee community organisations and partners.
- Develop pathways for staff and volunteers with lived experience to support their career progression and development.
- Take immediate action on equality, diversity and inclusion to demonstrate to all of our audiences how we are achieving equality and inclusion as well as ensuring people with lived experience have an equal voice.

### **Foundational Enabler 2:**

**We will collaborate with like-minded supporters and partners in our campaigning and systems change work.**

- Build our capabilities around campaigning to reach new public and political audiences within the centre ground of British politics, focused on the positive contribution of refugees to Britain and utilising digital campaigning and awareness building techniques.
- Play a central role in the Together with Refugees campaign, building a wide movement to achieve reform within the asylum system.
- Work with refugees and partners to achieve systems change at a local and regional level to deliver improvements to how refugees are treated and supported.

### **Foundational Enabler 3:**

**We will develop our staff, invest in our systems and processes, prioritise a learning approach and attract the resources needed to deliver our mission and ambitions.**

- Encourage and enable our staff, volunteers and trustees to make the best use of their skills and abilities, provide excellent selection processes and high-quality development training. Our volunteers are a vital part of our team and we will seek to expand their involvement in our operations. Critically, we will ensure that all our people are treated consistently and valued equally.
- Invest voluntary income into modernising our systems and processes and make greater use of digital technologies as well as piloting new ways of working with refugees. This will include systematically collecting evidence to shape what we do and improving our impact data and approach to learning.
- Develop and grow new relationships with corporate partners, philanthropists, foundations and supporters to deliver growth in income, impact and influence. Through these relationships we will deliver better employment, well-being and integration outcomes for refugees and engage new collaborators, influencers and audiences to drive forward social change.

## **Activities**

The Refugee Council undertakes its work through the following six main areas of activities, which are the main classifications used throughout our financial accounts:

1. **Children's Services**, enabling separated children seeking asylum to navigate the complex asylum system;
2. **Resettlement Services**, where people arrive in the UK with refugee status to rebuild their lives in the UK;
3. **Therapeutic Services**, supporting adults and children who have suffered torture, trauma, violence or sexual exploitation;
4. **Integration Services**, enabling newly recognised refugees to make the challenging first steps as they emerge from the asylum system to rebuild their lives in the UK;
5. **Destitution Services**, enabling people seeking asylum who are homeless to access housing, financial support, legal advice and therapeutic support and resume their asylum journey;
6. **Campaigning and Awareness Raising**; by drawing on evidence from our direct services, working to ensure that refugees have an influential voice in policy discussions that impact their lives and raising our supporters' and the public's awareness of the issues refugees and asylum seekers face.

## **Impact**

Our services exist to *significantly improve access to quality support for refugees in crisis and those seeking to integrate into the United Kingdom*. This year we set out three strategic objectives that would move us towards realising ambition 2 under our organisational strategy. We have set out our progress towards each below, and have also described the number of people who benefited from our services this year, the pathways and support they accessed.

This year our services sought to reach **15,000** people seeking asylum and refugees and successfully achieved that by benefitting **15,851** individual unique services users in total. Of these we supported:

- **1,433** people to improve their psychological and physical safety via our therapeutic services for children, adults and families. Of whom, 70% were people seeking asylum, 25% were people with refugee status or leave to remain brought to the UK to resettle, and 5% were people with refugee status or leave to remain who are rebuilding their lives in the UK independently of statutory support.
- **6,941** separated children to understand and navigate the asylum and children's social care systems, to improve their safety and ability to connect with support in their local communities. Separated children benefitted from our children's rights services that enabled putative children in the adult asylum support system to have their age accepted and care provided by children's services, and ensured children continued their education while they awaited their statutory places in schools and colleges.

- **6,260** adults and families increased their safety, connection to their local communities and ability to rebuild their lives in the UK having been brought to the UK to resettle.
- **2,136** adults increased their ability to live with safety, connection to the communities and ability to rebuild their lives in the UK with the specialist support of our integration and employment services.

It is important to note that some people accessed more than one of our services so the total number of those we supported is higher than the number we reached.

The outcomes we set for our services work and what we achieved against each outcome are set out below under reporting against Ambition 2 of our strategy.

We set out three objectives and related outcomes for the year and made good progress in meeting them.

### **1. Services strategy: New services strategy in place with clear delivery plan, and KPIs**

To achieve this we worked with refugees, staff and volunteers to define priority services for our current strategy period, and identify the budget and fundraising plans, strategic objectives and priorities.

We successfully achieved this strategic outcome in June 2022 by securing board approval for our services strategy for 2022-2025. The strategy sets out the services we will deliver over the next three years to enable refugees and people seeking asylum to live with safety, agency, and connection to their local communities. The purpose of our services being to enable Refugee Council to achieve its organisational strategy by delivering high impact, sustainable services that are centered on the needs of people seeking asylum and refugees in the UK; and to improve the system of support that they rely on for their safety and future lives in local communities. The strategy included an implementation plan, KPIs, indicative budget and objectives. In February we produced a three-year budget that set out the detailed budget for our services, into the new strategy period.

### **2. Services structure, quality framework, and impact:**

We set out four key outcomes under this objective:

- New service structure implemented
- Impact measurement framework agreed with changes to Client Database introduced
- Services communications plan implemented
- Data & insight strategy agreed

In December 2022 we agreed our new services structure, and began implementation in January 2023. The structure was implemented in two stages. The first phase was in place by 1st April 2023, and included the new Head of Practice Development, with the final structure in place by 5th June. The delays were due to recruitment challenges.

In May 2022 we agreed the impact measurement framework and began to implement this from October with our therapeutic and resettlement services. Before implementation began, changes were made to InForm (our client database) to enable us to consistently capture, track and analyse the data collected. We agreed to phase the implementation in recognition of the changes to services structure and leadership. Phase one concluded in February 2023 with 62 frontline staff trained to gather impact data, who collected data from over 200 clients, providing us with robust baseline data and a process to roll out to employment, integration and children's services from April 2023.

In September-October 2022 we developed a communications plan for services to support the implementation of the services strategy. We created a strategy champions group to regularly share insight on the impact and direction of the strategy, and a monthly 'strategy to reality' meeting for all services staff to join to hear updates on strategy implementation progress updates, to reflect on this and discuss and clarify direction and priorities. We have also included an internal intranet blog where updates are regularly shared. Both groups launched in February 2023 with staff reporting how much they value the transparent approach to communication about services changes.

In December 2022 as part of the data and insight strategy, we agreed to appoint a new Client Data and Impact Manager. This post holder will drive the implementation of the strategy with the team. This will include the revisions required following the impact data measurement pilot. The post holder joined us in July 2023.

### **3. Safeguarding and quality practice:**

We set seven outcomes under this strategic theme:

- New policies, procedures & governance structure in place
- Safeguarding Manager in post
- DSO structure introduced
- Safeguarding training programme implemented
- Improved DBS system implemented
- Safeguarding reporting in In-Form
- Quality framework agreed

In April 2022 we commissioned the co-production of new safeguarding policies and procedures for work with vulnerable adults and children and young people. These tools were co-produced with refugees, staff and volunteers, and approved by the board in June 2022. We began implementation in July 2022 with training for all staff and managers on the new policies and procedures, clarifying the new governance structures in place and those that would be developed over the coming year. In March 2023 we agreed the safeguarding practice governance structure would include regional rather than thematic leads as originally envisaged.

In August 2023 we welcomed our new Safeguarding Policy and Practice Manager who has led the implementation of our safeguarding strategy. A key priority has been the move to ensuring that all safeguarding reports are being submitted via our InForm client database. Since this was introduced in Q3 we have seen a significant increase in the number of reports submitted, a trend that we are seeing continue into 2023-24.

In June 2022 we agreed that all staff and volunteers must have safeguarding training via both our electronic learning platform and with our Safeguarding Practice and Policy Manager as part of their onboarding to the organisation and renewed annually. The Safeguarding Manager has designed bespoke training session for departments to address key safeguarding risks the people using their services face including: self-harm and suicidal ideation, domestic abuse, working with perpetrators, trafficking, working with separated children seeking asylum and practice boundaries. Staff have reported improved confidence to identify and report a safeguarding alert following this training.

In March 2023 we agreed to implement the Advice Quality Standard across services. This will begin in Q2 2023-24 with new capacity within the Practice Development team. This function coordinates practice quality implementation across services with dedicated roles in resettlement and children's services.



## **2022/23 Achievements and performance against strategic goals**

**Ambition 1**      **To successfully press Government and other agencies to take action to improve refugee protection**

**Achievements**      Despite the government's hostile policies and its mismanagement of the asylum system, we did achieve some important and significant policy reforms and commitments that will make a positive difference to the lives of those we work with, including those in the asylum system and Ukrainian refugees.

By Autumn 2022, the **backlog of asylum cases** waiting for a decision had grown to over 140,000, with systemic use of hotel accommodation standing at £6m per day. Utilising the window of opportunity with a new Prime Minister and Home Secretary in this period, and after sourcing funding from Blue Thread and the Jubilee Foundation, Refugee Council advocated for practical solutions to address the growing backlog. Using Freedom of Information data that unearthed the scale of the backlog and its rapid growth (quadrupling over the last 5 years), we put forward our recommendations for how the backlog could be addressed. This contributed to PM Rishi Sunak committing in December 2022 to clear the asylum backlog by December 2023, a significant policy win.

In February 2023, the Home Office introduced a new **Streamlined Asylum Process** to make faster decisions on applications made by people from high grant countries. This approach was in-line with recommendations Refugee Council had made on how to improve decision making, however we had concerns about the design of the questionnaire that was being sent to people as part of the process. We worked with ILPA and others to raise these and continue to monitor the impact.

We have been campaigning hard to ensure refugees are able to reunite, to allow them to come to the UK to be with their family members. We achieved some important success when the Home Office amended the Immigration Rules to allow adult dependent children to apply for family reunion (if the case meets certain exceptional circumstances), and to allow children to reunite with an adult relative other than their parents. This was an important policy win.

In April 2022, the **Nationality and Borders Act** passed into law, including significant changes to the way the UK fulfils its international obligation to people seeking asylum. This included creating a two-tier asylum system whereby people seeking asylum will receive differential treatment entirely dependent on how they arrive in the UK. It also included plans to remove people who arrive irregularly to any third country they had travelled through on their way to the UK, plans to accommodate people in reception centres for the duration of their asylum claim, restrictions of family reunion rights of some refugees and provisions to allow offshore processing of claims.

Despite integrated influencing work with the wider refugee and asylum sector (notably the Asylum Reform Initiative and the Families Together Coalition), disappointingly, our efforts to thwart or amend the bill were unsuccessful and the Bill passed into law. In the following months, the Refugee Council inputted into draft Home Office guidance required to implement key aspects of the Act. It included much of our feedback in the final version of their published guidance (particularly in relation to Family Reunion).

April also saw the shocking introduction of the Government's new **Migration and Economic Development Partnership** to outsource asylum processing to **Rwanda**. Working closely with services colleagues, Refugee Council called out the human misery caused by this policy, and united with the Refugee and Migrant Children's Consortium to highlight, in particular, the issue of children being at risk of being sent to Rwanda due to incorrect age assessment. This work became a key area of focus later in the year in September, when we launched our report *'Identity crisis: how the age dispute process puts refugee children at risk'* highlighting concerning practice and biased approaches to age assessments for unaccompanied young people seeking asylum,

which included the risk of children being removed to Rwanda under the new policy. Alongside others in the refugee sector, the Refugee Council has worked hard to call out the inhumane, costly and unworkable measures laid out in the Rwanda policy. In summer 2023, the Rwanda policy was found to be unlawful in the Court of Appeal, and at the time of writing this report, there are no flights to Rwanda for the purpose of an outsourced UK asylum system. We expect the Government to appeal this decision and further litigation to take place throughout 2023 and 2024.

And as we ended the financial year 2022/23, March 2023 saw the publication of the Government's latest and most hostile asylum legislation to date, the **Illegal Migration Bill**. The Bill outlined changes to the law to make asylum applications made by people who arrive irregularly into the UK permanently inadmissible, including those made by both accompanied and separated children. Any claim that is declared inadmissible will not subsequently be considered within the UK's asylum process. The Bill also places a duty on the Home Secretary to arrange for the removal of anyone arriving irregularly, and while there is an exception for separated children, the Home Secretary retains the power to remove them, which becomes a duty when a child turns 18.

Using Home Office data and other sources, Refugee Council developed and published an impact assessment of the Bill, estimating how many people it would impact across the first three years of being in operation, as well as the financial cost. This was developed in the absence of a Government impact assessment, and as such Refugee Council's Impact Assessment was quoted widely in the media and in parliament. This includes being used by the Shadow Leader of the House, Thangam Debbonaire, to consistently call on the Government to publish their own Impact Assessment figures. Refugee Council were invited to give oral evidence to the Joint Committee on Human Rights at the committee's first session as part of their inquiry on the Bill.

Disappointingly, the Illegal Migration Bill passed into law in July 2023. Refugee Council worked hard with partner organisations across the refugee and asylum sector to achieve some very modest amendments to the legislation, such as a commitment from the Government to produce plans within six months of the bill becoming law to set out proposed new safe routes to the UK. We continue to oppose the Act and will now work closely with civil servants and refugee organisations to understand how the Act will be operationalised going forward.

2022/23 saw over **163,500 refugees arrive in the UK fleeing the war in Ukraine**. Refugee Council worked closely with the wider refugee and asylum sector, alongside Ukrainian-led organisations, to unpick and understand the Government programmes to help people fleeing the Ukraine seeking safety in the UK. We provided feedback to Government regarding the rights and entitlements of Ukrainians, given they were not arriving under a Refugee Resettlement Scheme. Alongside other NGO's, Refugee Council also worked with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUC), the Government department responsible for the Homes for Ukraine scheme, to offer learnings and suggestions for improvement. This included calling for:

- Improved safeguarding measures following the increase of DIY matching schemes generated by members of the public through social media.
- Parity of support for those on the family visa scheme, which does not carry the same funding for wrap-around support to the Homes for Ukraine scheme.
- A clear plan for hosting placements should they break down (on both the family scheme and the Homes for Ukraine programme) once the hosting commitment period was met.

