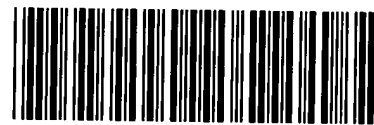


REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 06588338 (England and Wales)  
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1162349

Report of the Trustees and  
Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2021  
for  
Stepping Stones (Luton)

Hicks and Company  
Chartered Accountants  
Vaughan Chambers  
Vaughan Road  
Harpenden  
Hertfordshire  
AL5 4EE

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31/07/2021

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COMPANIES HOUSE

**Stepping Stones (Luton)**

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for the Year Ended 31 March 2021**

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## Stepping Stones (Luton)

### Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

The Trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)(effective 1 January 2019).

## **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

### **Objectives and aims:**

To empower every vulnerable woman that walks through our door with the opportunity and freedom to transform her life and the lives of her children and family.

### **Vision:**

As a direct result of our work we will have built stronger communities by putting systems in place that enable women to thrive and be their best selves.

### **Mission:**

Stepping Stones (Luton) is an innovative woman-centred service that is driven by passion enabling vulnerable women to transform their lives and reach their full potential. We empower and inspire women to make positive choices, creating a better future for themselves, their children, their families and the communities in which they live.

### **Guiding principles:**

Important to Stepping Stones (Luton):

- 1) Gender: A service that acknowledges that gender makes a difference.
- 2) Environment: Safety, respect and dignity.
- 3) Relationships: Policies, practices, and programmes that are relational and promote healthy connections to children, family, significant others and the community.
- 4) Services: Addressing drugs, alcohol, domestic abuse, and antisocial behaviour sometimes demonstrated by the most vulnerable for example, homeless women, and mental health issues through comprehensive, integrated services.
- 5) Socioeconomic status: Providing women with opportunities to improve their socioeconomic conditions.
- 6) Community: To partner with other key lead services in providing support and services to address unmet needs and overcome barriers.

### **Charitable Objects**

The Charitable Objects of Stepping Stones (Luton) are for the public benefit and are restricted to the following:

To relieve physical and mental sickness and financial hardship and to promote and preserve good health in particular through the provision of support services of any kind for women and their children and families suffering from drug addiction and substance abuse and who may have offended or re-offended or be victims of domestic abuse, living in Luton or such other parts of Bedfordshire or the United Kingdom as the trustees from time to time may think fit.

## Stepping Stones (Luton)

### Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

#### **Public benefit**

The Trustees are aware of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity'. As explained further in the Achievements and Performance section set out below, the charity has addressed the activities undertaken in relation to its objects and their relationship to addressing the public benefit.

#### **Principal areas of work**

Since 2008 Stepping Stones (Luton) has been dedicated to helping women and their children reach their potential and create healthier, happier lives.

The charity works with vulnerable women and their children to transform the stumbling blocks of their lives into Stepping Stones through the provision of one to one and group support for women and support through an Ofsted registered childcare provision. The charity aims to:

- Improve the health and wellbeing of vulnerable women and their children
- Improve the life prospects of vulnerable women and their children
- Create stronger and more cohesive families

#### **2020/21 Summary**

This year we worked with 308 vulnerable women and delivered 2,823 hours of support. This is significantly lower than last year (520 women and 6,763 hours of support). The reductions are most likely due to changes in how we were able to support women due to Covid 19 restrictions. We closed our office in March 2020 and immediately adapted our services to offer support to women on a one to one basis on the phone and using video calls where possible. Practitioners undertook these activities from their homes. Though there were periods within the last 12 months where we were able to return to the office, with social distancing and increased health and safety procedures, face to face appointments were often limited in number and length.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on our client group. Our referral rates have fluctuated significantly during the year, with lockdown periods seeing a reduction in referrals and the period immediately after national or local easing of restrictions often resulting in an increase in referrals. We have also seen an increase in the needs and complexities of the women presenting to us. The percentage of our clients reporting domestic abuse has increased to 85% (from 81% last year). Anecdotally clients are reporting needing more support around their mental and emotional wellbeing (over 75% of women). Clients have also reported feeling isolated due to the restrictions imposed and are not always able to engage with remote support as they often have difficulties accessing the necessary technology. It has often been difficult to progress support plans due to the support being offered over the phone and the impact of other circumstances including clients often having others present at home such as their perpetrators and/or their children. Supporting a woman who has experienced trauma is challenging both for the client and the practitioner whilst they are both in their own homes.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the pandemic has had an emotional impact on our staff, both for those who have been working from home and those who have spent varying amounts of time on furlough. We have implemented a variety of support activities for staff including regular zoom check ins, virtual team lunches, virtual team challenges and team building sessions including support around resilience and self-compassion.

We have continued to receive referrals from a variety of sources; Probation, Children's Services and the Police remain our biggest referrers, comprising over 40% of all referrals. We have seen another increase in self-referrals; this year self-referrals made up 30% of all referrals compared to 25% last year. We have worked with other local organisations to promote our services, in particular targeting pharmacies and supermarkets during lockdown periods.

## Stepping Stones (Luton)

### Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

Our childcare support has also been impacted by the Covid-19 lockdown. Sadly, for much of the year we have been unable to support children as we have been closed and when able to open this has been for limited numbers of children with limited opening hours. Over the last 12 months we have only been open for approximately 26 days (delivering 113 sessions). However, we have been creative in offering support to mums remotely, including distributing activity packs (some provided by the British Library) and other childcare provisions such as nappies and clothes. We have also offered one to one phone support to mums and created a large amount of video content for our website, including stories, craft activities, songs, and games, which mums can do with their children. Mums who have used the service during lockdown have said that it has been an important source of support for them.

### **ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE**

During 2020/21 the following services were provided:

<b>Intervention / services</b>	<b>No. of women</b>
One to one support (Luton)	173
One to one support (Central Beds)	44
BeNCH (probation)	88
Group programmes (incl Freedom, Own My Life)	34
Education, Training and Employment support	35
Counselling	26

#### Services:

**Luton one to one support:** Following an initial assessment, keyworkers will work collaboratively with women to devise a support plan of action, identify and manage risks.

One to one support continues to be the largest proportion of support offered where we can be responsive to the individual needs of the client and offer ongoing support around any additional interventions. One to one support will include such things as:

- offering emotional support - building self-esteem / confidence, empowering women to make decisions, problem solving
- exploring options / planning for the future
- guidance on life skills (budgeting, healthy eating)
- support in a crisis
- domestic abuse support - building knowledge about what is domestic abuse, how to manage risk, what the impact of abuse can be on children, options for court orders, information on healthy relationships
- help filling out forms
- accompanying service users at professionals' meetings / advocacy with other professionals
- attending court with clients.

In order to manage waiting times during our peak referral periods we also implemented a 'lighter touch' telephone support offer for lower risk clients.

**Childcare:** All women engaging with our services are encouraged to make use of our childcare services, though clearly these have looked a little different this year with more remote support being offered. Since February 2021 we have been offering regular Monday sessions and we are hoping to extend these as Covid restrictions ease and offer a more holistic support package for mums through our childcare staff team.

**Central Beds one to one support:** Although our official Central Beds outreach project finished at the end of March 2020, we continued to offer support to women living in Central Beds over the phone in line with the support being offered to women living in Luton at the time. Numbers accessing support in this way have been smaller than previous numbers accessing our outreach support, but this is reflective of the restrictions in being able to offer support generally to women.

**Group programmes:** We have been unable to run any face to face groups programmes this year, but have adapted some of our groups to deliver over Zoom and delivered content on a 121 basis where possible. We decided to limit virtual group sizes to ensure they were small to better manage delivery and engagement.

## Stepping Stones (Luton)

### Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

**Freedom** - The Freedom Programme examines the impact of attitudes and beliefs on the actions of domestic abuse perpetrators and the responses of victims and survivors. It aims to help women make sense of and understand what has happened to them and to have an awareness of the warning signs/tactics of the perpetrator. This was the first programme we adapted for virtual delivery and we have run 2 virtual groups over Zoom.

**Shine** - New last year, this is a personal development and group mentoring programme that uses inspirational, practical and experiential approach to learning. Women are equipped to become effective global citizens for the future. Each woman is supported to develop an understanding of her own personal worth, strength and purpose and realise the potential within her to fulfil her desires. We have delivered this on a one to one basis.

**Anger** - The Anger Programme explores anger and violence in different areas of the women's lives, focussing on strengths and how women can express their emotions and make positive changes to their lives. Due to the nature of the programme, we agreed that it was not suitable for virtual delivery but hope to recommence face to face groups next year when we are able.

**Onyx** - This is a structured group programme where women who have experienced domestic abuse or other trauma can explore and make sense of their experiences and increase control over their own lives. The sessions focus on: understanding the dynamics of violence, abuse and trauma; understanding the impact of trauma on women's lives; and learning how to live with and to heal from trauma. We have been unable to deliver Onyx remotely but have delivered on a one to one basis.

**Parenting** - Our usual parenting programmes were previously delivered jointly involving children and mums, it has been very difficult to continue in this way this year, but we have offered individual support where possible over the phone. We are hoping to start some small face to face parenting sessions early next year.