We co-ordinated a public letter backed by Oxfam, the British Red Cross, IRC and Save the Children calling on Government to immediately waive visa restrictions for Ukrainians. We also responded to the announcement of the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship scheme – highlighting the slow visa application process and the increasing number of Ukrainian refugees falling into homelessness due to breakdowns in relationships with hosts.

This lobbying contributed to an extension of the family visa, and the family members entitled to come to the UK, an extension on the six-month hosting placement financial support package for Homes for Ukraine hosts, and retrospective benefits entitlements for Sure Start Maternity Grants for Ukrainian refugees (alongside Afghan refugees).

And, throughout this period, Refugee Council continued to call on Government to better meet the **needs of refugees from Afghanistan**. This has included escalating concerns about the experiences of men, women and families housed in hotels, alongside the restrictive nature of the Afghan resettlement scheme, to Parliamentarians and in the public domain throughout the year. We've also highlighted issues affecting Afghans on being reunited with their family members, particularly those who were separated during the 2021 evacuation but who don't have access to refugee family reunion processes as they have not been given refugee status. Through the Families Together Coalition, and in particular with partner organisations Safe Passage, Amnesty International and the British Red Cross, we have pushed for a policy solution to this disparity of access to family reunion. Two years on from the evacuation there is still no clarity on how these families can be reunited, and despite many Afghan evacuees moving into community accommodation, as of the end of this period, over 9,500 men, women and children evacuated from Afghanistan in 2021 remain in hotels.

**Ambition 2**      **We will significantly improve access to quality support for refugees in crisis and those seeking to integrate into the UK.**

**Achievements**      **In 2022/23 we provided services to 15,851 people. However, across our services we supported 16,770 people as some accessed more than one service. For example, in regions where we supported people from Afghanistan living in Bridging Hotels who also accessed our therapeutic services and resettlement services.**

Key achievements from our four service delivery pillars were:

#### **Resettlement**

Delivering integration and therapeutic support to Afghans in Bridging Hotels in Yorkshire and Humberside for a second year, whilst rapidly mobilising our service response for Ukrainians in Yorkshire and Humberside and London under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, and scaling up our services to support Afghans long term resettlement in the UK. We supported 1,258 people from Afghanistan living in ARAP hotels and enabled 2,864 people to resettle in Hertfordshire, London and Yorkshire and Humberside.

We succeeded in securing therapeutic services for people in ARAP hotels, Ukrainians, children and families in Yorkshire and Humberside, enabling people to come to terms with the emotional impact of their experiences. Our services supported Afghans and Ukrainians to access benefits, employability, education and healthcare, and plan for long term housing. We worked with government and local housing providers to seek solutions to lack of affordable housing supply, and with statutory partners to keep people safe when domestic relationships or mental health led to risks to their personal safety.

Key to this achievement was our strong track record of enabling refugees to settle temporarily in the UK, and our strong relationships with local partners and statutory agencies. We drew on this to design a service that met the unique needs of the sponsored refugees from Ukraine and local sponsors, recognising the specific barriers and risks they faced in rebuilding their lives in the UK.

This was a significant period of growth and diversifying of our refugee resettlement models in response to government policy initiatives for people from Ukraine and

Afghanistan. We also produced a report with 30+ refugee community organisations (RCOs) in collaboration with Reset, describing their interest and unique capacity to support refugee integration, and the barriers they face to offer their expertise within the current community sponsorship model. This insight has been welcomed by government as they consider future sponsorship programme design with refugee charity partners in the field.

## Resettlement Case Study

Qudos\* (name changed to protect identity)

Qudos\* lives in Yorkshire with his wife and five children. They were resettled from Afghanistan (via Iran) under the ARAP scheme in January 2023. They were taken to a bridging hotel when they first arrived where they were supported by the Refugee Council. Qudos\* says:

*"Refugees don't know how to start here, the Refugee Council helps with everything, they apply for bank accounts, for school for kids, and also now applying for NHS doctors. Some people can't speak English so they help. Some people have stress, some issues, and emotionally they help. There is a therapist who meets all the people in the hotel and if some people have a problem they have a contact with the therapist. They're very useful and very good, I am very happy with them."*

*"The Refugee Council sent me one of the links for a job, in a charity and they accept me. Now I'm also working for Afghan refugees, we are meeting with Afghan women, if they have problems, we speak with the Refugee Council. The refugees trust the Refugee Council here..."*

*"We are healthy and we are good, but we have some problems in our mind, when we go into our backstory, we have a lot of problems. I hope that all the people in all the world, they don't accept war and their life is safe forever."*

*"Refugees don't like to leave their country, they left everything, for example, they have a car, they have a life, they have a house, they have money, they have shops. Nobody thinks about that, they left everything."*

## Children's Services

Our children's services supported 6,941 children, 25% more than in 2021-22. The vast majority were supported by our Independent Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children's Support Service, that launched in May 2021. Building on our 28 years welcoming separated children to the UK, this service provides children arriving alone in the UK to seek asylum with the trauma-informed and child-centred advice and support they need to understand the asylum and child protection systems they rely on for their safety in the UK across England. It includes our reception service for vulnerable children at the Kent Intake Unit, our free Advice Line, and regional advice teams, connecting young people with specialist services they need to stay safe and thrive while they wait for the outcome of the asylum claim and/or turn 18.

Alongside this England-wide service, our specialist Age Dispute team supported 523 children who were accommodated with adults having been incorrectly identified by Home Office officials as adults, to secure Local Authority accommodation. We continue to work closely with children and the Home Office to improve age assessment processes and address this ongoing safeguarding crisis.

## Children's Services Case Study

Amir\*(name changed to protect identity)

Amir\* (from Afghanistan) arrived in the UK with a copy of his Afghan ID, which showed his age as 16. However, this was not accepted by officials, and he was recorded as 22 years. He was then transferred to adult accommodation, where he found life very difficult. He was scared of the older people and felt uncomfortable around them.

Amir\* was visited by the Refugee Council Age Disputes Project in his hotel and referred to the Local Authority, who agreed to take him into care. He had an age assessment and was found to be 16. Amir\* says:

*"When we came here, they let us rest, then they called us one by one for an interview. They asked my name, they asked my age. I said 'I am 16', I gave them my Afghanistan date of birth...*

*They gave me no reason, they just said 'no you are 22.' Two or three times I said 'no', I said 'if you don't believe me, I am 16, I can give you my national ID'. They said 'this is not your ID.'*

*It wasn't fair. I struggled a lot. There were a lot of people at the hotel and I regretted coming here, but I didn't have another choice, because my sister lives in the UK.*

*The Refugee Council visited me, I was in the hotel for maximum one month. They interviewed me and helped me get out of the hotel and get my age corrected.*

*I felt more relaxed when I got out of the hotel. I'm going to school, I have friends. I can get help with issues I don't understand, like getting to the GP. Now I get help from a social worker.*

*I heard this country was kind. I didn't expect them to be so unfair. Why did they give me the wrong age? I'm still shocked. It's not just me, it's also happening to lots of other people, even younger than me. It has had a bad effect. Mentally it was difficult to cope with, I suffered.*

*At my young age I have seen and experienced a lot of suffering. Now I'm studying ESOL. I would like to become a police officer.*

*If not for Josh [at the Refugee Council], I could still be in that hotel. Day and night I'm thankful, and I pray for Josh, because he helped me to get out.*

*Young people come here because there is no safety in their countries. If they are treated well, they can work and become useful members of society. I don't want them to suffer as I did. Despite the bad experience, I'm thankful to the British people for giving me safety."*

### Integration Services

Our Integration and Employment Services played a critical role again this year enabling 2,136 refugees to overcome the key barriers to rebuilding their lives in the UK – understanding of housing, healthcare, welfare and employability systems, and addressing the barriers to inclusion through specialist advocacy, training and support. Our targeted services to support newly recognised refugees to access the mainstream welfare and social care systems, secured 40 tenancies with private landlords in London for homeless refugees. Our specialist employment services in London, Hertfordshire and Yorkshire enabled 141 people to secure the best first job and professional jobs, while

enabling a further 482 to develop their employability through mentoring programmes, job placements, training and support to have their qualifications recognised.

## Integration Services Case Study

Mariam was supported by our team in Hull to train as a beauty therapist.

*"My name is Mariam, I'm from Syria. The Refugee Council, they helped me with training.*

*It's so difficult when you come, you can't speak English, it's a hard life in the beginning. After we studied ESOL, step by step, we learned a lot. We learned about life here, it's interesting and it's so cool.*

*I'm 32 now, and I have three kids. My oldest one, my son is 14, my second one, she is 12, and my youngest is 4. When we arrived here, the Refugee Council helped with everything. I came with my husband and children. I heard about the beauty training, and I felt excited and happy. They give you confidence, it's good teaching. Really, they helped me a lot.*

*I was learning about acrylic nails, health and safety, and different therapies. I enjoyed it, it was so helpful. Everything takes practice! I felt confident and relaxed after the course. The teacher told me for every section what I needed to do. She was so kind, really.*

*In future I hope to open my own hairdressing salon, and my sister will open it with me, together, we will do nails and acrylic nails, we will have our own business.*

*I'd say everyone should have opportunities. I love this work, and if you love it, you keep going, and step by step, you'll find what you like. My kids told me - we hope you open your own business Mum, and do anything you want!"*

## Therapeutic and Destitution Services

Our therapeutic services supported people seeking asylum and refugees to come to terms with the emotional impact of their experiences since fleeing to the UK to seek protection. Our services work with children, separated and within their families, adults and families. Our destitution service engages people who have often been failed by the refugee protection system for many years, who arrive physically and mentally broken, who need a home and specialist support to be able re-engage with their asylum claim and secure long-term safety and security. This is slow, highly skilled practice that focuses on regaining people's trust and works with them to regain their health and a safe place to live. This year our destitution service supported 87 people and enabled 35 to re-enter the asylum support system.

This year we have supported 219 adults seeking asylum in hotels and initial accommodation to manage the loss of hope and trauma of living in accommodation inappropriate to their needs while waiting years for consideration of their asylum claim. After working with our therapists through psychosocial group work and a programme of 121 therapy, 81% reported improved feelings of safety and physical and mental wellbeing.

Our therapeutic service for children and families resettling in South Yorkshire continues to provide a safe space for young and old to safely face emotional distress, and develop relationships and techniques that keep them safe and enable them to re-engage with their life goals. This year we supported 29 families, 99 people, through this service with 100% of people reporting improved mental and physical wellbeing, ability to make informed choices, and social inclusion.

## Destitution Case Study

Ali Martin is from Sierra Leone where he campaigned for the rights of other disabled people. After a new government came to power, his life was in danger, and he claimed asylum in the UK. It was a very difficult process for him, and he struggled to find accommodation, to buy food, and to get the support he needed. He was supported by the Refugee Council who also connected him with a solicitor. Ali Martin says:

*"There was a time when I was almost homeless. It was very difficult for me. The Home Office would not give me accommodation. It was difficult because according to Social Services I had no recourse to public funds. It was a struggle. I had no money to eat, nothing. I had to contact Refugee Council. Refugee Council were so instrumental in finding a solicitor for me, and giving me money.*

*It was very challenging. It was so stressful.*

*Organisations like Refugee Council and others are doing a very good job... I went to the court, I won my appeal, I got my decision on 9th November.*

*In my depths of struggle for food, there were times I did not have Home Office support. I did not receive my Aspen Card. Kellie has always provided me vouchers to get food.*

*It was not easy to get food. Those were starving days for me. I starved. Apart from the counselling services, which I received from the Refugee Council.... They also provided other resources, of institutions to contact. It has been very tough and challenging. You have to think of what's happening at home. Then when you think you are safe now, you can only think of your family, you still have to think of shelter, food, you know, it was really tough."*

### Ambition 3

**To successfully influence public attitudes to refugees and people seeking asylum in new and imaginative ways to reform the hostile environment.**

2022/23 was a key year for delivering a step change in our work to influence public perceptions to refugees. This year saw the merging of teams within the organisation working with externally facing audiences, to create one united and integrated public facing Fundraising and External Affairs directorate. We also invested in the Communications and Campaigns team, including creating a new Digital Team and a Stories Officer, with the aim of providing solid foundations, systems and processes to drive impact and ensure the voices of people with lived experience of the refugee protection system in the UK are front and centre.

As a result of this approach, Refugee Council's profile through our media and influencing work has accelerated. Over the last 2 years, we have **increased our overall media coverage by 616%, and our national media by 459%**. During this period, the Refugee Council was mentioned in 6,244 media items, of which 554 were in national outlets. We have also delivered reports and policy analysis that have shaped the refugee

debate and undermined the foundations of the anti-protection argument, cited not just by the refugee sector but by the media, think tanks and politicians. We have stepped further into our work with unexpected messengers to reach new audiences, never better illustrated than when A list celebrities such as Sylvester Stallone and Daniel Radcliffe joined our patron Emma Thompson to shine a light on the true impact of the Nationality and Borders Act through the **#You'reAcriminal viral film**. We also understand how crucial it is to take a relational approach in our influencing work. We have proactively built strong relationships with Editors, Home Affairs Correspondents and respected Think Tanks that traditionally sit on the centre right in their politics.

A large part of our work under this ambition is to **balance the narrative and influence positive public discourse** around refugees and people seeking asylum in the UK. This includes sharing evidence and information that refute incorrect or misleading information in the public domain. For example, during the year we challenged misinformation around the men, women and children arriving in small boats across the English Channel in our report, **The Truth about Channel Crossings**, which aimed to directly counter the Home Office's narrative that those crossing the channel are predominantly economic migrants. Using the Home Office's own data, our report showed that two-thirds of people currently crossing the channel and awaiting a decision on their claim for asylum would be recognised as refugees. The report, and the evidence within it, has been cited across the media, by parliamentarians and by the refugee and asylum sector to help balance the hostile narrative that dehumanises and demonises refugees.