**Own My Life** - This is another new programme and we have invested in training for all our practitioners. Own My Life has been developed specifically with virtual delivery in mind. It is a 12-week course to help women who have suffered abuse regain ownership of their lives. It looks at sexism, rape culture, violence, misogyny, disrespect in relationships and abusive behaviour. We have run 2 virtual groups and several 'mini groups'.

**Serenity** - we developed our own brief intervention to enhance wellbeing and develop strategies for dealing with stress and anxiety. To date this has been delivered on a one to one basis.

**Education, Training and Employment (ETE) support:** The Lloyds Bank Foundation funded ETE Advisor post has continued this year and despite working in difficult economic circumstances we have seen an increase in women gaining employment and going for interviews. Through this role, we have offered one to one support with CVs, interview preparation, exploration of training and development opportunities, apprenticeship opportunities and discussion of self employment opportunities.

**BeNCH (Probation):** We continue to provide support for women on statutory orders and licences in Luton and the South area of Central Bedfordshire. Referrals come from the Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Community Rehabilitation Company (BeNCH CRC) and the National Probation Service. This provision encompasses:

- Dedicated one to one support
- Liaison with Probation Responsible Officer
- Opportunity for female offenders to have all their appointments in a female-only environment
- Access to all our other Luton based services including Childcare
- Provision of Unpaid Work female only placements

**Additional support:** We have a bank of committed and qualified volunteers that offer additional support in their respective fields and we have accessed additional support through our partnership organisations. We were able to continue to offer counselling through video calls with volunteer trainee counsellors. We have also been able to offer practical support with clothes, food and toiletries donations from partner organisations such as the Rapid Relief Team, the Hygiene Bank and through generous donations from members of the public. We have met our clients' needs either through arranging for clients to pick up from the office or by delivering these where possible. We have also secured 11 tablets for clients working with 'We Are Digital'.

## Stepping Stones (Luton)

### Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

#### **Broad outcomes for women support in the community include:**

220 clients have exited the service this year.

- 161 positive outcomes in relation to health (including women reducing the symptoms of anxiety and trauma and accessing mental health support)
- 46 positive outcomes in relation to finances (including women feeling better able to manage their finances and more able to manage debt)
- 37 positive outcomes in relation to ETE
- 124 positive outcomes in relation to parenting (including being supported through contact processes, increasing their confidence in parenting, increasing their understanding of the impact of DA on children and better relationships with their children).

Further, of the women exiting the service over the course of the year:

70% said they felt safe either all of the time or often

82% said they felt confident either all of the time or often

71% said they felt good about themselves either all of the time or often

83% said they felt able to deal with their problems all of the time or often

78% said they felt optimistic about the future either all of the time or often.

#### **Operational challenges during the year 2020/21**

- **Staff changes:** We lost 4 members of staff (1 childcare and 3 women's support practitioners) over the course of the year. All of the practitioners were replaced, but due to a reduction in demand we have not replaced the childcare practitioner. It has been challenging to complete recruitment virtually and induct new members of staff. However, we have been creative where possible with training and support and encouraged virtual opportunities for staff to come together as a team. The team has been stable for the last 6 months.
- **Funding:** At the start of the financial year, we saw our biggest grant funder reduce their funding, with immediate financial consequences for us. Whilst we were successful with some of our applications for Covid emergency funding, we have found it difficult to plan financially as many of these sources of funding were extremely short term and the funding opportunities remain uncertain in the years to come.
- **Remote working:** As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, we continued to work from home for most of this year, offering our services over the phone and via video calls. This continued to be a challenge, both for staff and clients, who were invariably managing complex home circumstances. Upon reflection, whilst some clients seem to have welcomed this type of support and the flexibility it can offer, it has also proved to be more difficult for some in building a rapport with staff and in overcoming technological difficulties. As restrictions ease, we are supporting clients and staff to return to the office, but due to the size of our building we are encountering practical and financial challenges in maintaining social distancing and increased health and safety measures. We expect to offer a hybrid service next year.

#### **Business Development and Fundraising**

We have continued to undertake regular service user engagement including a virtual service user engagement group and regular surveys completed using SurveyMonkey. This has assisted us in making decisions around new services, such as developing the Serenity wellbeing intervention and informed our next steps in returning to the office. We also built on our work from last year in bringing together the Board and service users by arranging for one of our service users to speak at a Board of Trustees meeting. We have also responded to feedback from service users reporting they were feeling isolated by holding several virtual 'coffee cake chat' sessions.

In 2020/21, we have continued to increase our online presence, focusing on our social media content and gaining new followers. Whilst we were unable to resume our community-based fundraising, we have had some success with online fundraising; taking part in both the 2.6 challenge in April 2020 and a silent auction in August 2020.