We also spoke out about the **inappropriate use of hotels to house unaccompanied children** over the summer of 2022. We were one of 60 signatories to an open letter led by Children England, warning that children seeking asylum are actually going missing from hotels and at risk of exploitation. Alongside this, we leaned into the divisive topic of children and young people's ages within the asylum system, by highlighting the damaging processes used to assess a child's age in our report, **Identity Crisis: how the age dispute process puts refugee children at risk.** Launched in September 2022, the report highlighted the hundreds of refugee children at risk as a result of inaccurate decision making that sees the Home Office routinely mistaking them for adults. This included the cases of 233 children Refugee Council supported last year through our Age Disputes Service, 94% of whom the Home Office wrongly judged as adult and housed with other adults. These children had no access to support or education and were at clear risk of abuse and neglect. In over half of these cases, the Home Office claimed these children were at least 25 if not older. The report was covered by a large number of media outlets and also cited by Stuart McDonald MP in the November 2022 Home Affairs Select Committee, who asked the Home Secretary for more data on the number of children affected and how that is recorded. Looking to the future, we are sadly expecting the number of young people wrongly age assessed to significantly increase and will be publicly calling for Government to publish adequate and accurate data to give a true picture of the numbers of children affected.

And we continued to shine a light on polarising and misunderstood areas of the refugee protection system, to help balance the narrative. For example, this year saw the continued and increasing use of hotels, alongside the mounting backlog in decision making, for people in the asylum system. We countered the hostile rhetoric around supposedly 'luxurious' hotel stays by evidencing the impact of prolonged hotel stays on the health and wellbeing of people, in our report **Lives on Hold: The Experiences of People in Hotel Asylum Accommodation**. The report uncovered that the use of hotel accommodation for people seeking asylum had almost trebled in 2021, leaving thousands of families with limited access to vital health, legal and other support services and at risk of depression and suicide ideation. The report made a number of recommendations to ensure people are not left in limbo in hotels for long periods, but moved into dispersal accommodation within 35 days, and ensuring that whilst people are in hotels, that they have access to quality legal advice early and basic essentials like clothing, nutritious food and medicine.

The Autumn of 2022 also saw the terrible and wholly avoidable situation unfold in the **Immigration Processing Centre at Manston** in Kent, in which 4,000 men, women



and children were detained, illegally, for up to a month in a facility designed for 1,600 people for a 24-hour period. Rife with contagious conditions such as scabies and an outbreak of the life-threatening disease diphtheria – the situation was very distressing and wholly unacceptable. Refugee Council proactively spoke out about the inhumane conditions, putting forward a six-point plan for how Government could approach the situation. We also launched a campaign for a fair and compassionate asylum system (which was supported by over 5,000 people in the first 10 days, and at the time of writing now stands at over 30,000). Following the death of person held at Manston from suspected diphtheria, we also led a joint call, backed by over 60 charities and NGOs, at the end of November – calling for an independent inquiry into the handling of people seeking asylum at Manston. Shortly after this, Manston was cleared and a plan for contingency processing facilities put in place to avoid a repeat of this scenario going forward.

## **Enabler 1: Refugee Involvement**

### **Achievements**

Refugee Council made a commitment to put the voices and insights of refugees at the heart of what we do by developing a whole organisation approach to their engagement and involvement in our work. We took steps towards developing a strategy and establishing leadership to follow through on this commitment. In addition, we reviewed existing initiatives and good practice on supporting staff and volunteers with lived experience in career progression and development and planned and budgeted for an internal evaluation on this work.

Our Refugee Involvement Strategy was co-produced by a Lived Experience Enabling Group (including staff with lived experience) and Refugee Council clients. We engaged a consultancy with expertise from the health sector where knowledge, best practice and expertise about service user involvement is far more advanced than it is in the refugee and migrant voluntary sector. The Strategy was also informed by an internal review completed in 2021, that mapped out our service user participation across the organisation, and identified existing pockets of good practice, gaps and learning. Following consultations from a wide range of staff about what they would need to be able to implement the strategy, we also co-produced a Refugee Involvement Delivery Plan. The Lived Experience Enabling group was also involved in communicating and championing the plans with the rest of the organisation and with the refugee community.

We allocated resources to make the strategy and delivery plan a reality through creating a new leadership function across the organisation to ensure we deliver our plans. We established a Refugee Involvement Team within the CEO office, to work with all teams in different Directorates to deliver our plan. We appointed a Head of Refugee Involvement to lead the strategy implementation and a Youth Involvement Manager to work with children and young people. Our project with working with Refugee Community Organisations was placed under this leadership to ensure we continue to create a thriving and resilient population of RCOs with a strong voice and with the capacity to respond effectively to the needs of their communities.

## **Enabler 2: Collaboration**

### **Achievements**

Refugee Council is one of the founding members of the Together with Refugees coalition of more than 500 organisations campaigning to show greater compassion for people fleeing war, persecution and violence. Membership includes grassroots, community and refugee-led organisations, international development charities and faith groups. We worked with the coalition to jointly oppose a number of policy and legislative moments during the year – notably responding to the Nationality and Borders Act 2022, the Migration and Economic Development Partnership (more commonly known as the Rwanda Plan) and the Illegal Migration Bill 2023.

Refugee Council co-chairs and coordinates the Families Together coalition, which brings together organisations across the sector to campaign to expand and improve access to family reunion for refugees. The coalition has grown to 106 members, ranging from major international charities, through to grassroots volunteer-led and refugee-led community organisations. The campaign goals are to persuade Government to amend the Immigration Rules and allow more refugees to reunite with their loved ones. At a time when new legislation will ban the right to asylum in the UK, increasing access to safe routes has never been more critical. The campaign achieved a significant win in May 2022: the expansion of family reunion to allow refugees in the UK to sponsor their adult dependent children to join them in safety.

In the face of the Illegal Migration Bill, we have ensured that family reunion remains a key part of the conversation around asylum: we worked with Liberal Democrat Peer Baroness Sarah Ludford to secure a Private Member's Bill on family reunion in the House of Lords; the coalition (and in particular coalition member Safe Passage) organised a successful cross-party parliamentary event with lived experience speakers; and we worked with MPs and Peers to table amendments to the Illegal Migration Bill in the Commons and Lords.

Through our campaign activity we delivered two letters to the Immigration Minister – one from 100 sector organisations, and a giant Mother's Day card signed by Refugee Council supporters. We have had high-profile support from actor Emma Thompson, BAFTA award-winning filmmaker Hassan Akkad, and award-winning children's author Michael Rosen. We are also bringing new people to the campaign. More than half of engagement with our Instagram content at key campaign moments were new audiences.

With our specialism in working with unaccompanied children and young people, Refugee Council also continue to play an important role at the Refugee and Migrant Children's Consortium (RMCC), which is an influencing umbrella group for children and refugees. Our key area of focus has been the use of hotels by the Home Office for separated children seeking asylum. This is an unlawful practice and poses a significant safeguarding risk, clearly evident by over 200 children going missing from these hotels, never to be found, since 2021. Refugee Council used our collective voice to continue to raise this issue in Parliament and with the Home Office. We also pursued the issue of age disputes.

### **Enabler 3: People, Partners and Processes**

**Achievements** Refugee Council made a commitment in our strategy to develop our staff, invest in our systems and processes, prioritise a learning approach and attract the resources needed to deliver our mission and ambitions. This year we continued to invest in our support functions and infrastructure, particularly focusing on our people and our technology. We have also developed and grown new relationships with corporate partners, philanthropists, foundations and supporters to deliver growth in income, impact and influence. We have been able to deliver key services in partnership with Ikea, ServiceNow and Starbucks, and through these relationships we will deliver better employment, well-being and integration outcomes for refugees and engage new collaborators, influencers and audiences to drive forward social change.

We relaunched our HR function as the People and Culture team with a stronger focus on development and learning, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) and volunteering. We initiated a project to develop a new Leadership and Management development framework, beginning with reviewing a behaviour framework linked to our organisational values. We have rolled out an inclusive leadership training course to continue our work on improving our approach to EDIB. We have invested in our volunteering function with a new central coordinating role and we have established a new set of associated policies aimed at improving the overall volunteer experience. We

recognise volunteers are a vital part of our team and we will seek to expand their involvement in our operations. We have also begun implementing a new digital HR and payroll system due to go live in the autumn of 2023 and improved our DBS process.

We brought our new outsourced IT provider Bluecube onboard in March 2022, and much of this year has been around stabilising and improving the service offered to our staff and volunteers. We have begun upgrading the internet provision in our regional sites and have also rolled out a hardware refresh of our IT kit and established an action plan to improve our data protection. Finally, we have also invested in our internal communications function and have launched a new intranet.

## **Strategic Plans for 2023/24**

### **Ambition 1: Successfully press Government and other agencies to take action that significantly improves refugee protection.**

- We will set out and monitor the impact of the Illegal Migration Act 2023 and what needs to change.
- We will continue to lobby Government to tackle the mounting backlog of people awaiting a decision on their claim for asylum.
- We will put forward practical solutions for a new national refugee strategy, including recommendations for the Government to pilot a Refugee Visa scheme, to provide a safe alternative to dangerous journeys for people who want to claim asylum in the UK, and to operate a fair, humane and effective asylum system.

### **Ambition 2: Significantly improve access to quality support for refugees in crisis and those seeking to integrate into the United Kingdom.**

- We will improve safeguarding governance, practice quality and recording.
- We will improve data quality and embed data visualisation tool across all of our services.
- We will strengthen practice in key thematic areas across services & establish practice quality standards.

### **Ambition 3: Successfully influence public attitudes to refugees in new and imaginative ways to reform the hostile environment that impact their lives**

- We will deliver an External Affairs strategy – covering our influencing and engagement work across external audiences, including investing in audience insight to better understand target audiences, messaging framing and channels.
- We will launch a campaign, working with partners 'outside of the refugee sector' to reach new audiences of people persuadable to the refugee protection cause
- We will deliver a new brand for Refugee Council and undertake a programme of digital improvement work across our website and digital channels.

### **Enabler 1: Ensure people with lived experience of refugee protection are at the heart of what we do by developing a whole organisation approach to their engagement and involvement in our work.**

- We will build a strong foundation to implement our Refugee Involvement Strategy through developing policies and systems that will allow us to involve and engage refugees to shape and influence Refugee Council's work.
- We will design a number of pioneer projects to test and learn our approach to refugee involvement and identify promising practice.
- We will create a model for career progression and development for staff and volunteers with lived experience through engaging expert consultants, staff and partners.

### **Enabler 2: Collaborate with like-minded supporters and partners to secure cut-through in our campaigning and systems change work**

- We will play a central role in the Families Together coalition and continue to support the Together

- with Refugees initiative.
- We will work in collaboration with a diverse range of organisations to balance the narrative and unlock the potential reach of our core base of supporters, in line with our External Affairs strategy.
- We will secure new Patrons, Ambassadors and corporate partners to grow our reach into new audiences and networks of decision makers.

**Enabler 3: Develop our staff, invest in our systems and processes and prioritise a learning approach and ensure we attract the resources to deliver our mission and ambitions**

- We will ensure that 100% of our sites and remote workers are "technology enabled" and start the work to find efficiencies in our ways of working by utilising the Microsoft 365 suite of tools including the ongoing work to improve data management.
- We will continue with our People plan, focusing on launching a new HR system, our EDI work, continuing to invest in developing our leaders and managers and establishing a program focusing on Career Development for those with Lived Experience that we intend to share with the wider sector.
- We will further invest in our capacity and capability to maximise public fundraising (particularly through digital fundraising) and partnerships fundraising (particularly focussing on philanthropy and corporate partnerships as growth income streams).

**Principal Risks and Uncertainties**

**Risk management**

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that appropriate systems of financial and other controls are in place. Trustees are responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity, taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and providing reasonable assurance that:

- The Refugee Council is operating efficiently and effectively;
- Its assets are safeguarded against unauthorised use or disposal;
- Proper records are maintained, and financial information used internally or for publication is reliable;
- The charity complies with relevant laws and regulations.

The systems of internal control are designed to provide reasonable, although not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss. They include:

- The adoption of a Strategic Plan and an Annual Business Plan and Budget by the Board of Trustees;
- Regular review of financial and operational results by the Senior Management Team, Resources Committee and the Board of Trustees against these plans;
- A review carried out by the Resources Committee with the external auditors of any matters raised for the attention of management;
- Clear rules for delegation of authority for decision making and the incurring of expenditure;
- Health and safety risk management, review and monitoring procedures;
- Serious incident reporting and review procedures;
- A framework for joint working between delivery managers, fundraising, and finance for whole-life management of external funding and partnerships.

Trustees review risk using a traditional risk register approach as a formal report and review of the organisation's key risks, with the review including looking at existing controls and plans for mitigation, and further actions and improvements required. Risk management techniques are also thoroughly embedded throughout the organisation's decision making and control mechanisms, an organisational strength which has strengthened our effective response to the higher-level risk environment we have seen from the Pandemic.

At the current time the following risks are identified as the highest category risks for the Refugee Council:

Risk	Mitigation Actions
<p><b>Significant Safeguarding Issue</b></p> <p>The potential for actual harm to our beneficiaries, staff, volunteers or other stakeholders, due to negligence or inadequate practice on behalf of the Refugee Council.</p> <p>Any subsequent reputational damage, which would then have second order reputational impacts including threat to our ability to effectively collaborate with partners, or a detrimental effect on our fundraising, as well as risk our clients trust in us.</p> <p>As a service delivery organisation, this risk remains consistently at the top of our risk register.</p>	<p>We have now agreed a strategy for strengthening our safeguarding approach with regular reporting to the senior team and Trustees and we have a Safeguarding lead now on the Board.</p> <p>Safeguarding is now embedded in recruitment, induction, training and appraisal and we have appointed a Safeguarding and Practice and Policy Manager embedded within services with an organisation-wide remit.</p> <p>The senior team and Board have received training on creating a culture of safeguarding and we have delivered targeted training to address practice needs (domestic violence, suicidal ideation, boundaries).</p> <p>Safeguarding incidents are investigated, lessons learned and implemented from April 2022 and we have moved all safeguarding alert reporting to the Inform client database so we have central oversight.</p>
<p><b>Staff Well-being</b></p> <p>Stresses on our staff team and the associated negative impact on wellbeing include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Over-stretch and a lack of capacity in some areas affecting our ability to deliver on operational and strategic goals</li> <li>- Our move to a hybrid operating model including relaxing of previous COVID risk mitigations</li> <li>- A Hostile political climate and the implications of the Illegal Immigration Act for our clients &amp; our activities and staff morale.</li> <li>- Increased stress on our workforce related to the "Cost of Living Crisis"</li> </ul>	<p>We continue to deliver our people strategy which includes a focus on our values as well as EDI, training on performance management and nurturing talent with a focus on lived experience.</p> <p>We are also providing an on-going HR support programme on staff wellbeing including a new well-being hub on the intranet.</p> <p>We have designed a bespoke hybrid working approach that works for our different teams and we hold quarterly discussions and regular staff Q&amp;A sessions on key topics.</p> <p>We have undertaken a review of internal comms and improving oversight and delivery being led by Head of Communications and Campaigns and have created a working group to implement the desired improvements.</p> <p>Finally, we considered the "cost of living" impact on staff against our planned pay awards and awarded both a pay award and a one -off payment to staff.</p>
<p><b>Information Security &amp; Data Quality</b></p> <p>A data breach could create a significant reputational risk, risk to a service user and/ or lead to fines from the ICO. This could then in turn lead to a loss of income as there could be an impact on public support and funder/ commissioner confidence in the organisation.</p> <p>Although the move to BlueCube has increased the reliability and wider security of our IT systems, it has now become clear that there has been a lack of understanding of organisational information security, and we have been working hard to improve our processes and controls.</p> <p>There is also a risk the data we do hold is of poor quality or not utilised effectively to drive evidence led decision making.</p>	<p>Cyber essentials has now been achieved and the IUSS has an ISO27001 Information Security Management System in place. We also have training in place for all staff.</p> <p>Several remedial steps have been taken across the organisational IT infrastructure and the IT database for Services including agreeing to recruit roles with specific focus on data management. We have also made some technical improvements such as increasing email security across all our accounts with additional filters and monitoring.</p> <p>A new structure has been proposed clearly stating the accountabilities and responsibilities of various roles within the charity, we have restructured the internal IT team and we have invested in an outsourced dedicated DPO role to advise on matters going forward.</p>

<p><b>Change in government policy</b></p> <p>Change in government policy that negatively impacts clients and reduces the likelihood of government contracts/funding.</p> <p>The new Illegal Migration Act could have significant impact on our services although commencement of the provisions has yet to happen.</p> <p>While this risk has existed on our register previously, recently the risk level has increased.</p>	<p>We are delivering a multi-faceted advocacy work plan (including parliamentary, policy and media work) including scrutinising the Immigration Bill and the impact for our beneficiaries and services.</p> <p>We have commissioned consultants to produce a report on the impact of the Act on both our own charity and the wider sector.</p> <p>More generally we are working across the sector on key issues as well as building relationships with media and parliamentarians to address the impact of the new legislation. We will be monitoring and engaging with sector activity and 'leaning in' dependent on tone of voice, call to action and potential impact.</p>
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There are in addition to the above a number of other risks that whilst significant in aggregate, are not individually critical. The impact of these can in general be assessed to give an estimated financial impact, such as the likely range by which income may fall short of budgets, or the resources required to put right issues arising. The overarching insurance and mitigation against these risks is the holding of sufficient levels of free reserves to protect against them. The process for setting the level of reserves we hold is described in the Reserves section below.

## **Financial review**

### **Income and Expenditure**

Total income was £3.3m higher than the prior year at **£19.1m** (2021/22: £15.8m) driven by an exceptional year for legacy income and an expanding of our locations and activities for resettlement.

Income from donations and legacies has grown from £0.4m in 2021/22 to £2.5m, due to an extraordinary year for legacy income including a very generous legacy donation from one legator, Mr Romera Maura. This exceptional performance is somewhat masked by a drop in publicly donated income to £3.3m, down from £5.2m in 2021/22. This is due to the prior year including additional income due to the success of two emergency appeals; Refugee Crisis Appeal and The Times Appeal partnership.

Income from charitable activities has grown £3.1m to **£12.8m**, of which £5.8m is income for resettlement (2021/22: £3.3m) representing over 80 per cent of the income uplift for charitable activities. This is driven by increased resettlement activity for an increase in arrivals for our existing schemes in Yorkshire & Humberside and Hertfordshire, a full year of our resettlement programmes in the London borough of Lewisham, and a new programme in Lambeth. An uplift in income from charitable activities typically has a proportionate increase in accompanying expenditure, and represents an increase in our charitable activity rather than impacting net surplus or deficit.

Total expenditure increased £4.2m to **£17.1m** (2021/22: £12.9m) driven by spend on charitable activities of £15.9m, up from £11.2m in the prior year and as expected in line with the increase in income.

Expenditure on our resettlement programmes was £2.2m higher than the prior year, as we increased our activity for higher refugee arrivals and new London based programmes. Other charitable activities, such as children's services, integration and therapeutic services, have seen small increases in spend, with this increase being covered by income from Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), the European Asylum Migration & Integration Fund (AMIF) and other generous funders.

Expenditure on our advocacy & awareness raising activities was **£1.7m**, an increase of £1.0m from prior year and of which only £0.2m is covered by restricted income. During the year we redesigned and expanded our external affairs teams, establishing a team for Public Affairs & Policy and Communications & Campaigns. These teams and their activities are critical to our success to achieving our two strategic ambitions:

- Ambition 1: We will successfully press Government and other agencies to take action that significantly improves refugee protection.
- Ambition 3: We will successfully influence improved public attitudes to refugees in new and imaginative ways to reform the hostile environment that impacts their lives.

Continued investment in this area is crucial for to achieve our strategy and we will continue to both look for external funding for this activity, as well as invest our unrestricted funds to deliver success in this key area.

Our surplus for the year is therefore **£2.0m** after the utilisation of brought forward reserves (restricted funds and designated funds) which is a decrease of £0.8m from last years' surplus of £2.9m.

## Reserves

Total funds at 31 March 2023 stand at **£10.8m**; of which **£3.0m** is restricted by donors to fund specific projects, and £0.1 million is a long term endowment fund. Neither of these balances are available for general use. Of the balance of **£7.7m** unrestricted funds, £1.9 million has been designated and set aside by Trustees at the year-end as funding for specific future purposes. These designations are:

- The balance of £220k from a £925k unrestricted donation originally received in 2018/19 from one of our long standing donors.
- The amount of our overall funds of £685k invested in our tangible fixed assets, chiefly the value of fitting our service provision offices out for our specialist activities and providing our staff with appropriate IT hardware. This has increased from last year as a result of capital additions in the year.
- Investment fund of £970k for an 'Invest to Save' fund which will fund investment needs on the new strategy period to 2025 covering both improvements to people, process and systems and investments in our income generation. This has reduced slightly by £63k from last year as part of investment into fixed assets, to improve our tech and therefore our processes and ways of working.

After these designations, our free unrestricted general reserves at 31 March 2023 stand at **£5.8m**, an increase of £1.2 million from the £4.6m held at the start of the year. This balance is greater than our reserves policy indicates we need, a policy which was reviewed and updated during the year, but we recognise that we are entering a very turbulent period financially reflected in our latest three-year plans and will need these reserves to weather the coming period.

We have significant financial challenges ahead of us relating to a combination of the ongoing cost of living crisis, some key contract funding arrangements ending next year and our continued need to invest in transforming our organisation to better deliver upon our strategy.

This has been a unique year for us and the key reason for the uplift in our unrestricted general reserves is the legacy income of £2.5m recognised in year, of which £2m is accrued income and therefore not yet cash received. With this income, we hope to tackle some difficult challenges ahead, and make intentional and thoughtful investment decisions that will bring long-lasting and impactful benefits not just to Refugee Council, but also to the wider refugee sector.

We are anticipating drawing down on our unrestricted reserves over the next two years as a major European funding stream ends next financial year and are planning to end the next three years in line with our latest reserves policy.

## Reserve setting and reserve policy

There is no single method or approach to setting a reserves policy. The approach adopted considers the size of the charity, the complexity of activities, legal structure and the nature of funds received and held by the charity. Specifically, our approach considers:

- The nature of the funds received and held by the charity- are the funds unrestricted or restricted income and the likelihood and timing?
- The existing organisational risk register, clearly identifying the key risks and any financial ramifications.
- Future cost commitments – are they fixed or variable and within our control?

Once these factors are assessed, this produces a risk index to incoming resources and a commitment factor to key spend lines. It is the highest scores that are the riskiest or committed areas and should be considered when setting the reserves limit.

Our chosen approach to reserves setting means we need a medium profile for reserve setting that considers both the income and cost risk profile. Therefore, our reserves range has been profiled to be £4m plus or minus £0.5m.

This is an increase from our previous reserves level of £2-£3m reflecting a riskier operating environment. The risk tolerance of Refugee Council is low, and in relation to reserves and financial sustainability, we are required that every effort is made to minimise or eliminate the risk of any financial loss or the need to use reserves. This means the approach to reserves is considered prudent.

## Approach to Fundraising

2022/23 has been an exceptional fundraising year, with an income of £6.2m, an uplift of 2% to the preceding year. This uplift is the result of three key factors:

- generous support from donors responding to our Refugee Crisis Appeal, launched in response to the Ukraine war, which received matched funding of £500,000 from the Lund Trust,
- extraordinary legacy year, which included a very large legacy donation from one legator (Mr Romera Maura) – total value expected to be in the region of £3m to £5m over the next two years, and
- launch of a new corporate partnerships approach to our employment services, resulting in new commitments and relationships with brands including Ikea, Starbucks and Service Now.

We work with supporters in a variety of ways. Our Public Fundraising programmes enables our donors to make either stand alone or regular gifts, inspiring support through direct mail, print and digital campaigns. We were grateful to receive a number of legacy gifts during the year, from generous supporters who chose to leave us a gift in their Will. Both our Trusts and Statutory team and our Philanthropy and Corporate Partnerships team work with individuals and organisations able to give at a higher level. We also have a collection of fantastic community fundraising supporters who raise funds through events and activities in their local communities.

The vast majority of the fundraising undertaken by the Refugee Council is done directly by our own staff, which means we are able to fully control the standards to which the work is carried out. We also work with a telephone fundraising agency to promote regular giving and a digital agency to support our paid and organic social media fundraising campaigns. We also onboarded an additional fundraising consultant to help manage the refugee crisis emergency fundraising appeal following the outbreak of war in Ukraine.

We expect all third parties who work with us to meet the same high standards as our own fundraisers and have contracts in place to ensure this. We do not currently undertake any street fundraising or door to door fundraising.

We use a mixture of consent and legitimate interest as our legal basis for processing supporters' personal data for marketing purposes. We ask all supporters how they would prefer us to communicate with them. We give them the option to let us know if they prefer less contact or no longer wish to hear from us, and we always respect their wishes. We do not sell or exchange lists of data with any other charities or companies. For further details please see our [Privacy policy - Refugee Council](#).

Occasionally, supporters or businesses wish to undertake fundraising through methods which fall under the term of commercial participator. These are often small-scale ventures such as proceeds or profits from books or clothes. In all such cases we carry out due diligence and require that the other party complies



with all relevant fundraising regulation, including, where applicable, how they will protect vulnerable people. During the year there were three such agreements in place, through which funds of £23,266.22 were raised for the organisation.

The Refugee Council has been registered with the Fundraising Regulator since its inception in July 2016 and with its predecessor, the Fundraising Standards Board, before then. We fully comply with the Code of Fundraising Regulations issued by the Fundraising Regulator. We take supporter complaints seriously and have established a process to handle, quantify and respond to complaints. This year we received seven complaints, all of which were resolved to the complainant's satisfaction by our Supporter Care team. We review all complaints received to determine any changes we need to make, and we update our database whenever a donor requests this. Our Fundraising Complaints Procedure can be found on our website. All of our staff follow best-practice guidelines for dealing with vulnerable people as outlined in our Acceptance and Refusal of Donations Policy and Procedures.

In July 2017 the Fundraising Regulator launched the Fundraising Preference Service (FPS) aimed at providing people with the means to stop direct marketing from specific charities without having to contact them directly. In this financial year, Refugee Council has received three such requests.

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

This report covers the year to 31 March 2022.

### **Organisational Structure**

The British Refugee Council ("the Refugee Council") is a company limited by guarantee and is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission. The Refugee Council's governing documents are its Memorandum and Articles of Association. As at 31 March 2023 there were 10 trustees who were also members, and who as required by the Memorandum and Articles of Association agree to contribute £1 in the event of the charity winding up. The Trustees perform their work on a voluntary and non-remunerated basis and are only reimbursed for minor costs such as transport to meetings.

### **Appointment of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees consists of up to thirteen members as set out in our governing documents, including a Chair and Honorary Treasurer, who are appointed on the basis of an open recruitment exercise. The Board undertakes a skills audit for existing trustees and matches that against the desired skills and experience before undertaking any new recruitment, in order to ensure that the Board remains well equipped to meet its governance function.

One third of the trustees must stand down at the Board meeting immediately preceding each AGM, with those standing down eligible for re-election subject to a maximum length of office of 9 years. The Chair and Honorary Treasurer are able to serve in these posts for a maximum length of seven years.

Three trustees resigned during 2022/23, and two joined.

### **Trustee induction and training**

All Trustees receive a full induction upon being appointed to the Board of Trustees. The induction includes an introductory session with the Senior Management Team and visits to see some of the service delivery work first hand. Through this they receive an overview of the work of the Refugee Council and grant arrangements with key funders. Trustees receive an induction pack which provides details of the charity's strategic plan, key policies, minutes of Board meetings for the previous year, financial information including budgets and procedures and more general information on the requirements of being a trustee. Trustees are

kept up-to-date with legal and statutory requirements through circulation of materials and where appropriate through attending external trustee training, such as Charity Finance training, and networking events.

## **Organisation**

The Board of Trustees meets on a regular basis throughout the year and met formally five times during the year. The main tasks of the Board are:

- Setting and maintaining the vision, mission and values of the organisation
- Agreeing major organisational policies and programmes
- Approving the strategic direction, annual plans and associated budgets
- Reviewing progress against these plans and financial performance
- Monitoring risks and the mitigation actions taken

The Board also has two sub-committees, the Finance and Resources Committee and the Remunerations and Nominations Committee. The Finance and Resources Committee comprises the Chair, Treasurer, and two other Trustees with relevant experience; it met four times during the year. This sub-committee, which operates within guidelines set by the Board, gives a greater level of scrutiny on financial and operational issues, including meeting with the external auditors and approving expenditures where they exceed levels delegated to management but below levels reserved to the Board.