## Stepping Stones (Luton)

### Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

#### **Other achievements in the year**

We have received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Lord Lieutenant in July 2020 and were successfully awarded the High Sheriff Award in recognition of great and valuable services in the community as a direct result of nomination from our clients in March 2021.

#### **Partnership working**

Working in partnership with complementary organisations both within Luton and across Central Bedfordshire remains critical to ensure effective service delivery (linking to housing, drug and alcohol and other complementary services) and to maximise resources. We continue to enjoy strong working relationships with Women's Aid Luton, Luton All Women's Centre and Victim Support to name but a few within the voluntary women's sector. We also work very closely with both Luton Council and Central Bedfordshire Council, as well as the Police and Probation services, all of which form a significant proportion of our referrals. We have an important presence on many of the local forums at a strategic and operational level.

#### **Volunteering**

The Trustees wish to thank the many volunteers and supporters without whom the charity would be unable to maintain the quality of service at the level of funds that is currently received. In particular, the Trustees would like to acknowledge and thank Meryl Dolling for her support; through her work with the Luton North Inner Wheel, the charity has been able to distribute many donations throughout the year of clothes, toiletries, bedding and gifts.

In 2020/21 the charity has benefited from the unpaid work of 5 volunteers, who supported paid staff in various ways including administrative support functions, counselling and legal services.

#### **Organisation Structure**

The Trustees are also wish to thank all the staff of the charity whose dedication is essential to the provision of high quality support for clients. By the end of the year, the charity employed 18 members of staff (50% work part time). The services the charity provides is hugely demanding on staff. To ensure they are well-supported and their well-being protected, we provide confidential clinical supervision on a monthly basis.

We have implemented the Government's initiative of auto-enrolment and promoted this to our staff. 100% of eligible staff are now in a pension scheme.

#### **Pay Policy Senior Staff**

Remuneration of staff is set with regards to market rates and will be reviewed in 2021/22 to ensure that the pay levels are fair.

#### **Principal risks and uncertainties**

We have considered the main areas of risk and outlined in the Business Continuity Plan. The main areas of risk for the charity are:

- Loss of workspace - building damage, unexpected structural faults, heating / plumbing failure and/or loss of utilities.
- Loss of IT / data - Failure of computer hardware and/or IT systems, hacking or security breach, damage to phone lines / internet access.
- Loss of key staff - inability of staff to attend workplace or permanent / temporary loss of staff.
- Loss of income - inability to secure sufficient funding for the year, not receiving expected funding on time, not receiving funding at all.

## Stepping Stones (Luton)

### Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

#### **Plans for future periods**

For the 2021/22 period we will be focusing on:

- Exploration and development of our childcare service - we plan to further develop the package of family friendly interventions with a view to developing our provisions in this area and exploring the opportunity to generate some of our own funds.
- Exploration of the continued use of remote support - we expect to adopt a hybrid approach of both remote and face to face support as restrictions ease and where of benefit to the client we will explore the possibility of adopting a more long term virtual type of support.
- Financial sustainability of the organisation and continued diversification of our funding streams.
- Peer support service - dependant on securing funding, we are planning on developing the opportunity for clients to support each other in a more formal capacity.
- Improvements in quality - we are planning on securing the Women's Aid Quality Standard and investing in practitioners to support them to achieve the Preventing and Tackling Domestic Abuse Certificate.

#### **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

##### **Financial position**

The detailed figures for the year ended 31 March 2021 are set out in the financial statements that follow this Trustees' Report. During the year, the Company received £635,051 (2020: £552,944) and spent £498,684 (2020: £560,881) leaving a net surplus of income of £136,367 (2020: deficit of £7,937).

Income for the year increased by £82,107, the primary sources of income being from a service agreement contract with BeNCH and grants from London Luton Airport Limited, The Tudor Trust, Lloyds Bank Foundation, Women's Aid, Ministry of Justice, Julia & Hans Rausing Trust and The Henry Smith Charity. Income for the year was in line with budget.

Expenditure for the year fell by £62,197 which was within budget due to cost savings during the year made whilst still maintaining service provision.

##### **Reserves policy**

The previous year's reserves policy of the Company aimed to keep between 20% and 25% of operating costs as reserves (excluding those relating to restricted income funds, endowment funds, tangible assets held for the Company's use and amounts designated for essential future spending) to ensure that the Company can continue to operate in the short term should it suffer an unexpected fall in incoming funds. We have recently reviewed our reserves policy, and due to the uncertainties of funding in the coming year, we have decided it would be prudent to keep between 45% and 50% of operating costs as reserves. At the balance sheet date, the Company held £237,268 (2020: £132,536) in reserves under the above definition, which represents 47.6% (2020: 23.6%) of operating costs for the year.