The Remunerations and Nominations Committee comprises three trustees under terms of reference agreed by the Board, which includes overseeing the recruitment and selection of new trustees and supporting the Chair of the Board in ensuring effective Board performance. It met four times during the year.

Day-to-day management is the responsibility of the Chief Executive, who is appointed by the Trustees, and a Senior Management Team comprising Executive Directors of Services, Fundraising and External Affairs, and Finance and Resources.

## **Public Benefit**

The Charities Act 2011 requires charities to demonstrate that their work is of direct benefit to the public. When planning the Refugee Council's activities each year, the Trustees take due regard of the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

Within the constraint of resources, and subject to any eligibility criteria for a specific service, the Refugee Council's services, described above, are available to all refugees and people claiming asylum. Services are offered in many of our clients' languages, without charging fees, and recognising the difficulties many face in meeting travelling costs. Our work on sector capacity building, refugee integration and education of the general public about refugee issues benefits the whole community by supporting community cohesion. Our work on policy, legislation and advocacy advances human rights and access to employment, education and health care, and combats destitution.

## **Policies**

### **Investment policy**

Within the year, the charity has opted not to pursue a policy of investing surplus funds on the equities or bond markets and has continued to utilise short-term deposits. With the legacy due over the next two years, we are now looking at what we might do with any surplus cash from 23/24 onwards.

### **Remuneration Policy**

The Refugee Council has a job grading system in place that, on the basis of a number of criteria, matches posts against the pay spine used by the National Joint Council for Local Government. This system is used for all posts in the organisation with the exception of executive staff. Employees normally join the organisation at the bottom of the scale for their post and move up the scale on an annual basis. In exceptional circumstances a market supplement may be paid in order to attract a candidate in a difficult to

recruit to post. This year, in light of the "cost of living" crisis, an annual cost of living award was paid to staff in line with that agreed by the National Joint Council. This was a fixed amount that equated to an overall 6.1% increase to the payroll, where those at the lower end of the scale may have received as much as 10%, while heads of functions received between 2-3% award. No bonuses are payable to any staff but we did choose to also award an additional one off payment of £700 for a full time equivalent member of staff.

For executive staff the Refugee Council has to balance a number of factors, including the esteem and value of working for a charity, and the limited number of applicants for senior roles with experience and knowledge in some key functions. The Board are conscious that executive salaries need to remain competitive with the sector whilst ensuring that there is appropriate consistency on remuneration across the organisation. Therefore in determining levels of executive pay, the Refugee Council will usually reference pay data from employment agencies, charities of a comparable size and sector competitors, and will consider the ratio between executive and median employee data. Annual cost of living awards for executive staff are normally comparable to any increases paid to non-executive staff.

The Board is directly responsible for the annual setting of the salary level of the Chief Executive, who in turn has delegated responsibility for executive directors. The Board reviews the level of executive salaries every two years based on benchmarking data, to ensure that salaries are still comparable to the median level of similar sized charities. Having last been conducted in 2018/19, this exercise was due to be conducted in 2021/22, but was deferred until this year when a recommendation based on benchmarking data was approved by the Board and the salaries of the senior team were adjusted accordingly. The senior team therefore did not receive a cost of living award nor the one off payment. This is in line with the remuneration policy.

The ratio of the Refugee Council Chief Executive's salary to the median of staff salaries at March 2023 was 2.9 (March 2022 – 3.0).

## **Employees**

The charity recognises the importance and commitment of its staff in the delivery of our plans and activities, and employed 321 staff during the year equivalent to 275 full time equivalents. This has increased from last years 242 staff due to increased service delivery. Employees are kept up to date on matters affecting the charity through regular staff briefings and email updates. With staff spread over a number of offices, and working in a hybrid manner, the Senior Management Team held regular all staff 'Question Time' sessions to maintain direct contact with the wider staff group, to supplement other formal communication channels. As COVID-19 measures have eased the Senior Management Team have resumed onsite visits across the organisation.

The organisation usually holds an all-staff conference every two years, to which volunteers are also invited, to foster a spirit of sharing and co-operation. This conference was due to take place in 2021, but we deferred this to 2022/23. The event was well attended and staff reported positive impact from getting together in person. We are now planning for our next conference in 2024.

We formally recognise the trade union Unison, and meet with union representatives quarterly in order to consult on issues affecting employees' interests, with the Chair of the Board also meeting the union once a year.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers are critical to the work we are able to achieve and their support makes the impact that we have so much greater. The contribution of 423 volunteers this year (305 in 2021/22) amounted to some 23,087 hours of support during the year (26,183 in 2021/22). Whilst we do not account for the value of this time in our financial statements, we can note that if we were to value their support to our work at only £10 per hour, this would amount to £230,870 worth of time (£261,830 in 2021/22). Not only do staff appreciate their value but also our beneficiaries who are at the receiving end of their valuable time. We are grateful for the continuing support of our volunteers and recognise that we need to invest more in

improving the volunteer journey. We have now set up a central function to coordinate our approach and build on the fantastic impact we already achieve through our volunteers.

The number of volunteer hours were lower than the prior year, due to the difficulties recruiting and supporting volunteers under the constraints of working from home/remotely. Nevertheless, we did recruit 93 new volunteers overall, and we are confident that we will attract more volunteers to support our work as we transition to our new strategy and hybrid way of working.

Each year Brian Marsh, chair of the Marsh Christian Trust, sponsors awards for volunteering. We held several volunteer celebrations in the year and gave out 16 Marsh Awards for the best volunteer ideas to support refugees and people seeking asylum to meet new people, develop skills, and participate in their local community. Thank you, Brian Marsh.

The Trustees and staff give a big thank you to all the very talented volunteers who work to support and help us improve the lives of refugees and people seeking asylum.

## **Statement of Trustees' responsibilities**

The Trustees are responsible in accordance with applicable law and regulations for preparing the Annual Report of the Trustees and the Strategic Report, as well as the financial statements.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the charity at any time, and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Financial statements are published on the charity's website in accordance with legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements, which may vary from legislation in other jurisdictions. The trustees' responsibility also extends to the ongoing integrity of the financial statements contained therein. The maintenance and integrity of the charity's website is the responsibility of the trustees.

### **Provision of information to auditor**

Each of the persons who is a trustee at the date of approval of this Report confirms that:

- so far as the trustee is aware, no relevant audit information has been withheld from the company's auditor; and
- the trustee has taken all the steps that he or she could reasonably be expected to have taken as a trustee in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information, and has established that this information has not been withheld from the auditor.

### **Auditor**

Sayer Vincent LLP are the appointed auditors for the charity since 2021/22.

This Trustees' Report, incorporating the Strategic Report, was approved and authorised for issuance by the Council on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



**Rachael Orr**  
**Chair**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BRITISH REFUGEE COUNCIL****Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of British Refugee Council (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

**Basis for opinion**

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

**Conclusions relating to going concern**

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

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

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

**Other Information**

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

**Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and

- The trustees' annual report, including the strategic report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

### **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

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

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

#### **Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities**

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management and the Resources Committee, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
  - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
  - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or

that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.

- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

#### **Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Noelia Serrano (Senior statutory auditor)

Date: 18 October 2023

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor  
Invicta House, 108-114 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TL



## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Including Income and Expenditure Account

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Endowment Funds £'000	2022/23 Total £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Endowment Funds £'000	2021/22 Total £'000
<b>Income from:</b>									
Donations and Legacies	2 & 5	5,270	965	-	6,235	4,998	1,101	-	6,099
Charitable Activities	3 & 5	45	12,756	-	12,801	82	9,601	-	9,683
Other Trading Activities	4	9	-	-	9	9	-	-	9
Investments		29	-	-	29	1	-	-	1
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>5,353</b>	<b>13,721</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>19,074</b>	<b>5,090</b>	<b>10,702</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>15,792</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>									
Raising Funds:									
Fundraising		1,213	-	-	1,213	1,698	-	-	1,698
Total Raising Funds		1,213	-	-	1,213	1,698	-	-	1,698
Charitable Activities:									
Resettlement		36	5,263	-	5,299	186	2,929	-	3,114
Children's Services		315	3,398	-	3,713	70	3,006	-	3,076
Integration		104	3,420	-	3,524	87	2,968	-	3,055
Advocacy and Awareness Raising		914	766	-	1,680	551	129	-	680
Therapeutic Services		-	1,579	-	1,579	16	1,186	-	1,202
Destitution		-	102	-	102	-	94	-	94
Total Charitable Activities		1,369	14,528	-	15,897	909	10,312	-	11,221
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	6a - d	<b>2,582</b>	<b>14,528</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>17,110</b>	<b>2,607</b>	<b>10,312</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12,919</b>
<b>Net Income/(Expenditure)</b>		<b>2,771</b>	<b>(807)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,964</b>	<b>2,483</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,873</b>
Transfers between Funds	15	(1,426)	1,426	-	-	(410)	410	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>1,345</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,964</b>	<b>2,073</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,873</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>									
Total funds brought forward		6,347	2,392	110	8,849	4,274	1,592	110	5,976
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>7,692</b>	<b>3,011</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>10,813</b>	<b>6,347</b>	<b>2,392</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>8,849</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended are derived from continuing activities (refer to Note 15: Funds Detail).

The accompanying notes form an integral part of this Statement of Financial Activities.

**BALANCE SHEET**  
AS AT 31 MARCH 2023  
REGISTERED COMPANY NO: 2727514

	Notes	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000
Fixed Assets:			
Tangible assets	8	685	539
Investments		4	4
Total Fixed Assets		<u>689</u>	<u>543</u>
Current assets:			
Debtors	9	7,791	4,614
Cash at bank and in hand	10	<u>5,368</u>	<u>5,951</u>
Total Current Assets		<u>13,159</u>	<u>10,565</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	11	(2,723)	(2,161)
Net current assets		<u>10,436</u>	<u>8,404</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		11,125	8,949
Provision for liabilities	12	(312)	(100)
<b>Total Net Assets</b>		<b><u>10,813</u></b>	<b><u>8,849</u></b>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>			
Unrestricted funds:			
Designated funds		1,875	1,729
General Reserves		<u>5,817</u>	<u>4,618</u>
Total Unrestricted Funds		7,692	6,347
Restricted Income Funds		3,011	2,392
Endowment Funds		110	110
<b>Total charity funds</b>	<b>13 - 15</b>	<b><u>10,813</u></b>	<b><u>8,849</u></b>

These accounts, including this balance sheet and the notes, were approved by the Board of Trustees of the British Refugee Council on 28 September 2023, and are signed on its behalf by:



Ian Hanham

Treasurer

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2022/23 Total £'000	2021/22 Total £'000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>			
<i>Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities</i>	(i)	<u>(308)</u>	<u>854</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities:</b>			
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		29	1
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(303)	-
<i>Net cash (used in) / provided by investing activities</i>		<u>(274)</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		<u>(582)</u>	<u>855</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		5,951	5,098
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	(ii)	<u>5,368</u>	<u>5,951</u>
<b>(i) Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities</b>			
<b>Net income for the year</b>		<b>1,964</b>	<b>2,873</b>
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation charges		157	95
Interest		(29)	(1)
(Increase) in debtors		(3,175)	(2,417)
Increase in creditors & provisions		775	304
<b>Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities</b>		<u><b>(308)</b></u>	<u><b>854</b></u>
<b>(ii) Analysis of cash and cash equivalents</b>			
Cash in hand		3,994	4,585
Notice deposits (less than 3 months)		1,374	1,366
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>		<u><b>5,368</b></u>	<u><b>5,951</b></u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS****1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES****(a) Basis of accounting**

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments which are included at market value. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) effective 1 January 2015) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006. The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below.

The Refugee Council constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

**Going concern**

The financial statements are prepared on the going concern basis which assumes the charitable company will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The trustees have assessed the appropriateness of the going concern basis for the preparation of the financial statements and have taken account of potential uncertainties, including the legacy impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the on-going “cost of living” crisis on the charitable company’s financial position.

The trustees have reviewed the charitable company’s forecasts & projections for a period of eighteen months from the date of approval of these financial statements and have set a three year plan from 2023/24 based on reasonable assumptions on funding levels, and are confident that the charity has sufficient resources to deal with any further unexpected financial shocks arising.

Based on the above assessment and the charitable company’s level of free reserves at the balance sheet date, the trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Refugee Council’s ability to continue as a going concern and meet its liabilities as they fall due for at least 12 months following approval of these financial statements. Accordingly the financial statements continue to be prepared on the going concern basis.

The functional currency of the charity is pounds Sterling.

**(b) Income**

Income is recognised in these accounts where there is entitlement to the income, where it is probable that the income will be received, and where the amount can be measured reliably. Income received in advance of these criteria being met is deferred as a liability.

**Income from Donations and Legacies**

Donations and legacies includes donations and gifts, legacies, and all other income that is in substance a gift made on a voluntary basis. It also includes grants of a general nature provided by government and charitable foundations which are not conditional on delivery of certain levels or volumes of a service. The donation may be made towards the general aims of the Refugee Council (unrestricted), or towards a specific service or aim (restricted). Donations are recognised on receipt of the donation, or if earlier, at the point where there is a written obligation for a donor to pay a specified donation. Legacies are recognised at the point of probate being granted and the estate value can be estimated reliably.

**Income from Charitable Activities**

Income from charitable activities includes income earned from the supply of services under contractual arrangements, and from grants that specify the provision of a particular charitable service.

Income under contractual arrangements is recognised when the income falls due under the terms of

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

the contract.

Income from grants that are subject to performance or other conditions are recognised when the conditions are deemed met. Where a grant agreement states that funding is conditional on eligible expenditure having been made, such as our provision of the Gateway Resettlement service, our entitlement to income matches expenditure incurred and so we recognise income when eligible expenditure is made. Where a performance related grant is given for charitable activity to be performed over a specified period of time, the entitlement arises and the income is recognised for the period of activity for which it is awarded. For example multi-year grants approved on the basis of annual budgets are recognised over the life of the multi-year charitable activity in line with the approved annual budgets.

**Income from Other Trading Activities**

If included, comprises primarily rental income received on renting out surplus office space. Rental income is recognised on a straight line basis over the term of the rental agreement.

**(c) Expenditure**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under the related activity. The expenditure comprises direct expenditure including direct staff cost attributable, and allocated support cost. Support costs represent central operational overheads such as Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, and central office costs (not including service premises costs which are accounted for as direct expenditure), and the costs of governing the organisation. Support costs are allocated to activities on the basis of a percent on top of the expenditure supported as this is deemed the most appropriate measure of how such resources are used.

Expenditure on raising funds are those costs incurred in attracting donations and legacies.

Charitable activities include grants payable and expenditure associated with the provision of service to the beneficiaries and stakeholders of the charity, and covers both direct cost and allocated support cost relating to these activities. Grants payable are accounted for when the directors have created a constructive obligation to make the grant. The value of grants approved and communicated but still to be paid are included in the balance sheet as current liabilities.

Charitable activities have been classified into the following main activities of the charity:

- Resettlement – where we work in partnership with local authorities in providing high quality services to integrate refugees in England;
- Children's Services – where we provide services to separated children, children who have been trafficked and or suffered traumatic experiences;
- Integration – where we support those with newly granted refugee status to move into mainstream support systems;
- Advocacy and Awareness Raising – where we promote the rights of refugees and to ensure that UK immigration legislation and European directives are responded to in a co-ordinated manner, including the use of research, public campaigns, policy influencing, parliamentary lobbying and media work;
- Therapeutic Services – where we offer a holistic response to the complex needs of refugees who have suffered traumatic experiences;
- Destitution – where we provide immediate personal support to those at risk of destitution and also access to advice.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**(d) Fund accounting**

The charity maintains various types of funds as follows:

***Unrestricted funds***

General unrestricted funds represent funds which are expendable at the discretion of the Trustees in the furtherance of the objects of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds transferred from general funds and set aside at the discretion of the Board of Trustees for particular purposes. The Trustees review the composition of the funds annually in order to assess their continued use and make new reserves in line with the future strategy of the charity.

The current status of designated and general funds is disclosed in note 15a.

***Restricted funds***

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by the donors. The aim and use of key restricted funds are set out in note 15b to the financial statements.

***Endowment funds***

The charity holds one endowment fund which capital sum is to be held in perpetuity with the interest on the balance used to support refugees' education. The aim and use of this endowment fund is set out in note 15c to the financial statements.

**Transfers**

Transfers in certain situations may be made between categories of funds. Funds may be transferred between Unrestricted and Designated funds at the discretion of the Board of Trustees to set aside resources for a particular purpose. Where expenditure against a primarily restricted funded project exceeds the restricted funding available from donors in the year, funding is transferred from unrestricted funds to meet the excess cost.

**(e) Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets purchased for the Refugee Council's purposes and costing more than £2,000 are capitalised and included at cost, including any incidental expenses of acquisition. Depreciation is calculated so as to write off tangible assets on a straight line basis over the expected useful lives as follows:

Freehold buildings	50 years
Leasehold property improvements	lesser of 10 years from date of purchase or lease period
IT Hardware & Infrastructure	3 years
Software	5 years
Motor vehicles, furniture, fixtures and equipment	5 years

**(f) Value added tax**

Irrecoverable Value Added Tax is included in the relevant costs in the Statement of Financial Activities.

**(g) Pensions**

The organisation operates a defined contribution pension scheme for employees and the amount charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in respect of pension costs and other post-retirement

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

benefits is the contributions payable in the year. Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments in the balance sheet.

**(h) Finance and operating leases**

Rentals applicable to operating leases, where substantially all the benefits and risk of ownership remain with the lessor, are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities over the period in which the cost is incurred. The Refugee Council has no assets under finance leases, which confer rights, and obligations similar to those attached to owned assets.

**(i) Provision for liabilities**

Provision for liabilities only arises where the charity has a legal or constructive obligation to meet future liabilities. The following liabilities have been recognised in the accounts:

**Dilapidations**

Provision is made for dilapidation works due to arise on leasehold properties. The Refugee Council has a contractual obligation to absorb such future costs.

**(j) Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement**

In the view of the trustees in applying the accounting policies adopted, no judgements were required that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements nor do any estimates or assumptions made carry a significant risk of material adjustment in the next financial year.

**(k) Other financial instruments****i. Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash at banks and in hand and short term deposits with a maturity date of three months or less.

**ii. Debtors and creditors**

Debtors and creditors receivable or payable within one year of the reporting date are carried at their transaction price.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2. Donations and legacies	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	2022/23 Total £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	2021/22 Total £'000
Donations and gifts from individuals	2,593	702	3,295	4,350	806	5,156
Legacies	2,500	-	2,500	389	-	389
Trust income & general grants	177	263	440	259	295	554
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,270</b>	<b>965</b>	<b>6,235</b>	<b>4,998</b>	<b>1,101</b>	<b>6,099</b>

3. Charitable activities	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	2022/23 Total £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	2021/22 Total £'000
Resettlement	-	5,771	5,771	-	3,295	3,295
Children's Services	35	2,669	2,704	65	2,512	2,577
Integration	-	2,860	2,860	-	2,468	2,468
Advocacy and Awareness Raising	10	171	181	16	374	391
Therapeutic Services	-	1,285	1,285	-	952	952
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>12,756</b>	<b>12,801</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>9,601</b>	<b>9,683</b>

4. Other Trading Activities	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	2022/23 Total £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	2021/22 Total £'000
Premises sublets and rentals	9	-	9	9	-	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9</b>



## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## 5a. Grants included within donations and legacies:

Activity	Funder	Grant For	2022/23 £'000	2021/22 £'000
Advocacy	Various trusts	Other grants	10	23
Children's Services	Various trusts	Various Children's Projects	16	84
Children's Services	Comic Relief	Youth Connect	19	-
Destitution	Various trusts	Destitution	22	25
Destitution	The Linbury Trust	Destitution	75	-
Integration	Starbucks	Employment	-	37
Integration	Various trusts	Employment, Refugee Advice Project, Private Rented Scheme	-	50
Integration	Marsh Charitable Trust	Volunteer Awards	9	-
Resettlement	Reset Communities and Refugees	Capacity Building for Community Sponsorship of Refugees Programme and others	-	13
Resettlement	Various	Other Resettlement	2	-
Therapeutic Services	Various trusts	Adult Therapeutic Services	-	24
Therapeutic Services	Kent and Medway CCG	My View (Kent and Remote)	47	-
Therapeutic Services	Department for Education	My View (Main)	-	-
Therapeutic Services	Stanley Thomas Johnson Foundation	Adult Therapeutic Services	16	-
Therapeutic Services	The Boltini Trust	Adult Therapeutic Services	10	-
Therapeutic Services	South East London CCG	Resettled Refugee Emotional Wellbeing Service	33	-
Various	HMRC Job Retention Scheme Grant	Resettlement, Integration, Children's	-	20
Various	Other funders	Other grants	4	19
Other Trust and Statutory Grants			<b>263</b>	<b>295</b>
Total Grants included within donations and legacies			<b>263</b>	<b>295</b>

## 5b. Grants included within charitable activities:

Activity	Funder	Grant For	2022/23 £'000	2021/22 £'000
Children's Services	Home Office	Children's Panel and Kent Intake Unit	2,061	1,809
Children's Services	Home Office	CAP Implementation and UASC Hotel Support	181	143
Integration	Asylum Migration & Integration Fund (AMIF)	New Roots and WJR Step (Leeds and Sheffield)	1,651	1,434
Integration	Asylum Migration & Integration Fund (AMIF)	Refugees into Jobs	219	-
Integration	Barnsley Metropolitan BC	Health Access for Refugees Programme (HARP 2 and HARP 3)	11	-
Integration	Health Education England	Building bridges	340	340
Integration	Office for Health Improvement and Disparities	Health Access for Refugees Programme (HARP 2 and HARP 3)	6	-
Integration	Various Hertfordshire Councils	Employment	55	-
Integration	National Lottery Community Fund	Health Access for Refugees Programme (HARP 2 and HARP 3)	157	146
Integration	National Lottery Community Fund	Barnsley Refugee Advice Project	148	154
Integration	Sheffield CCG	Health Access for Refugees Programme (HARP 3)	-	5
Resettlement	Leeds City Council	Yorkshire & Humberside Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme	2,640	1,825
Resettlement	Lewisham Council	Lewisham Resettlement	1,590	745
Resettlement	Lambeth Council	Lambeth Resettlement	497	-
Resettlement	Leeds City Council	ARAP hotels	478	378
Resettlement	Various Hertfordshire Councils	Hertfordshire Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme	429	256
Resettlement	Bassetlaw District Council	Syrian Vulnerable Persons Refugee Programme	78	30
Resettlement	Leeds City Council	Employment Advice- HCC	60	40
Resettlement	Sheffield City Council	Gateway Resettlement Programme	-	12
Therapeutic Services	East of England - SMP	Wellbeing for Work programme	450	408
Therapeutic Services	Asylum Migration & Integration Fund (AMIF)	VPRS Sheffield	92	123
Therapeutic Services	Birmingham CCG	Adult Therapeutic Services	26	20
Therapeutic Services	Department for Education	My View (Main)	65	-
Therapeutic Services	East Sussex CCG	My View (East Sussex)	66	-
Therapeutic Services	Home Office	ASMHW Training and Delivery	72	247
Therapeutic Services	Kent and Medway CCG	My View (Kent and Remote)	56	-
Therapeutic Services	Leeds City Council	ARAP hotels	38	-
Therapeutic Services	Leeds City Council	VPRS South Yorkshire	96	83
Therapeutic Services	Leeds City Council	VPRS TS Sheffield	-	-
Therapeutic Services	Sheffield CCG	Adult Therapeutic Services	32	-
Therapeutic Services	Sheffield City Council	Adult Therapeutic Services	52	-
Therapeutic Services	Southwark CCG	Adult Therapeutic Services	92	-
Therapeutic Services	National Lottery Community Fund	Adult Therapeutic Services	65	-
Therapeutic Services	National Lottery Community Fund	Adults Therapeutic Services	-	20
Government Grants			<b>11,803</b>	<b>8,218</b>

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## 5b. Continued - Grants included within charitable activities:

Activity	Funder	Grant For	2022/23 £'000	2021/22 £'000
Advocacy and Awareness Raising	Comic Relief	Families Together	22	-
Advocacy and Awareness Raising	Comic Relief	Advocacy projects	36	-
Advocacy and Awareness Raising	Migration Exchange	Refugee Community Organisation Capacity Building	80	265
Advocacy and Awareness Raising	Other funders	Detention forum	32	55
Advocacy and Awareness Raising	Red Cross	Families Together	2	-
Advocacy and Awareness Raising	Various	RCO Capacity building	-	-
Children's Services	Children in Need	My View (Birmingham, Leeds)	54	179
Children's Services	Children in Need	Youth Development	41	40
Children's Services	Comic Relief	My View (Main)	57	130
Children's Services	Comic Relief	Refugee Cricket Project	91	108
Children's Services	Melanie Macleod - major donor	Age Disputes	100	-
Children's Services	Mixed	My View (Kent and Remote)	-	143
Children's Services	Various	My View (Birmingham, Leeds)	83	-
Integration	City Bridge Trust	Refugee Community Organisation Capacity Building	6	62
Integration	IKEA	Employment	111	-
Integration	Innis Free	Queens Park Project	10	15
Integration	Kingston Voluntary Action CIO	Superhighways Refugee Community Organisations	9	-
Integration	Reset Communities & Refugees	Refugee Community Organisations	7	-
Integration	ServiceNow	Employment	52	-
Integration	Starbucks	Employment	21	-
Integration	Various	Private Rented Sector Housing scheme	14	-
Integration	Various	Various	25	-
Integration	Various employers	Refugees into Jobs	18	-
Therapeutic Services	Goldman Sachs	Adult Therapeutic Services	39	-
Therapeutic Services	The National Friendship Fund	Adult Therapeutic Services	1	-
Therapeutic Services	Various	Various	42	-
Mixed	Various	Various	-	80
Other Trust and Statutory Grants			953	1,077
Total Grants included within charitable activities			12,756	9,295

There are no unfulfilled conditions and other contingencies attaching to government or other grants that have been recognised in income. There has not been any other forms of government assistance from which we have directly benefited.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

6a. Expenditure comparitors	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	2022/23 Total £'000	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	2021/22 Total £'000
Raising Funds:						
Fundraising	1,213	-	1,213	1,698	-	1,698
Total Raising Funds	1,213	-	1,213	1,698	-	1,698
Charitable Activities:						
Resettlement	36	5,263	5,299	186	2,929	3,114
Children's Services	315	3,398	3,713	70	3,006	3,076
Integration	104	3,420	3,524	87	2,968	3,055
Advocacy and Awareness Raising	914	766	1,680	551	129	680
Therapeutic Services	-	1,579	1,579	16	1,186	1,202
Destitution	-	102	102	-	94	94
Total Charitable Activities	1,369	14,528	15,897	909	10,312	11,221
Total Expenditure	2,582	14,528	17,110	2,607	10,312	12,919
6b. Expenditure analysis	Staff Costs £'000 Note 7(a)	Other Direct Costs £'000	Grant expenditure £'000 Note 6(d)	Subtotal £'000	Support Costs £'000 Note 6(c)	Total £'000
2022/23 Expenditure on:						
Raising Funds:						
Fundraising	439	431	5	875	338	1,213
Total Raising Funds	439	431	5	875	338	1,213
Charitable Activities:						
Resettlement	3,503	722	143	4,368	931	5,299
Children's Services	2,295	753	-	3,048	665	3,713
Integration	1,646	529	835	3,010	514	3,524
Advocacy and Awareness Raising	662	334	441	1,437	243	1,680
Therapeutic Services	963	326	7	1,296	283	1,579
Destitution	59	25	-	84	18	102
Total Charitable Activities	9,128	2,689	1,426	13,243	2,654	15,897
Support Costs (Note 6(c))	1,935	1,051	6	2,992	(2,992)	-
Total	11,502	4,171	1,437	17,110	-	17,110
2021/22 Expenditure on:						
Raising Funds:						
Fundraising	507	592	276	1,375	322	1,698
Total Raising Funds	507	592	276	1,375	322	1,698
Charitable Activities:						
Resettlement	1,982	549	121	2,652	462	3,114
Children's Services	1,878	734	-	2,613	464	3,076
Integration	1,469	475	736	2,681	374	3,055
Advocacy and Awareness Raising	413	133	31	576	104	680
Therapeutic Services	761	258	-	1,019	183	1,202
Destitution	57	23	-	80	14	94
Total Charitable Activities	6,560	2,173	888	9,620	1,601	11,221
Support Costs (Note 6(c))	1,370	553	-	1,923	(1,923)	-
Total	8,437	3,317	1,164	12,919	-	12,919

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

6c. Support Costs	2022/23 £'000	2021/22 £'000
Central Premises and Business Support	284	168
Finance and Payroll	715	504
Human Resources	973	395
Information & Communication Technology	697	706
Governance Costs	192	62
Digital & Web development	35	57
Senior Management	96	31
<b>Total Support Costs</b>	<b>2,992</b>	<b>1,923</b>

The above support costs are allocated pro-rata to the expenditure of activities supported (see Note 1c.)