##### **Investment policy**

The trustees have decided to maintain a low risk investment strategy. The main purpose of the Company is to provide support services to vulnerable women and their children and families and because of the uncertainty of income streams, it is necessary to ensure that funds are readily available to ensure that services are not adversely affected by short term income falls. As such the trustees choose not to risk funds in potentially higher return investments.

#### **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

##### **Governing document**

Stepping Stones (Luton) is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 8 June 2015 (amended 11 January 2017). It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission. The maximum contribution required by members of the company is an amount not exceeding £1 in the event of the company being wound up. The Company was originally incorporated on 8 May 2008 as a Community Interest Company and passed a special resolution on 8 June 2015 to convert to a Charitable Company.

## Stepping Stones (Luton)

### Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

#### **Appointment of trustees**

New Trustees are appointed by a majority ballot of the existing Trustees or by ordinary resolution of the members in general meeting. New Trustees appointed by the existing Trustees only hold office until the next AGM at which time they may seek re-appointment. One third of the Trustees retire from office by rotation at each AGM following the first AGM and may seek re-appointment.

Following resignations of Trustees from the Board for a variety of personal reasons, we have sought new Trustees and have been fortunate to identify a number of well qualified and interested people who have been appointed to the Board during the year.

#### **REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

**Registered Company number**  
06588338 (England and Wales)

**Registered Charity number**  
1162349

**Registered office**  
9a George Street West  
Luton  
Bedfordshire  
LU1 2BW

#### **Company Trustees and Directors**

The directors of the charitable company are its trustees for the purpose of charity law. The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Sandra Brown (Chair)  
Sally Hopwood (Deputy Chair)  
Sandra Williams-Carraro  
Sara Miles  
Hannah Hill  
Rosemary Hughes (appointed 28.9.20)  
Manoj Jain (appointed 2.11.20)

#### **Independent Examiner**

Philip Dean, FCA (Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales)  
Hicks and Company  
Chartered Accountants  
Vaughan Chambers  
Vaughan Road  
Harpenden  
Hertfordshire  
AL5 4EE

#### **Patron**

Meryl Dolling

#### **Bankers**

Barclays Bank Plc  
28 George Street  
Luton  
Bedfordshire  
LU1 2AE

Stepping Stones (Luton)

Report of the Trustees  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

**MANAGEMENT TEAM**

Nicola Panton (CEO)  
Karrina Usher (Manager Women's Services)  
Linda Rogers (Manager Children's Services)

**STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

The trustees (who are also the directors of Stepping Stones (Luton) for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 19 July 2021 and signed on its behalf by:



Sandra Brown (Chair) - Trustee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of  
Stepping Stones (Luton)

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Stepping Stones (Luton) ('the Company')**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2021.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

**Independent examiner's statement**

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

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

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



Philip Dean, FCA (Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales)  
Hicks and Company  
Chartered Accountants  
Vaughan Chambers  
Vaughan Road  
Harpenden  
Hertfordshire  
AL5 4EE

19 July 2021

Stepping Stones (Luton)

Statement of Financial Activities  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	31.3.21 Total funds £	31.3.20 Total funds £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM</b>					
Donations and legacies	2	27,663	-	27,663	197,083
<b>Charitable activities</b>	4				
Support services for vulnerable women		163,249	444,048	607,297	355,531
Investment income	3	91	-	91	330
<b>Total</b>		<u>191,003</u>	<u>444,048</u>	<u>635,051</u>	<u>552,944</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON</b>					
Raising funds		-	-	-	10,419
<b>Charitable activities</b>	5				
Support services for vulnerable women		99,245	399,439	498,684	550,462
<b>Total</b>		<u>99,245</u>	<u>399,439</u>	<u>498,684</u>	<u>560,881</u>
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)</b>		91,758	44,609	136,367	(7,937)
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>					
Total funds brought forward		152,759	155,582	308,341	316,278
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<u>244,517</u>	<u>200,191</u>	<u>444,708</u>	<u>308,341</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Stepping Stones (Luton)

Statement of Financial Position  
31 March 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	31.3.21 Total funds £	31.3.20 Total funds £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>					
Tangible assets	11	<u>7,249</u>	=	<u>7,249</u>	<u>20,223</u>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Debtors	12	20,756	11,648	32,404	23,911
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>235,359</u>	<u>249,890</u>	<u>485,249</u>	<u>334,616</u>
		256,115	261,538	517,653	358,527
<b>CREDITORS</b>					
Amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(18,847)</u>	<u>(61,347)</u>	<u>(80,194)</u>	<u>(70,409)</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>237,268</u>	<u>200,191</u>	<u>437,459</u>	<u>288,118</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<u>244,517</u>	<u>200,191</u>	<u>444,708</u>	<u>308,341</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<u>244,517</u>	<u>200,191</u>	<u>444,708</u>	<u>308,341</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>	15				
Unrestricted funds:					
General fund				244,517	152,759
Restricted funds:					
Support services for vulnerable women				<u>200,191</u>	<u>155,582</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>				<u>444,708</u>	<u>308,341</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

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

The notes form part of these financial statements

Stepping Stones (Luton)

Statement of Financial Position - continued  
31 March 2021

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 19 July 2021 and were signed on its behalf by:

Sandra Brown

Sandra Brown (Chair) - Trustee

S Hopwood

Sally Hopwood (Deputy Chair) - Trustee

Stepping Stones (Luton)

Statement of Cash Flows  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Notes	31.3.21 £	31.3.20 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Cash generated from operations	1	150,763	4,679
Interest paid		<u>(130)</u>	<u>(243)</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities		<u>150,633</u>	<u>4,436</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		<u>-</u>	<u>(197)</u>
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		<u>-</u>	<u>(197)</u>
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</b>		<b>150,633</b>	<b>4,239</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period</b>		<b><u>334,616</u></b>	<b><u>330,377</u></b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>		<b><u>485,249</u></b>	<b><u>334,616</u></b>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

**1. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES**

	31.3.21 £	31.3.20 £
<b>Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)</b>	<b>136,367</b>	<b>(7,937)</b>
<b>Adjustments for:</b>		
Depreciation charges	12,974	23,831
Interest paid	130	243
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(8,493)	3,684
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	<u>9,785</u>	<u>(15,142)</u>
<b>Net cash provided by operations</b>	<b><u>150,763</u></b>	<b><u>4,679</u></b>

**2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS**

	At 1.4.20 £	Cash flow £	At 31.3.21 £
<b>Net cash</b>			
Cash at bank and in hand	<u>334,616</u>	<u>150,633</u>	<u>485,249</u>
	<u>334,616</u>	<u>150,633</u>	<u>485,249</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>334,616</u></b>	<b><u>150,633</u></b>	<b><u>485,249</u></b>

## **1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

### **Basis of preparing the financial statements**

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

### **Income**

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to them.

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included in these accounts.

Investment income is included when receivable.

Incoming resources from grants, where related to performance and specific deliverables, are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance.

### **Expenditure**

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

The charity has one main activity being the provision of support services for vulnerable women.

### **Allocation and apportionment of costs**

Costs have either been directly allocated or have been allocated on the basis of the proportion of income to which they relate. Where depreciation is properly chargeable to restricted fund activities, this has also been allocated on the basis of the proportion of income between restricted and unrestricted activities.

### **Tangible fixed assets**

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

Short leasehold	- 10% on cost
Fixtures & equipment	- 25% on cost

### **Taxation**

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

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued**

**Fund accounting**

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

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

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

**Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits**

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

**2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES**

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Donations	<u>27,663</u>	<u>197,083</u>

**3. INVESTMENT INCOME**

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Interest received	<u>91</u>	<u>330</u>

**4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES**

	Activity	31.3.21	31.3.20
		£	£
Service agreement	Support services for vulnerable women	77,762	75,010
Grants	Support services for vulnerable women	484,898	280,521
Government Job Retention Scheme	Support services for vulnerable women	<u>44,637</u>	-
		<u>607,297</u>	<u>355,531</u>

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

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Bedfordshire Pre-School Learning Alliance	-	31,978
Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation - London Luton Airport Ltd Fund	154,445	-
Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport	4,988	80,835
Tudor Trust	25,500	29,956
Resolutions Partnership	10,000	10,000
Awards For All	9,394	10,000
Lloyds Bank Foundation	38,441	32,800
Central Beds Council	-	35,000
Ministry Of Justice	<u>39,106</u>	<u>14,552</u>
Carried forward	<b>281,874</b>	<b>245,121</b>

Stepping Stones (Luton)

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

**4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES - continued**

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Brought forward	281,874	245,121
VERU (Police and Crime Commissioner)	-	8,500
The Henry Smith Charity	53,800	26,900
Bedfordshire Luton Community Foundation (emergency Covid)	3,457	-
Garfield Weston	25,000	-
Julia and Hans Rausing	41,285	-
Police and Crime Commissioner	10,290	-
Pilgrim Trust	23,698	-
Women's Aid	24,244	-
Steel Charitable Trust	15,000	-
Active Luton	400	-
Luton Borough Council	5,850	-
	<u>484,898</u>	<u>280,521</u>

**5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS**

	Direct Costs £	Support costs (see note 6) £	Totals £
Support services for vulnerable women	<u>404,728</u>	<u>93,956</u>	<u>498,684</u>

**6. SUPPORT COSTS**

	Other £
Support services for vulnerable women	<u>93,956</u>

**7. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)**

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

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Depreciation - owned assets	12,974	23,831
Independent Examiner's remuneration	<u>2,250</u>	<u>2,250</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

**8. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS**

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2021 nor for the year ended 31 March 2020.