6d. Grant Expenditure	For	Activity	2022/23 £'000	2021/22 £'000
<b>Institutional Grants to</b>				
Scottish and Welsh Refugee Council	Ukraine Appeal and Net Refugee Council Crisis Project	Integration	5	344
Various	Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs)	Integration	416	-
Humber Community Advice Services (H-CAS)	New Roots	Integration	80	61
Goodwin Development Trust (GDT)	New Roots	Integration	77	75
Refugee Education Training Advice Service (RETAS)	New Roots	Integration	308	204
Positive Action Training in Housing (PATH)	New Roots	Integration	136	111
Glowing Results	Building Bridges	Integration	54	42
Barnsley CVS	Refugee Advice Project	Integration	35	37
Lewisham Refugee & Migrant Network	Lewisham Resettlement	Resettlement	143	121
British Red Cross	Asylum Reform Initiative	Advocacy and Awareness Raising	17	15
London Metropolitan University	Building Bridges	Integration	139	139
Various	Volunteer Awards	Integration	6	-
Clear Voice Comms	First Person Stories	Advocacy and Awareness Raising	8	-
Counterpoint Arts	Refugee Week	Advocacy and Awareness Raising	6	-
Lewisham Refugee & Migrant Network	Lewisham Resettled Refugees Therapeutic	Therapeutic	7	-
British Future	Global Dialogue	Advocacy and Awareness Raising	-	15
<b>i) Expenditure on Grants to Institutions</b>			<b>1,437</b>	<b>1,164</b>
<b>Total Grant Expenditure</b>			<b>1,437</b>	<b>1,164</b>

Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) are frontline organisations, set up and run by people with lived experience of the asylum system and refugee integration. Refugee Council grant funded 24 such organisations in the year totalling grants of £416,332, of which the largest individual grant was £40,000 and the smallest was £11,737.

Support costs are incidental to the costs of making institutional grants and so there were no support costs allocated to institutional grants in the current or prior year. There were no grants made to individuals in 2022/23 or 2021/22.

7a. Staff costs and employee benefits	2022/23 £'000	2021/22 £'000
Wages and salaries	9,627	7,023
Redundancy costs	113	34
Social security costs (employer's National Insurance)	975	682
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension	368	287
<b>Salaried Employees</b>	<b>11,084</b>	<b>8,025</b>
Wages and salaries	400	394
Social security costs (employer's National Insurance)	11	11
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension	9	7
<b>Sessional Workers</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>411</b>
<b>Total staff costs</b>	<b>11,502</b>	<b>8,437</b>

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The number of employees whose remuneration as defined for taxation purposes amounted to £60,000 and upwards in the year was as follows:

	2022/23	2021/22
£70,000 - £79,999	2	3
£90,000 - £99,999	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

Pensions payments in respect of the above in 2022/23 were £12k (2021/22: £13k).

The remuneration of the senior executives is set in accordance with the policy set out in the Trustees report. In 2022/23 the below posts were classified as Senior Executive. The actual remuneration (including amounts paid in respect of employer's National Insurance and Pension contributions) paid for the individuals who were in post during the year is shown below, and the names of the post holders can be found in these accounts.

As some individuals were part time or only in post for part of the year, the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) full year salary on which their remuneration is based for the current year is also shown for comparison.

	FTE Salary for Post £	Actual Salary paid £	Employer's NI paid £	Employer's Pension paid £	Total Remuneration £	Total Remuneration £
	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	2021/22
Chief Executive	96,000	97,330	12,746	4,901	114,977	105,494
ED Services	75,000	74,746	9,537	3,308	87,591	80,954
ED of Fundraising and External Affairs	75,000	75,000	9,575	3,438	88,013	59,419
ED Finance and Resources	75,000	55,962	7,052	1,988	65,002	80,589
Interim ED Finance and Resources	86,538	39,471	4,521	1,934	45,926	6,821
<b>Total Senior Executive Remuneration</b>		<b>342,509</b>	<b>43,431</b>	<b>15,569</b>	<b>401,509</b>	<b>333,277</b>

## 7b. Average Staff Numbers

The average full time equivalent (FTE) and count of salaried employees within the year was as follows:

	2022/23		2021/22	
	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount
Charitable Activities:				
Resettlement	107	130	46	55
Children's Services	62	67	42	45
Integration	27	29	45	54
Therapeutic Services	26	37	30	37
Advocacy & Engagement	9	10	10	10
Destitution	1	1	1	1
<b>Total Charitable Activities</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>202</b>
Raising Funds	15	16	12	14
Support	28	31	23	26
<b>Total Staff Employed</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>242</b>

In addition to salaried employees, the Refugee Council uses sessional workers on an ad hoc bookings basis, chiefly for the provision of interpretation. In 2022/23 we paid a total of 191 sessional workers (2021/22: 269).

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

8. Tangible Fixed Assets	Leasehold property improvement £'000	IT Hardware & Infrastructure £'000	Software £'000	Furniture, fixtures and equipment £'000	Total £'000
<b>Cost</b>					
<i>At beginning of the year - 1 April 2022</i>	775	410	-	281	1,466
Additions	-	260	43	-	303
Disposals	-	(410)	-	(235)	(645)
<b>At end of the year - 31 March 2023</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>1,124</b>
<b>Depreciation and impairments</b>					
<i>At beginning of the year - 1 April 2022</i>	254	410	-	263	927
Depreciation	81	61	5	10	157
Depreciation on Disposals	-	(410)	-	(235)	(645)
<b>At end of the year - 31 March 2023</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>439</b>
<i>Net book value at beginning of the year</i>	521	-	-	18	539
<b>Net book value at end of the year</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>685</b>

9. Debtors	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000
Accrued income	4,131	2,287
Prepayments	226	124
Trade Debtors	3,358	2,142
Other debtors	76	61
<b>Total Debtors</b>	<b>7,791</b>	<b>4,614</b>

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement value due, net of any discounts offered or impairment provision.

10. Cash at bank and in hand	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000
Cash on short term deposit	1,374	1,366
Cash at bank and in hand	3,994	4,585
<b>Total Cash at bank and in hand</b>	<b>5,368</b>	<b>5,951</b>

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

11. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000
Trade creditors	625	412
Other creditors	403	246
Taxation and social security	678	239
Accruals	177	292
Deferred income (i)	840	972
<b>Total Creditors falling due within one year</b>	<b>2,723</b>	<b>2,161</b>

Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party, and the amount due can be measured or estimated reliably.

Deferred income includes funding received in advance of funding conditions being met, and contract payments received in advance.

	£'000	£'000
(i) Deferred income at 1 April	972	743
Income released from the previous year	(972)	(743)
Funding received and deferred	840	972
<b>Deferred income at 31 March</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>972</b>

## 12. Provisions

Dilapidations provisions result from constructive obligations arising under leaseholder agreements.

Dilapidations Provisions	2022/23 £'000	2021/22 £'000
Provided at 1 April	100	100
Movement in provisions in the year	212	-
<b>Provided at 31 March</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>100</b>

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

13. Movement on Funds Summary	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Endowment Funds £'000	Total Funds £'000
<b>2022/23</b>				
Balance at 1st April	6,347	2,392	110	8,849
Income	5,353	13,721	-	19,074
Expenditure	(2,582)	(14,528)	-	(17,110)
Net Income / (Expenditure)	2,771	(807)	-	1,964
Transfers	(1,426)	1,426	-	-
Net Movements in funds	1,345	619	-	1,964
Balance at 31st March	7,692	3,011	110	10,813
<b>2021/22</b>				
Balance at 1st April	4,274	1,592	110	5,976
Income	5,090	10,702	-	15,792
Expenditure	(2,607)	(10,312)	-	(12,919)
Net Income	2,483	390	-	2,873
Transfers	(410)	410	-	-
Net Movements in funds	2,073	800	-	2,873
Balance at 31st March	6,347	2,392	110	8,849
<b>14. Funds assets and liabilities</b>				
<b>2022/23</b>				
Fixed Assets & Investments	689	-	-	689
Debtors	5,533	2,258	-	7,791
Cash at bank and in hand	3,446	1,812	110	5,368
Total Assets	9,668	4,070	110	13,848
Creditors	(1,664)	(1,059)	-	(2,723)
Provision for liabilities	(312)	-	-	(312)
Liabilities	(1,976)	(1,059)	-	(3,035)
Net Assets and Funds Total	7,692	3,011	110	10,813
<b>2021/22</b>				
Fixed Assets & Investments	543	-	-	543
Debtors	436	4,178	-	4,614
Cash at bank and in hand	4,569	1,272	110	5,951
Total Assets	5,548	5,450	110	11,108
Creditors	(1,189)	(972)	-	(2,161)
Provision for liabilities	(100)	-	-	(100)
Liabilities	(1,289)	(972)	-	(2,261)
Net Assets and Funds Total	4,259	4,478	110	8,846



## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## 15. Funds Details

15a. Unrestricted Funds	Balance at 1 April 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Net I&E before Transfers £'000	Transfers £'000	Balance at 31 March 2023 £'000
General Fund	4,618	5,353	(2,728)	2,625	(1,426)	5,817
Designated Funds:						
(i) Fixed Asset Reserve	476	-	146	146	63	685
(ii) Investment Fund	1,033	-	-	-	(63)	970
(iii) Major Donor Services Fund	220	-	-	-	-	220
Total Designated Funds	1,729	-	146	146	-	1,875
<b>Total Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>6,347</b>	<b>5,353</b>	<b>(2,582)</b>	<b>2,771</b>	<b>(1,426)</b>	<b>7,692</b>

(i) The Fixed Asset Reserve represents unrestricted funds invested in tangible fixed assets for use by the charity, which are not available for other purposes. Fixed asset depreciation is charged to these balances. The transfer in represents funding set aside on capital expenditure or depreciation charged in the year.

(ii) In 2020-21, in preparation for a new strategy period we created an 'Invest to Save' fund which will fund investment needs on the new strategy period to 2025. Last year, we have increased this designated fund by a further £650k to reflect our commitment to improve our people, process and ways of working. We have used £63k to invest in fixed assets in the year.

(iii) The Major Donor Services Fund represents the balance of the generous gift of one of our supporters originally received in 2018/19. We have applied £325k to fund expenditure in 2020/21 and £30k in 2021/22 and the balance of £220k is planned to fund children's services over the next 2 years.

15b. Restricted Funds:	Balance at 1 April 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Net I&E before Transfers £'000	Transfers £'000	Balance at 31 March 2023 £'000
(i) Children's Advice Service	102	1,326	(1,371)	(45)	72	129
(ii) Other Children's Services	147	1,288	(1,678)	(390)	243	-
(iii) Gateway Resettlement	99	-	-	-	-	99
(iv) Syrian VPRS Resettlement - Y&H	185	2,640	(2,716)	(76)	131	240
(v) Syrian VPRS Resettlement - Hertfordshire	275	429	(276)	153	13	441
(vi) Ukraine Appeal	555	640	(357)	283	19	857
(vii) Integration including New Roots	65	2,446	(2,755)	(309)	244	-
(viii) Building Bridges	41	340	(285)	55	14	110
(ix) Barnsley Refugee Advice Project (BLF)	18	148	(161)	(13)	8	13
(x) Therapeutic Services	142	1,540	(1,909)	(369)	397	170
(xi) Resettlement - Lambeth	-	497	(430)	67	21	88
(xii) Resettlement - Lewisham	331	1,590	(1,117)	473	54	858
(xiii) Resettlement - ARAP Hotels	2	478	(504)	(26)	24	-
(xiv) Afghan RCO Fund	261	80	(486)	(406)	145	-
(xv) Refugee Community Organisations	22	22	(50)	(28)	6	-
(xvi) Other	147	257	(433)	(176)	35	6
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2,392</b>	<b>13,721</b>	<b>(14,528)</b>	<b>(807)</b>	<b>1,426</b>	<b>3,011</b>

Transfers: Support expenditure has been allocated across the projects to attribute the related support costs across the portfolio, included in the expenditure column. In the transfers column, funds have been transferred in from the general reserves to offset these allocated support costs, so that the restricted funding carried forward into 2023/24 represents only the restricted balance left for that project from the funders.

(i) The Children's Advice Service (previously referred to as Children's Panel) works mainly with unaccompanied children. The service helps children access education, training, health care and legal advice, as well as providing independent advocacy on their behalf. This activity is funded by the Home Office, with the balance carried forward represents funding set aside to match increases in redundancy rights accrued by staff in the delivery of the service.

(ii) Other Children's services include support to trafficked young boys and girls, assistance to age disputed children, and youth development and activities including our Refugee Cricket Project. The income is from a variety of individual and institutional donors. The transfer represents an allocation from our General Reserves.

(iii) The Gateway resettlement project provides integration support to refugees resettled through the Gateway programme in the Yorkshire & Humberside region. The balance carried forward represents funding set aside to match increases in redundancy rights accrued by staff in the delivery of the service.