**Trustees' expenses**

No expenses were paid to Trustees during the year ended 31 March 2021. During the year ended 31 March 2020, expenses totalling £1,222 were paid for 3 Trustees in respect of travel, training costs and entertaining.

**9. STAFF COSTS**

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Wages and salaries	353,603	347,129
Social security costs	23,064	23,875
Other pension costs	6,467	6,470
	<u>383,134</u>	<u>377,474</u>

Pension costs are allocated to activities in proportion to the related staffing costs incurred.

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

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	19	18
Support services for vulnerable women	<u>19</u>	<u>18</u>

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

The employee benefits of key management personnel for the company were £94,414 (2020: £95,719).

**10. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM</b>			
Donations and legacies	25,281	171,802	197,083
<b>Charitable activities</b>			
Support services for vulnerable women	85,010	270,521	355,531
Investment income	<u>330</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>330</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u>110,621</u>	<u>442,323</u>	<u>552,944</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON</b>			
Raising funds	-	10,419	10,419
<b>Charitable activities</b>			
Support services for vulnerable women	118,810	431,652	550,462
<b>Total</b>	<u>118,810</u>	<u>442,071</u>	<u>560,881</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

**10. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued**

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
<b>NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)</b>	(8,189)	252	(7,937)
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>			
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>	160,948	155,330	316,278
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<u>152,759</u>	<u>155,582</u>	<u>308,341</u>

**11. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

	Short leasehold £	Fixtures & equipment £	Totals £
<b>COST</b>			
At 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021	<u>129,248</u>	<u>46,085</u>	<u>175,333</u>
<b>DEPRECIATION</b>			
At 1 April 2020	109,215	45,895	155,110
Charge for year	<u>12,925</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>12,974</u>
At 31 March 2021	<u>122,140</u>	<u>45,944</u>	<u>168,084</u>
<b>NET BOOK VALUE</b>			
At 31 March 2021	<u>7,108</u>	<u>141</u>	<u>7,249</u>
At 31 March 2020	<u>20,033</u>	<u>190</u>	<u>20,223</u>

**12. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	31.3.21 £	31.3.20 £
Trade debtors	19,462	13,752
Other debtors	2,541	-
Prepayments	<u>10,401</u>	<u>10,159</u>
	<u>32,404</u>	<u>23,911</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

13. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Trade creditors	897	3,854
Social security and other taxes	18,979	22,629
Other creditors	25,185	30,371
Accruals and deferred income	<u>35,133</u>	<u>13,555</u>
	<u>80,194</u>	<u>70,409</u>

14. LEASING AGREEMENTS

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

	31.3.21	31.3.20
	£	£
Within one year	2,663	18,000
Between one and five years	-	2,663
	<u>2,663</u>	<u>20,663</u>

15. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.20	Net movement in funds	At 31.3.21
	£	£	£
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	152,759	91,758	244,517
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Support services for vulnerable women	155,582	44,609	200,191
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>308,341</u>	<u>136,367</u>	<u>444,708</u>

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

	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Movement in funds
	£	£	£
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	191,003	(99,245)	91,758
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Support services for vulnerable women	444,048	(399,439)	44,609
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>635,051</u>	<u>(498,684)</u>	<u>136,367</u>

Stepping Stones (Luton)

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

**15. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued**

**Comparatives for movement in funds**

	At 1.4.19 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.20 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	160,948	(8,189)	152,759
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Support services for vulnerable women	155,330	252	155,582
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>316,278</u>	<u>(7,937)</u>	<u>308,341</u>

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	110,621	(118,810)	(8,189)
<b>Restricted funds</b>			
Support services for vulnerable women	442,323	(442,071)	252
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>552,944</u>	<u>(560,881)</u>	<u>(7,937)</u>

**Purpose of restricted funds:**

The restricted funds are held and applied for the overall objects of the company. Due to the complex needs of all service users, it is not possible to allocate income and costs to specific services provided by the company.