(iv) and (v) The Refugee Council helps with the integration support to refugees resettled into the UK under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme, operating in Yorkshire and Humberside and in Hertfordshire. This funding is ongoing with no fixed end date and continues to be funded due to arrival numbers, with funding received from the relevant local authorities.

(vi) Ukraine appeal launched in March 2022 to fund integration and therapeutic services for Ukraine refugees as a result of the conflict with Russia. The income was recognised in both the 21/22 and 22/23 financial years as a result of major gifts generated from appeals. The spend is across projects to develop our Ukrainian integration casework, therapeutic interventions, developing practice and partnerships and grant funding Ukrainian Refugee Community Organisations. These projects will continue into 2023/24 and are expected to end by the end of March 2024.

(vii) The Refugee Council provides support to newly granted refugees to integrate into the UK. We support refugees at every stage in their integration, including helping secure access to housing and other rights on initial grant of refugee status, through to social integration activities, to supporting settled refugees find employment. In 2018/19 the Refugee Council secured significant funding from the EC Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) for this work, and used it to set up the 'New Roots' project, which has allowed us to expand this work in London, and working in collaboration with delivery partners, extend it to Hull and Leeds. This funding was extended for a further year, expected to end 31 December 2023.

(viii) Building Bridges helps refugee doctors and other health professionals qualify for working in the NHS. This project has been running for a number of years funded by Health Education England, and this tranche of funding is for the two years to 1 April 2024.

(ix) The Barnsley Refugee Advice Project supports advice and integration to refugees and asylum seekers in Barnsley. It is a 5 year project funded by the National Community Lottery Fund funded to 2026.

(x) The Refugee Council runs a number of projects providing therapy and psycho-social support to refugees and asylum seekers. Funding for this work comes from a mix of voluntary grants, commissioning contracts from CCGs, and unrestricted funding. The balance at year end is funding from various CCGs for the Wellbeing and Work for Refugee Integration (WW4RI) project, due to end December 2023.

(xi) and (xii) The Refugee Council helps with the integration support to refugees resettled into the UK, by providing a Refugee Resettlement support service, operating in the Lambeth and Lewisham boroughs.

(xiii) The Refugee Council provide wraparound advice and assistance to refugees under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme, based at a number of hotels in Yorkshire & Humberside. The Refugee Council provide this group with support on their practical needs and access to urgent services at the hotels, while they are awaiting more permanent resettlement.

(xiv and xv) Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) are groups run for and by refugees, supporting their communities to become more integrated into their local areas. The Refugee Council work with RCOs to develop the skills and knowledge of leaders within the RCOs and the Refugee Council also grant fund a number RCOs, with the aim to empower the organisations to deliver on their mission and be a strong voice for their community.

(xvi) Other restricted funds represent a large number of smaller streams of income or balances (each individual income stream or balance below £100k), restricted to a range of our specialist service and advocacy projects. Many of these activities are planned to be funded by a mix of restricted and unrestricted income, with the transfer in representing the allocation of unrestricted funds against these activities. In the prior year, 'Other' included (xi), (xii), (xiii) and (xv), but these have been split out into more detailed categories in the current year, grouped up to reflect our strategy. The total of the balances at 1 April 2022 from (xi) onwards are the total of the closing balance for 'Other' in the 2021/22 Statutory accounts.

15c. Endowment Funds	Balance at 1 April 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Net I&E before Transfers £'000	Transfers £'000	Balance at 31 March 2023 £'000
(i) John Frank Fund	110	-	-	-	-	110
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>110</b>

(i) The John Frank Fund is used to provide assistance to refugees who need to gain further qualifications and training to enhance their employment prospects in the United Kingdom. The capital element of the fund is invested in a low risk cash deposit and the interest arising from it is used to meet grant requests.

15d. Unrestricted Funds Movement (Prior Year)	Balance at 1 April 2021 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Net I&E before Transfers £'000	Transfers £'000	Balance at 31 March 2022 £'000
General Fund	2,924	5,090	(2,512)	2,578	(884)	4,618
Designated Funds:						
(i) Fixed Asset Reserve	571	-	(95)	(95)	-	476
(ii) Investment Fund	383	-	-	-	650	1,033
(iii) Major Trust Services Fund	146	-	-	-	(146)	-
(iv) Major Donor Services Fund	250	-	-	-	(30)	220
<b>Total Designated Funds</b>	<b>1,350</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(95)</b>	<b>(95)</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>1,729</b>
<b>Total Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>4,274</b>	<b>5,090</b>	<b>(2,607)</b>	<b>2,483</b>	<b>(410)</b>	<b>6,347</b>

(i) The Fixed Asset Reserve represents unrestricted funds invested in tangible fixed assets for use by the charity, which are not available for other purposes. Fixed asset depreciation is charged to these balances. The transfer in represents funding set aside on capital expenditure or depreciation charged in the year.

(ii) In 2020-21, in preparation for a new strategy period we created an 'Invest to Save' fund which will fund investment needs on the new strategy period to 2025. This year, we have increased this designated fund by a further £650k (2020/21: £320k) to reflect our commitment to improve our people, process and ways of working.

(iii) In 2019/20 the Ajahma Charitable Trust closed and granted £230k towards services in future years. The gift was made as an unrestricted donation, but as we had planned to use this against specific services, trustees ring-fenced this against those services by creation of a designated reserve. This has now been applied against our Integration services.

(iv) The Major Donor Services Fund represents the balance of the generous gift of one of our supporters originally received in 2018/19. We have applied £325k to fund expenditure in 2020/21 and £30k in 2021/22 and the balance of £220k is planned to fund children's services in 2022/23.

The net £410k (2020/21: £630k) transfer out of unrestricted and into restricted funds represents our use of unrestricted resources to part fund restricted charitable expenditure. For the most part this is in the case where we have planned for an activity to be funded from a mix of unrestricted and restricted income, but can also arise where funder rules preclude their funding of the full cost of the activity.

<b>15e. Restricted Funds Movement (Prior Year)</b>	<b>Balance at 1 April 2021 £'000</b>	<b>Income £'000</b>	<b>Expenditure £'000</b>	<b>Net I&amp;E before Transfers £'000</b>	<b>Transfers £'000</b>	<b>Balance at 31 March 2022 £'000</b>
(i) Children's Advice Service	85	1,600	(1,583)	17	-	102
(ii) Other Children's Services	51	796	(860)	(64)	160	147
(iii) NET Covid Response Fund	290	-	(300)	(300)	10	-
(iv) Gateway Resettlement	113	12	(26)	(14)	-	99
(v) Syrian VPRS Resettlement - Y&H	147	1,825	(1,806)	19	19	185
(vi) Syrian VPRS Resettlement - Hertfordshire	210	262	(197)	65	-	275
(vii) Ukraine Appeal	-	555	-	555	-	555
(viii) Integration including New Roots	2	1,607	(1,765)	(158)	221	65
(ix) Building Bridges	38	340	(337)	3	-	41
(x) Barnsley Refugee Advice Project (BLF)	-	154	(136)	18	-	18
(xi) Therapeutic Services	332	1,392	(1,582)	(190)	-	142
(xii) Other	324	2,160	(1,721)	438	-	762
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>1,592</b>	<b>10,701</b>	<b>(10,312)</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>2,391</b>

(i) The Children's Advice Service (previously referred to as Children's Panel) works mainly with unaccompanied children. The service helps children access education, training, health care and legal advice, as well as providing independent advocacy on their behalf. This activity is funded by the Home Office, with the balance carried forward represents funding set aside to match increases in redundancy rights accrued by staff in the delivery of the service.

(ii) Other Children's services include support to trafficked young boys and girls, assistance to age disputed children, and youth development and activities including our Refugee Cricket Project. The income is from a variety of individual and institutional donors. The transfer represents an allocation from our major Donors designated fund.

(iii) Funded by the National Emergencies Trust, 'NET Covid Response' is a partnership project between Refugee Council, Scottish Refugee Council, Welsh Refugee Council and Brysons Care (Northern Ireland) that provides emergency support to refugees that have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. This funding enabled the set up of a national Covid helpline for refugees and to support clients housed in hotels amongst other projects. This has now been fully spent.

(iv) The Gateway resettlement project provides integration support to refugees resettled through the Gateway programme in the Yorkshire & Humberside region.

(v) and (vi) The Refugee Council helps with the integration support to refugees resettled into the UK under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme, operating in Yorkshire and Humberside and in Hertfordshire.

(vii) Ukraine appeal launched in March 2022 to fund integration and therapeutic services for Ukraine refugees as a result of the conflict with Russia. The income fell into this financial year but the costs will be spent over the next 2 years.

(viii) The Refugee Council provides support to newly granted refugees to integrate into the UK. We support refugees at every stage in their integration, including helping secure access to housing and other rights on initial grant of refugee status, through to social integration activities, to supporting settled refugees find employment. In 2018/19 the Refugee Council secured significant funding from the EC Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) for this work, and used it to set up the 'New Roots' project, which has allowed us to expand this work in London, and working in collaboration with delivery partners, extend it to Hull and Leeds.

(ix) Building Bridges helps refugee doctors and other health professionals qualify for working in the NHS.

(x) The Barnsley Refugee Advice Project supports advice and integration to refugees and asylum seekers in Barnsley

(xi) The Refugee Council runs a number of projects providing therapy and psycho-social support to refugees and asylum seekers. Funding for

(xii) Other restricted funds represent a large number of smaller streams of income or balances (each individual income stream or balance below £100k), restricted to a range of our specialist service and advocacy projects. Many of these activities are planned to be funded by a mix of restricted and unrestricted income, with the transfer in representing the allocation of unrestricted funds against these activities.

<b>15f. Endowment Funds Movement (Prior Year)</b>	<b>Balance at 1 April 2021 £'000</b>	<b>Income £'000</b>	<b>Expenditure £'000</b>	<b>Net I&amp;E before Transfers £'000</b>	<b>Transfers £'000</b>	<b>Balance at 31 March 2022 £'000</b>
(i) John Frank Fund	110	(0)	0	0	-	110
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>110</b>

(i) The John Frank Fund is used to provide assistance to refugees who need to gain further qualifications and training to enhance their employment prospects in the United Kingdom. The capital element of the fund is invested in a low risk cash deposit and the interest arising from it is used to meet grant requests.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**16. Trustees Expenses**

None of the Trustees of the Charity received any remuneration during the current or prior year.

No travel and subsistence expenses were incurred by trustees in the course of carrying out their duties, and so no reimbursements were made in year (in 2021/22 Enil was claimed in total by trustees.)

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Total expenses	-	-
	2022/23	2021/22
Number of trustees claiming expenses	-	-

**17. Related parties**

There are no related party transactions to disclose for this financial year (2021/22: none).

The Refugee Council received a total of £1,360 unrestricted donations from its trustees in 2022/23 (2021/22: £2,280)

**18. Fees payable to auditor**

	2022/23	2021/22
	£'000	£'000
Statutory audit fee for current year audit	23	14
Under accrual for prior year audit	16	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>23</b>

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## 19. Operating leases

19a. Expenditure under operating leases	2022/23 £'000	2021/22 £'000
Operating lease expenditure	419	392

## 19b. Expenditure commitments under operating leases

The Refugee Council is committed to paying the following amounts in respect of non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods following the balance sheet date:

	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000
Within one year	272	244
Between two and five years	666	864
Over five years	103	387
Total future minimum lease payments	1,041	1,495

The Refugee Council had no capital commitments as at 31 March 2023 (2021/22: none).

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

20. Net income / (expenditure) for the year	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
This is stated after charging / (crediting):		
Depreciation	157	95
Operating lease rentals payable:		
Property	419	392
Auditor's remuneration / Independent Examiner's Fee (excluding VAT):		
Audit/ Independent Examination - current year	19	12
Audit/ Independent Examination - under accrual for prior year	13	8
Other services	8	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>506</b>

## 21. Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

## 22. Pension scheme

Refugee Council operates two pension schemes, both defined contribution schemes. The schemes are managed by the National Employment Savings Trust (NEST) and Aegon UK. The scheme is compliant with the pension reform rules for automatic enrolment. Contributions by the employee are matched by the employer up to a limit of 5% of salary. The cost of employer contributions due as a result of service in the year was £772,263 (2021/22: £562,670).

## 23. Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital.

## **Reference and Administrative Details of the Charity, its Trustees and Advisors**

**Charity number** 1014576

**Chief Executive**

Enver Solomon

**Company Secretary**

Dheepa Balasundaram (from 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022 to 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022)  
Lindsay Taylor (from 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022)

**Executive Director of Services**

Renae Mann

**Executive Director of Fundraising and External Affairs**

Tamsin Baxter

**Executive Director of Finance and Resources**

Dheepa Balasundaram (from 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022 to 4<sup>th</sup> July)  
Lindsay Taylor (from 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022)

**Company number** 2727514

**Auditor**

Sayer Vincent LLP  
Invicta House, 108-114 Golden Lane  
London, EC1Y 0TL

**Bankers**

National Westminster Bank plc  
Piccadilly & New Bond Street  
63 Piccadilly  
London  
W1J 0AJ

**Solicitors**

Stone King LLP  
Boundary House  
91 Charterhouse Street  
London  
EC1M 6HR

**Pension Advisers**

Creative Benefits  
2 Cherry Orchard Road  
Croydon,  
Surrey  
CR0 6BA

**Principal and Registered Office**

Alf Dubs House  
134 – 138 The Grove  
London  
E15 1NS

### **Trustees of the company**

The Refugee Council Trustees serve as the directors of the company and members of the Board of Trustees. The following were members of the Board of Trustees at the date the report was signed, or served during the year 2022/23:

Andrew Halper (Chair)	Resigned June 2022
Zaeem Haq	Resigned June 2023
Aneil Jhumat (Interim Treasurer)	Resigned September 2022
John Kerr	Resigned June 2022
Anne McLoughlin	
Rachael Orr (Chair)	
Clare Paterson	
Gerry Power	
Lyndall Stein	
Alphonsine Kabagabo	
Ghino Parker	
Ian Hanham	Joined September 2022
Harriet Oppenheimer	Joined September 2022