**16. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES**

There were no transactions with related parties during the year ended 31 March 2021.

During the year ended 31 March 2020, the company had an agreement with Pan Resource Management Consultants Limited (PRMCL) for the provision of marketing and fundraising services. Mrs Niki Toffis, a Trustee who resigned during that year, was a director of PRMCL. During that year £6,215 was paid to PRMCL and no amounts were outstanding at the end of that year. The transactions with PRMCL were undertaken at arm's length.

Also during the year ended 31 March 2020, the company paid £6,000 to Godfrey Building Services for building work at the company premises. The proprietor of the firm is the husband of Mrs Karen Godfrey, a Trustee who resigned during that year. No amounts were outstanding at the end of that year and the transactions with Godfrey Building Services were undertaken at arm's length.

Stepping Stones (Luton)

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

**17. ULTIMATE CONTROLLING PARTY**

In the opinion of the trustees, there was no controlling party during the year.

**18. GENERAL INFORMATION**

The company is a private company registered in England and Wales. It is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. In the event of a winding up, every member has undertaken to contribute a sum not exceeding £1. The company's registered number and registered office address can be found in the Report of the Trustees.

Stepping Stones (Luton)

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.3.21 Total funds £	31.3.20 Total funds £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS</b>				
<b>Donations and legacies</b>				
Donations	<u>27,663</u>	-	<u>27,663</u>	<u>197,083</u>
<b>Investment income</b>				
Interest received	<u>91</u>	-	<u>91</u>	<u>330</u>
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
Service agreement	77,762	-	77,762	75,010
Grants	40,850	444,048	484,898	280,521
Government Job Retention Scheme	<u>44,637</u>	-	<u>44,637</u>	-
	<u>163,249</u>	<u>444,048</u>	<u>607,297</u>	<u>355,531</u>
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>191,003</b>	<b>444,048</b>	<b>635,051</b>	<b>552,944</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
<b>Raising donations and legacies</b>				
Consultancy fees	-	-	-	<u>10,419</u>
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
Salaries	61,521	292,082	353,603	347,129
Social security	4,404	18,660	23,064	23,875
Pensions	962	5,505	6,467	6,470
Staff training	26	5,406	5,432	13,666
Recruitment costs	-	500	500	3,065
DBS costs	328	254	582	773
Refreshments & canteen expenses	338	-	338	3,228
Travel expenses	141	27	168	8,721
Supervision costs	1,088	6,259	7,347	15,190
Materials	735	1,447	2,182	2,153
Service user support expenses	-	-	-	522
Venue hire	-	-	-	4,515
Accountancy	5,045	-	5,045	7,725
Trustee expenses	-	-	-	<u>1,222</u>
	<u>74,588</u>	<u>330,140</u>	<u>404,728</u>	<u>438,254</u>
<b>Support costs</b>				
<b>Other</b>				
Advertising	-	-	-	457
Fundraising and promotion	123	-	123	-
Rent & parking payable	<u>2,961</u>	<u>16,245</u>	<u>19,206</u>	<u>18,860</u>
Carried forward	<u>3,084</u>	<u>16,245</u>	<u>19,329</u>	<u>19,317</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

Stepping Stones (Luton)

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities  
for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	31.3.21 Total funds £	31.3.20 Total funds £
<b>Other</b>				
Brought forward	3,084	16,245	19,329	19,317
Rates & water rates	2,826	-	2,826	2,178
Insurance	920	631	1,551	5,504
Telephone	4,854	10,285	15,139	8,732
Printing, postage & stationery	499	1,952	2,451	1,977
Repairs, renewals & alterations	363	9,513	9,876	7,208
Light & heat	79	2,200	2,279	3,610
Computer & software expenses	5,471	12,390	17,861	15,694
Subscriptions	1,226	390	1,616	-
Professional fees	755	-	755	835
Consultancy fees	-	-	-	6,313
Volunteer expenses	170	1,805	1,975	-
Refuse collection & cleaning	925	2,807	3,732	2,571
Sundry expenses	394	-	394	3,216
Irrecoverable VAT	1,068	-	1,068	10,979
Depreciation of short leasehold	1,886	11,039	12,925	12,925
Depreciation of fixtures & equipment	7	42	49	10,906
Bank charges & interest	130	-	130	243
	<u>24,657</u>	<u>69,299</u>	<u>93,956</u>	<u>112,208</u>
Total resources expended	<u>99,245</u>	<u>399,439</u>	<u>498,684</u>	<u>560,881</u>
<b>Net (expenditure)/income</b>	<u>91,758</u>	<u>44,609</u>	<u>136,367</u>	<u>(7,937)</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements