



INVESTING IN  
COMMUNITIES

## *VAST Services (1920)*

**Trustees' Report and Financial Statements**  
*Year Ended 31st March 2021*



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# Trustees, Directors, Principal Officers & Advisors

VAST is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its memorandum and articles of association, which were last amended in 2020.

Company No. 2000818

Charity No. 1049663

## Trustees

Neil Dawson *Chair*

Mark Barnish *Treasurer*

John Beech

David Holton

Tim Edwards (resigned 28 July 2021)

Dawn Wickham

Susan Meredith

Lesley Morrey

Nick Maslen

## Auditors

Geens, 68 Liverpool Road,  
Stoke on Trent, ST4 1BG

## Bankers

Unity Bank Plc, Nine Brindleyplace,  
Birmingham, B1 2HB

## Company Secretary

Lisa Healings FCCA

## Key Management Personnel

Lisa Healings FCCA Chief Executive  
& Finance Director

## Registered Office

Dudson Centre, Hope Street, Hanley, Stoke on  
Trent, ST1 5DD

## Stafford Office

The Hub, 17 Eastgate Street, Stafford,  
ST16 2LZ

VAST is the trading name of VAST Services (1920)

# Chair's Foreword



At the end of the last Annual Accounting period, we were concerned with the impact of COVID-19 on all of society and particularly on the voluntary sector. Little did we expect to still be in a similar situation at the end of this

present period. The last year has seen the staff at VAST provide an amazing level of support for many groups and individuals across our area. At the same time ensuring, where possible, that our properties in Hanley and Stafford were kept in a safe condition to accommodate ourselves and our tenants.

Over the year we have continued to focus on supporting our many members and the communities where they operate through the provision of our services. Finances for our sector have always been difficult, but this year has been extremely challenging for many in the face of increased demand for services. VAST is an organisation dedicated to the betterment of the voluntary and community sectors locally and its core objectives remain to support the development of the local VCSE sector, utilising all available opportunities to best achieve this. We have once again reacted swiftly to allow our organisation to redirect itself to meet our member's needs.

During this time the Trustees have worked hard to consider the long-term strategy to best position VAST for the future. Lisa Healings has moved from Acting CEO to permanent CEO, and the staffing structure has been revised to ensure we can emerge from the pandemic into the new normal in as strong a position as possible. To the credit of all involved, this new delivery model was successful and helped VAST to continue to support the local VCSE sector through unprecedented times.

VAST, through Lisa Healings, and our small but very effective Senior Management Team, has increased engagement with local Statutory Bodies, The National Lottery Community Fund and The Community Foundation for Staffordshire. We have also encouraged partnership working among other local organisations and VAST has expanded its close working arrangements with Support Staffordshire. As a development support organisation VAST has a critical role to play in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire's best and most attractive assets -Voluntary and Community Organisations, and we are proud to have been instrumental in the

development of a new Community Directory where access to community services can be found within our area.

Our two managed centres, The Dudson Centre in Stoke-on-Trent, and The Hub in Stafford, have continued to maintain reasonable occupancy rates and offer an excellent service to the tenants and room users. The Trustees also continue to support and manage The Dudson Museum within the Dudson Centre, which is well worth a visit and is now on the Heritage Trail. Work has commenced to obtain accreditation for the Museum and a new Memorandum of Understanding has been enacted between VAST, The Dudson Centre and The Dudson Heritage Trust who own the collection.

VAST ensures quality by continuously examining the value and impact of our work and this has been recognised by externally moderated awards in the past. As the public sector continues to shrink due to austerity measures, we are building more effective relationships and partnerships with all sectors. To ensure that we are on target to achieve our ambitions, the Board of Trustees regularly review our strategic approach and have recommitted to be an entrepreneurial service which will develop and create more value for the VCSE sector. We will also continue to develop joint projects with like-minded partners to create more funding opportunities for our VCSE sector.

We have always been innovative and looked at developing solutions to emerging issues. I am confident that we can continue to deliver our passion for the VCSE sector and maintain VAST's position as a key provider of services to the sector.

I would like to thank VAST's members for their continued involvement, my fellow trustees and particularly the staff at VAST for their commitment, hard work and dedication and look forward to VAST continuing its invaluable work for the VCSE sector into the future.

Thank you,

Neil Dawson  
Chair  
December 2021

# Strategic Report

The trustees who are the directors for the purposes of company law present their strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2021 in compliance with S414C of the Companies Act 2006.

## Fair Review of the Business

This financial year has probably been the most challenging ever for VAST and the rest of the VCSE sector. The lockdown we entered in late March 2020, which everyone assumed was for just a few weeks, endured for four months and was followed by periods of restrictions and further lockdowns which continue to impact as this report is written and will for many years to come.

Our managed centres were closed and we had to find new and different ways of working.

During that time, however VAST has been able to demonstrate that it really is there to support the local VCSE sector. We have forged new partnerships with Stoke-on-Trent City Council and were able to step forward quickly to first provide the Stoke-on-Trent together portal, to ensure the local sector and City Council could provide essential services to the most vulnerable residents of the city and later, to provide support to the VCSE organisations, who saw unprecedented demand on their services. We were also able to provide a cohesive volunteer brokerage system to ensure all those who wanted to volunteer could do so safely and that organisations who so desperately needed volunteers could continue to meet demand. All of this was enabled by the flexibility of our existing funders and the adaptability of our staff.

We are very grateful for the emergency funding we were able to secure from Stoke-on-Trent City Council, The National Lottery and The Community Foundation for Staffordshire, which enabled us to change direction quickly and to utilise our staff to provide the services the sector so desperately needed. As a result, we ended the financial year in a stronger position as a result of the immense efforts of our whole team.

The landscape for the VCSE is more difficult than ever. However, VAST has continued to build key relationships with local authorities and health service bodies as well as other charities, to ensure that we can continue to support and advocate for the VCSE. This has been demonstrated with our strategic partnership with Stoke-on-Trent City Council during the COVID pandemic, which continues to strengthen as we emerge into the new landscape of a post pandemic world.

## Achievements and Performance

How we performed against our plans:

What we said we would do	What we did	How successful we were
<b>Chargeable Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertise more widely outside the membership base</li> <li>• Develop provision to social enterprises and other types of not for profit</li> <li>• Explore a wider geographical market</li> <li>• Develop a range of packages of support</li> <li>• Deliver training packages around relevant thematic areas</li> <li>• Develop governance support and project evaluation services</li> </ul>	<p>Lockdown restrictions impacted on our ability to network and meet with new clients, but word of mouth continued to mean we were still able to recruit new clients for our services. We did find, however that there was much less demand for services that were not mandatory and for most of the year our meeting room facilities and café were closed.</p> <p>Our chargeable income covering our business support service, creative services, café and refreshment income and income from rentals was £425,105 in the year.</p> <p>We have continued to recruit a number of clients from outside of our local geographic area.</p> <p>We are still developing packaged support offers to launch when demand begins to increase again.</p> <p>We have switched to virtual delivery for our training packages and have focussed these around volunteering and governance support and have also held successful volunteering and funding fayres virtually. We have also been engaged to carry out some small project evaluation work but, staff capacity means we are not widely promoting this stream of work at the moment.</p>	<p>Our support services continue to provide a value for money option for the VCSE sector and we want to continue to build our potential to offer these services more widely, however pressures on funding for our client base and the added pressures placed on both our client and ourselves by the COVID pandemic has meant it is difficult to expand our services as rapidly as originally anticipated.</p>

<p><b>Grants and Contracts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore funding opportunities to ensure we can continue to deliver in key areas such as volunteering and Social Prescribing</li> <li>• Continually develop our role of strategic liaison between the sector and public bodies</li> <li>• Facilitate collaborative partnership working across the local sector</li> </ul>	<p>During the COVID-19 pandemic, we successfully secured a number of Emergency funding streams and agreed with existing funders that we could use the funding provided by them for emergency response.</p> <p>We have successfully secured funding from Stoke-on-Trent City Council to provide support and volunteering brokerage to the VCSE sector in Stoke and to enable a strategic partnership between ourselves and the city council.</p> <p>Our Vintage Volunteers project was not successful in obtaining continuation funding, however we are developing further bids based on the learning from this project.</p> <p>Following the success of the pilot place-based giving scheme, Totally Stoked, and the evolution of this to form The Stoke-on-Trent Together partnership we have also secured three years funding from The National Lottery to develop a Totally Stoked Support offer to the VCSE sector in North Staffordshire.</p> <p>During the pandemic we have worked closely with partners across the VCSE sector to and developed strong networks with us now playing an active role in the local collaborative network encompassing VCSE and statutory bodies and re-invigorating the Stoke-on-Trent Voluntary Sector Chief Officers Group.</p> <p>Our Strategic Liaison Officer for Health and our Senior Management Team continue to have seats on key Boards across the area.</p>	<p>We were successful in securing emergency funding to enable us to react quickly during the pandemic and have built new, stronger partnerships with Stoke-on-Trent City Council.</p> <p>We continue to apply for appropriate funding to ensure our key service offer can continue into the future.</p>
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## Factors Relevant to the Achievement of Objectives

VAST's objectives and the activities derived thereof, have once again been carried out in a turbulent and unpredictable environment, both locally and nationally. Sector funding is likely to reduce drastically as the country gets to grips with the aftermath of a global pandemic and there are ongoing reviews of commissioning within the statutory bodies invariably meaning fewer, larger contracts available. There has been an unprecedented demand for services provided by the VCSE this year, with fewer resources available to fund and develop them. The sector needed to be responsive and reactive with little time to plan.

The local political environment continues to be experiencing enormous amounts of continual change, upheaval and review, with many of our statutory partners across a range of thematic areas shrinking, reviewing key strategies and working towards greater co-production and co-commissioning.

The transformation agenda still sweeping across Staffordshire, while welcome, is proving to be an incredibly protracted and complicated process, bringing with it enormous uncertainty, which makes planning during this difficult time quite precarious.

There is a desire from local statutory partners to want to engage with the Sector, and to this end we have been actively involved in a great deal of representation and advocacy work in partnership with our colleagues from VSCOG. We are having some encouraging conversations, but only time will tell if they lead to tangible benefits for the Sector.

Statutory partners have recognised that as there is more to be done with ever diminishing resources, that they need to improve and reinvigorate their engagement with the VCSE, and as such are re-evaluating their relationship with the sector. The Local Authority have embraced the Place-Based Giving agenda and have identified Asset Based Community Development as a key strategy to develop moving forward, to achieve which requires greater co-production with the VCSE and the communities we serve.

From the start of the COVID pandemic the statutory sector relied on the VCSE to support its work and it appears that this relationship will continue into the recovery phase. It is hoped that as these discussions continue that there become real tangible benefits and opportunities for the local VCSE to collaborate with statutory partners to deliver on ambitious initiatives.

These positive discussions are yet to impact upon local commissioning, this year has very little contracting above the emergency response with existing contracts rolled on for further periods. Hopefully, the above positive initiatives will lead to future investment in the local sector.



## Key Performance Indicators

During the year the main key performance indicators used by management to assess performance against objectives were as follows:

### Chargeable Services

Income against budget for chargeable services



The budgets were set before the COVID-19 Pandemic and when set were challenging. Due to additional assistance with furlough claims and the essential nature of our accountancy work we were able to surpass our budgets, however our digital services were impacted by the lack of print work needed as everything moved online, and, also by the fact that most VCSE organisations saw unprecedented demand for their services and had little time to focus on websites or other digital needs. As we emerge from the pandemic, we are continuing to look at ways to promote and expand our services.

### Facilities

Overall income from the Dudson Centre and The Hub



For the year to March 2021, as a result of the impact of the pandemic, based on income received against total possible income the Hub was 85% occupied and The Dudson Centre was 90% occupied.

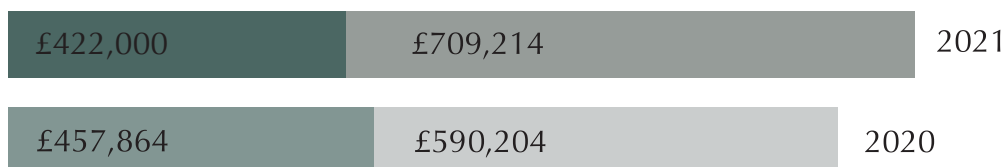
Occupancy levels remained good across both sites despite concerns that we may lose tenants as the impacts of COVID-19 and lockdowns hit. However, the meeting rooms at both centres remained closed for most of the year and during the period they were able to open bookings were low and capacity in the rooms reduced due to social distancing requirements. We were able to access some grants from Stoke-on-Trent City Council for The Dudson Centre but were unsuccessful in applications to Stafford Borough Council in respect of the Hub.

## Financial Review

Overall our income has remained consistent with the previous year at approximately £1million.

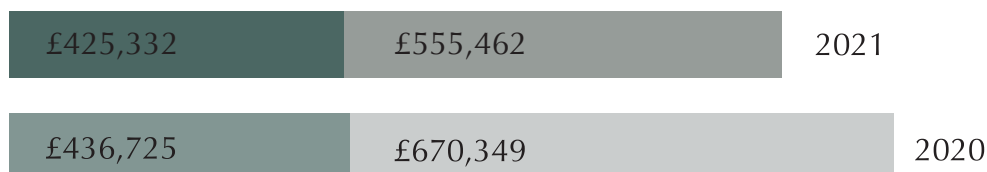
### Income £1,131,214



(2020 £1,048,068)



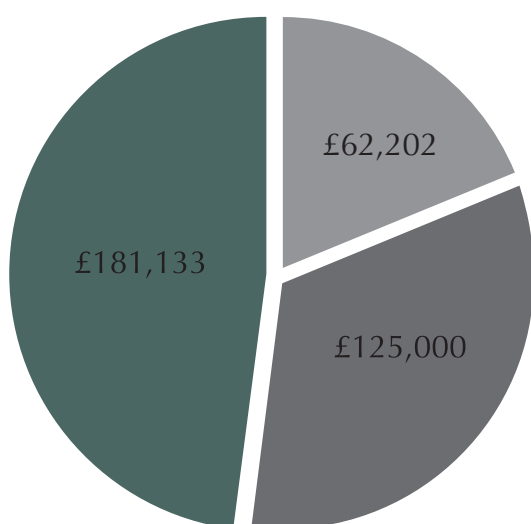
### Expenditure £980,794

(2020) 1,107,074

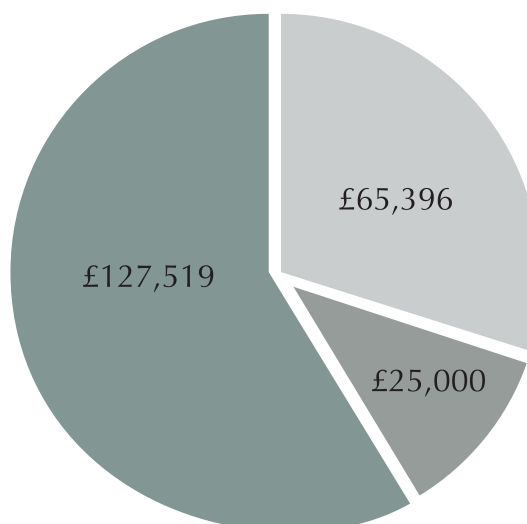


 Restricted       General

### Reserves 2021 £368,335



### Reserves 2020 £217,915



 Restricted       Designated       General

Of the designated reserves £25,000 is set aside to allow for times of underoccupancy and unexpected repair work at The Dudson Centre, £50,000 is set aside for underoccupancy and unexpected expenditure at The Hub and £50,000 is set aside for the running of the Dudson Museum should funding not be available.

## Financial Review

VAST's principle funding sources for 2020/21 were Stoke-on-Trent City Council who fund our work with the local VCSE sector, Stoke on Trent and North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning groups who fund our Strategic Liaison post, The National Lottery Community Fund who funded the Vintage Volunteers project, provided us with Emergency Funding through the COVID pandemic and fund our new, Totally Stoked Support project and The Community Foundation for Staffordshire who provided much needed funding to enable our support to the VCSE during the pandemic.

A large amount of VAST funding comes from our chargeable services, which in 2020/21 accounted for 37% of income (60% of unrestricted income).

### **The charity acts as agent over cash held for the following not for profit organisations:**

- RSPCA – Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.
- Trentham Pre School
- Stoke on Trent Foodbank
- Haregate Community Centre.
- ASHA
- RubyGirl UK
- NSAAA
- Disability Solutions
- Blurton Community Hub
- St Johns Community Church
- Uttoxeter Gateway
- Packmoor Community Association
- Expert Citizens UK CIC
- Staffordshire Parish Council Association
- North Staffordshire Carers Association
- Audley Parish Council
- Willoughbridge Garden Trust
- Biddulph Valley Way
- Biddulph Methodist Church
- Stoke on Trent Age Friendly City Board
- Abbey Hulton Sports and Social Club
- Green Door Hub
- Multiple Abilities Club
- Headway North Staffs
- Smallthorne Social Society
- Silvertree Cleaning
- Rachel Wilson (DP)
- Breakthru' Support Services
- Voice of Hope
- St Andrews with St Peters Pre School
- Werrington Parish Council
- Sunflower Families Support Group
- North Staffordshire Medical Institute
- Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
- Number 11 CIC
- SkinJase in the Community

This money is held in order that invoices can be paid on behalf of these organisations, enabling them to achieve their charitable objectives.

These monies are held in the charity's bank account and a separate nominal code kept to record any transactions. These balances are not included in the year end financial statements.

The overall objectives of VAST are to enhance the quality of life of local residents through the development of the social economy by developing the local community and voluntary sectors.

## Policy on Reserves

The policy of VAST has been to invest surplus funds in the growth of the charity. VAST aims to carry sufficient cash of up to £150,000 in bank current or higher interest deposit accounts to fund its predicted working capital requirements.

Surplus funds over £150,000 are deposited in a higher interest deposit account, in a higher interest fixed term bond or within an investment portfolio.

The VAST trustees aim to maintain sufficient free reserves in unrestricted funds to ensure the charity remains sustainable in the event of a significant loss of funding or other unforeseen financial difficulties arising.

The trustees have carried out a review of the level of reserves necessary, taking into account the key risks identified, to ensure the sustainability of the organisation. This review indicated the need for free reserves in the range of £93,000 to £421,000.

Currently we hold £25,438 of free reserves. Total reserves stand at £368,335 of which £306,133 is unrestricted, and of this £125,000 is designated.

The long-term aim of the trustees is to be able to set budgets which can increase the level of free reserves to the required level.

## Plans for Future Periods

### *Aims and Key objectives*

To grow VAST to be a thriving and sustainable organisation supporting and advocating for the VCSE sector in Staffordshire.

### **Activities Planned to Achieve Aims**

We will achieve the above by implementing the following activities;

#### **Chargeable Services**

- Advertise more widely outside membership base
- Develop provision to Social Enterprises and other types of not for profit organisations
- Explore the market in surrounding areas where there is currently no similar CVS provision
- Develop a range of packages of support for VCSE and Social Enterprise
- Deliver training courses around relevant thematical areas
- Develop governance support and project evaluation services

#### **Grants and Contracts**

- Explore funding opportunities to ensure that we can continue to deliver in key areas such as Volunteering and VCSE developmental support
- Continually develop our role of Strategic Liaison between the sector and public bodies
- Facilitate collaborative and partnership working across the local sector

## Principle Risks and Uncertainties

The major risks to which the charity is exposed, as identified by the trustees, have been reviewed, and systems or procedures have been established to manage those risks.

The principle risk is considered to be the loss of a major funding stream, however sources of income have been diversified over recent years and a significant portion of income is generated through chargeable service to mitigate this risk.

In approving these financial statements, the Trustees have considered the impact of a number of year on year reductions to free reserves together with the potential impact of the loss of, or failure to renew, one or more contracts, as they come up for renewal over the next year.

The board and the finance and general purposes sub-committee have developed a detailed reserves policy which is closely linked to the key risks identified for the charity, including the potential loss or non-renewal of contracts. Monthly management accounts and cash flow forecasts, include a rolling forecast to the end of each financial year, are updated and presented to these groups for regular review and comparison to the reserves policy papers. This enables the board to react to any pending cash flow issues and gives fair warning of any looming difficulties. The board have examined alternative strategies to ensure any such issues can be faced and costs reduced accordingly to ensure the charity remains a going concern. It is on this basis that the board are able to conclude this going concern risk is manageable.

Other risks considered to be high are risks associated with contracts, competition from similar organisations, provision of misleading advice, project failure and loss of key staff. The trustees consider all of these risks regularly and have taken steps to mitigate them where appropriate. These steps include close regular monitoring of performance, maintaining quality standards awards and ensuring all staff are appropriately qualified and trained.

This strategic report was approved by the trustees on 8th December 2021 and signed on its behalf by:



Neil Dawson

Chair

# Trustees' Report

## (incorporating the Directors' Report)

### Our Purpose

The Objects for which the Charity is established are to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of the community within Staffordshire and the West Midlands with particular reference to Stoke-on-Trent; and in particular the advancement of education, the advancement of heritage, the advancement of health, the advancement of citizenship or community development and the prevention or relief of poverty.

In furtherance of the above purposes, but not further or otherwise, the Charity may:

- i. promote and organise co-operation in the achievement of the objects and to that end to bring together in Council representatives of the statutory authorities and voluntary organisations engaged in the furtherance of the above;
- ii. assist anybody or bodies financially or otherwise;
- iii. obtain, collect and receive moneys and funds by way of contributions, donations, affiliation fees, subscriptions, legacies, grants and other lawful method, and accept or receive gifts of property of any description (whether subject to any special trusts or not);
- iv. procure and provide information;
- v. procure to be written and print, publish, issue and circulate gratuitously or otherwise any reports or periodicals, books, pamphlets, leaflets or any other documents;
- vi. arrange and provide for or join in arranging and providing for the holding of exhibitions, meetings, lectures and classes;
- vii. promote, encourage or undertake experimental work
- viii. operate an museum and heritage centre

### Role

VAST is a social enterprise that specialises in providing a range of support functions to the VCSE in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire enabling them to deliver high quality services that benefit local communities and civil society. VAST also promotes the VCSE sector and advocates on their behalf at a strategic level with a wide range of key stakeholders.

<sup>1</sup> Voluntary and Community & Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) - charities, voluntary organisations, community groups, social enterprises, faith organisations, community interest companies, housing associations and mutuals and co-operatives.

<sup>2</sup> The Geographical entity of Staffordshire which includes Stoke on Trent

## Mission Statement

Develop a vibrant and thriving VCSE to improve the quality of life of local residents.

## Aims

- Support
- Inform
- Connect
- Advocate

## Values

All of our aims are underpinned by the following behaviours;

- Authentic
- Pro-active
- Innovative
- Responsive

All delivered with Integrity and underpinned by these values...

ADVOCATE INNOVATION ACCOUNTABILITY  
DYNAMIC ENABLING  
SOCIAL CHAMPION INVEST TRAILBLAZING SUPPORT  
PROMOTION VOLUNTEERING INSPIRATIONAL QUALITY  
CARING ETHICAL TEAMWORK PROFESSIONAL  
PARTNERSHIP SUSTAINABILITY EXCELLENCE  
DEVELOPMENT PIONEERING SOCIAL CAPITAL EQUALITY INFLUENCING SOCIAL VALUE

# Support

Enhancing and improving the sustainability of VAST through selling of back office services to Voluntary Organisations, Community Groups, Social Enterprises and Registered Charities in Staffordshire (VCSE) has a twofold advantage. Firstly, it generates income for VAST, thus reducing our grant dependency, secondly, and more importantly, it provides high quality services which are professionally delivered by qualified professionals. Our services are extremely competitive compared to private sector organisations providing a similar service, with the added advantage of our staff being experts in the requirements of the sector.

In addition, through funded contracts we support and develop the local VCSE sector through advice and guidance as well as with practical support and advice.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic this support became a vital lifeline at a time of unprecedented demand.



# Accounts and Payroll



Our fully qualified accountancy team are experts in the charity and not-for-profit sector and offer a range of affordable services in a friendly and professional manner. During the year we have worked with 122 community groups, charities and social enterprises and we are always keen to talk to new organisations about how we can help them.



## End of year accounts and independent examination

A major part of our work is the preparation and, if required, the independent examination of accounts. Our team keeps up to date with the ever-changing regulations so trustees and directors can be safe in the knowledge they are fully compliant with all the relevant legislation.



## Bookkeeping

We offer a full bookkeeping and management accounts service to ensure that decisions can be made based on accurate up to date information. We also provide training, support and advice to organisations who wish to maintain their own accounting records.



## Payroll

We offer a fully managed payroll bureau service meaning that payroll is processed simply, quickly and reliably and ensuring that all HMRC and pension requirements are up to date. Our approachable staff are on hand to offer advice and support to take the headache out of paying staff. During COVID we have assisted over 40 clients to correctly process claims to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.



## Corporation tax

Whether the organisation is a community interest company or a charity, HMRC can request a corporation tax return. We can help complete and submit any required returns and ensure that any tax due is correctly calculated. Many charities who have not been required to submit corporation tax returns in the past are now being requested to do so and this is a constantly growing area of our work.

We can also help organisations prepare and submit vat returns, even in complicated partial-exemption situations.



## Training

We offer classroom based or one to one training on all aspects of bookkeeping, accounting and governance for new or established organisations. As QuickBooks certified pro-advisors, we also offer bespoke training to ensure that organisations are fully prepared to use QuickBooks' many features to their advantage

## Future aims



Increase the number of organisations we support with year-end accounts and independent examinations to ensure as many local small charities and social enterprises as possible have access to quality, accurate information to provide to beneficiaries, regulators and to support funding applications.



To work with an increased number of local not-for-profit organisations to give them access to quality training (classroom-based or virtually) and provide bespoke support.

## Accounts feedback

*"Fabulous service, always very helpful and quick to respond to any questions or queries."*

*"Thank you for all your help and advice, it was a pleasure to deal with you."*

*"Really great service as usual. I have worked with Daryl on our accounts now for a number of years and have been very impressed with his professionalism and support."*



## Digital services



### Database

VAST has a qualified Database Developer in house providing bespoke CRM databases to the VCSE sector, enabling them to easily and effectively manage their contacts, interactions, and to streamline their business processes and reporting mechanisms.

Our solutions enable VCSE groups to easily and effectively monitor their work and services and capture outcomes. We simplify the often-daunting process of reporting on key outcomes which saves our clients time and money.



### Graphic design

Our comprehensive and highly professional Graphic Design service enables even the smallest VCSE group to portray a professional image through a one stop shop for all marketing requirements including the design and production of business stationary, leaflets, brochures, newsletters, posters, annual reports, exhibition stands and much more.

In the past year the graphic design department has maintained good links with existing customers ensuring repeat work and developing relationships with new customers.



### Web design

VAST design and build bespoke websites for our clients and offer everything from a simple one-page website to more complex systems, including e-commerce sites. We provide solutions using a user-friendly CMS that allows our clients to edit and update their own websites themselves.

VAST website design portfolio has continued to expand over the past 12 months, we have completed a variety of bursary websites for SMEs along with larger websites including e-commerce, directory-based sites and news and information distribution sites.



### Print

VAST offers a quality and cost-effective printing service. We print flyers, leaflets, brochures, letterheads, business cards, compliments slips, pull up banners, PVC vinyl banners, annual reports and more.



## Our Achievements



Over the past 12 months we have had a large internal focus on updating our own websites to create more online brand consistency, improved modern functionality, and user experience. We have successfully updated the VAST and Dudson Centre website and created a new website for the Dudson Museum.



VAST Digital have fully developed a new bespoke internal CRM. The CRM offers portals for client details, Door2Door and Volunteering, alongside many useful staff tools such as online timesheets. The CRM has been integrated with Mailchimp to allow for targeted email marketing.



We have undertaken a full review of our hosting package and updated security in line with GDPR. VAST now have their own online servers that host all internal websites and CRMs alongside a number of client websites and CRMs.



During the Initial part of the COVID-19 Pandemic, VAST worked closely with Stoke-on-Trent City Council to develop a digital response to the community's needs. The City Council commissioned VAST to develop an online ticketing system placed on a public facing website where both organisations and individuals could request and offer support. Additionally, there was also an area developed for promoting the latest guidance and advice to the public. This build was undertaken on a very short timescale and although challenging, received a lot of positive feedback and had a lot of interactions.



The Stoke-on-Trent Community Directory build had been completed this year and has begun population.

## Future aims



We will focus on expanding our client base through marketing our services to improve income generation.



Continued development of the VAST CRM, new areas have been planned for the CRM.



We aim to continue to develop inhouse skills and processes to grow income generation. We will continue to focus on new technology and digital developments.



We will deliver bespoke online training via digital platforms including Teams and Zoom. The training will include website, database, and social media.



We will continue to focus on internal websites bringing the remaining few in line with the brand, while building a new website for Stoke Community Health Champions. A new user-friendly booking system will be developed for the Meeting rooms.

## Facilities



Unfortunately, for most of the year both centres had to remain closed to external visitors due to COVID-19 restrictions meaning that the café and meeting rooms were able to generate very little income.

We have been fortunate that tenants have been able to retain their office space and utilise offices when they were allowed to do so.



### The Hub – Stafford

At the end of March 2021 Wise Ability and the Social Hub left the Hub due to not being able to hold face to face meetings. These groups occupied 2 large offices on the ground floor. SSAFA and YMCA also gave notice, but YMCA asked to rent desk space in place of office space. Although most of the tenants continued to work from home during the lockdown, three tenants requested that they still be able to work from the Hub and, as they had access, they continued to use their office space.

The Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust, who had previously used the meeting room on the second floor, wanted to continue to use it during lockdown and signed a short-term licence and continued to use the room.

Due to COVID the meeting rooms were not used at all to the end of March, however bookings have started to come in from May 2021 onwards.



### The Dudson Centre - Hanley

A lot of activity took place at the Dudson Centre during the year, two tenants gave notice, however three offices now have new tenants. Due to the lockdown most of the tenants continued to work from home. The Dudson Centre was closed to the public during lockdown periods, following government guidelines and re-opened in May 2021.

During the last three months of the year 3 enquiries were received regarding office space, the tenancies will be taken on in the new financial year. The occupancy levels have been consistent at around 82% increasing to 87% at the end of the year.

The meeting rooms have been closed for much of the year and have therefore generated very little income however, The Rose Price room and Audrey Dudson room have had improved technology installed to enable groups and organisations to have blended meetings between people who are physically present and others who want to attend virtually.

Towards the end of the year, after many months awaiting listed building permission, steel gates and fencing were installed at the front and the side of the Dudson Centre. This has secured the Centre and has reduced antisocial behaviour.

The café has remained closed for the whole 12 months and has therefore generated no income.





## The Dudson Museum

When VAST took over the running of The Dudson Museum in late 2019 a series of events were planned for the year ahead, however, due to the COVID pandemic, it was not possible for these to take place.

For the majority of the year staff were furloughed, However, the Museum secured funding from the Culture Recovery Fund and The Community Foundation for Staffordshire to enable staff to return and make plans for re-opening. As a result of this funding, a new website has been developed with a combination of children's activities, stories, and other information. Reels in Motion visited the Dudson Centre in February 2021 and produced a video and photographs which can also be accessed from the website and a virtual tour was also produced by 360 pictures, enabling virtual visits while the Museum had to remain closed.

The Museum is working towards accreditation and is currently in the process of completing and finalising the eligibility criteria and the staff have worked on many different activities and presentations which will take place once the Museum is able to open to the public once again.

### Facilities feedback

*"I would like to say is that the HUB is such a special venue for us at A Child of Mine. We personally have been a tenant at the HUB for almost 7 years and have loved our time here. It is a central location offering both office and meeting room space if needed. Our service users find it convenient as we have a town centre location (although parking has always been a real negative) but we love the building, love the atmosphere and being with other charities to network with and support each other, it really is a community hub where we all work and support each other.*

*Covid really took a toll on the tenants over the past year however, the building has always remained available and accessible for those who needed it to carry on their work. Thank you VAST for giving us a place and a venue to continue our work and support our service users, that is so incredibly important."*

*"We moved in to the Dudson Centre in August last year. Our new office is bright and has a really lovely feel about it. The staff at VAST have been most welcoming and extremely helpful in helping us to settle in, even during the pandemic when some of their own staff were working from home or furloughed. We have now started to meet and work with other organisations who are part of the Dudson Centre which is a really positive thing for clients we are working with. The Café is a great place for our clients to meet for a cuppa, cake and a natter. Thank you to the staff at VAST for making us feel really welcome"*

*"We have been able to use the building during lockdowns which has meant that we have been able to continue to run the charity, serve our CCPA families without a break in services and to fundraise. Without access to our ebay office in particular that funding stream would have ceased losing us £1000's in much-needed income. I know it has been very difficult to manage so I would like to thank Jackie Wheeler, in particular, for enabling the opening of the building during a very difficult time.*





## Door2Door Transport



The coronavirus pandemic has meant Door2Door Transport faced it's most challenging year in over 30 years of service. Like many services, the transport element stopped running during the initial period of lockdown. But we have always known that the service is about so much more than transport and so we were able to adapt immediately, recognising the need to keep in regular contact with both our service users and our wonderful team of volunteers. From her home Margaret, our Service Coordinator, supported by Sheila, our Volunteer Administrator, made regular check in calls and became a vital lifeline and the friendly support that was so much needed in that incredibly uncertain time.

The service also diversified and became a "pharmacy partner" to a number of local pharmacies. The scheme linked VCSE sector organisations with pharmacies to help them meet the overwhelming demand for delivery of vital prescriptions to people's homes.

In July, with the support and advice from The Community Transport Association, we put new guidelines and processes in place, provided PPE and gradually re-started the transport provision. A number of our fabulous volunteer drivers came forward to start offering transport for vital medical appointments and essential trips.

The number of journeys was understandably low and we continued to provide the befriending calls alongside the journeys for many of our beneficiaries who remained at home shielding. This quieter period was put to good use as we designed and implemented a bespoke CRM system to manage our bookings alongside implementing a cashless service, taking payments at the time of booking to avoid drivers and service users handling cash.

As the vaccination roll out began Door2Door Transport played a vital role in supporting vulnerable people to access their vaccinations earning the nickname "Jabs Cabs" amongst our drivers and service users.

Through our links with the Social Prescribing Link Worker in Audley we have established a partnership with Audley Rural Parish Council who have provided funding and promotion to support people in the parish to access the service.

### Door2Door in action

Leo has a number of long-term health conditions including Fibromyalgia and chronic pain. He walks with a cane and tires very quickly. In addition, he was diagnosed with Autism at 32 and is now 36. He finds it difficult to socialise and maintain small talk and feels paranoid around strangers. He has frequent hospital appointments and no means of transport.

Leo describes the Door 2 Door Service as vital for both his health and his wellbeing. He has built familiar, trusting relationships with the volunteer drivers, who have an understanding of his condition and how best to help him. Leo says that many of the drivers go "above and beyond" the call of duty for him; if he has a routine hospital appointment, they will support him in the waiting room and wait until his appointment is finished to take him home.

In the past, Leo had his groceries delivered from a major supermarket. He says that over time, the delivery drivers became lazy and would leave his shopping at the foot of two flights of stairs, leaving him to struggle and become tired trying to carry it all up. A Door2Door driver helped Leo to change to a new supermarket and makes sure that his groceries are taken to his door. Leo says this is just another example of the way Door 2 Door go "above and beyond".

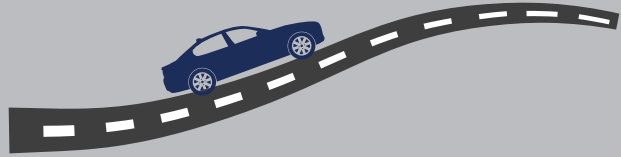
"I haven't been having my pain appointments because of lockdown so I'm in extreme pain now. But I know that when my appointments start again, Door2Door will be there for me, which means a lot"





Over 60  
beneficiaries  
recorded  
wellbeing calls  
per month  
during lock  
down

96 journeys – 61% medical, 20% essential  
trips maintaining independence including  
shopping/banking/hairstressing



Supported By:

**realise**  
charity

## The VAST Bursary Fund



Since its inception in 2015, the VAST Bursary Fund has awarded more than £52,000 to more than 100 voluntary sector organisations throughout Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. The fund awards a total of up to £500 towards eligible VAST business services.

Between April and September 2020, The Bursary Fund was paused for new applications due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

During the period from April 2020 and March 2021 a total of 9 applications were received and subsequently awarded by the panel. The total awarded for this period was £4500.00, each at £500. Five of these applications were for accountancy services and the remaining for website design.

Of these applications, two thirds were from Stoke-on-Trent. The remaining applications were from VCSE groups based in the East Staffordshire and Lichfield areas.

A gift from VAST to our members.

**Get £500**

from the Bursary Fund

# Inform

To support and help the sector to grow and thrive, we share interesting and relevant information and resources, sector news and important updates to the local voluntary sector.



## Marketing and Communication



Under the Creative Services banner, the main marketing objective is to promote the services we offer, increase our customer-base and generate income. To support and help the sector to grow and thrive, we share interesting and relevant information and resources, sector news and important updates to the local voluntary sector.

VAST have multiple social and emailing communication channels for the different projects, during this period our focus was on the VAST Central, Totally Stoked and Volunteering communications.

### VAST marketing includes:

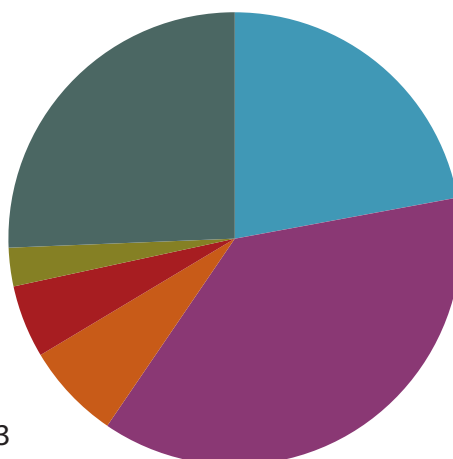
**Email marketing** – After the launch of #StokeonTrentTogether and the introduction of lockdown restrictions, we began to send out more frequent updates around COVID-19 to our mailing lists to ensure that they could access all the help, support, and resources they needed to better serve their beneficiaries during a time of crisis. The funding elements of these newsletters were, predictably, the most popular in terms of click-throughs to our website.

The recruitment of hundreds of volunteers in Stoke-on-Trent meant that regular volunteering updates were also sent out to the new COVID-19 Volunteers mailing list. These volunteering newsletters were very well received with initial open rates of more than 70%.



Total emails sent: **83**  
COVID-19 emails sent: **27**  
Average open rate: **23.50%**  
Average click rate: **7.0%**

### Our Audience



Total Subscribers  
**3019**

**Social media marketing** – The prime focus for VCSE groups – especially during the first part of the year – was emergency funding and we promoted these new funds, together with sector and government guidance with a heavy social media presence. The increase in activity on our social media channels was phenomenal; at one point we saw a 577% increase in engagements with our audiences.

As well as the local #StokeonTrentTogether message and the associated calls to action, VAST also took part in wider sector social media campaigns. Fronted by NAVCA and NCVO, the #EveryDayCounts campaign called on the government to provide sector-specific funding to support charities and community groups throughout the crisis. Once the VCSE funding was announced, #EveryDayCounts became #NeverMoreNeeded. This campaign was created purely to raise awareness of the importance of charities and the crucial role the voluntary sector will had in supporting local communities and vulnerable residents through COVID-19.

## Our Followers



**Website blog** - During the beginning of this period, news stories were hitting inboxes at a ferocious rate. This is reflected in the sheer number of articles shared through the “Latest News” page on our website – a huge increase from the same period in 2019/20.



**Articles Posted**  
2021/20 - **585**  
2020/19 - **176**



**Website Visits**  
2021/20 - **57,395**  
2020/19 - **18,331**



**Job Adverts**  
2021/20 - **37**  
2020/19 - **60**

# Connect

Our meeting spaces, events and networks enable VCSE organisations to work together and collaborate amongst themselves and with the wider local community

TOTALLY  
STOKED



# Totally Stoked



Totally Stoked was a successful pilot scheme under the Place Based Giving agenda managed by VAST. Following a successful funding application in December 2018 to DCMS and CAF work began in July 2019 to form the management team, structure, partnership and strategic direction of the scheme.

The Totally Stoked ethos is that the people in Stoke-on-Trent need access to a rich variety of resilient VCSE groups and services to help them and their communities to thrive. For this to happen we believe it is vital to provide support to our local VCSE sector. Totally Stoked aims to ensure the sector has access to the support, funds, skills and resources it requires to enable it to give local people and communities what they need to live happy healthy lives.

Totally Stoked works across sectors to bring VCSE organisations, statutory partners and local businesses together to tackle the challenges in our City.

## How it Works

Totally Stoked provides a mechanism so that organisations in the community can get access and request support in four key areas that are common to the practical, operational and development needs of community organisations:



We provide this mechanism by facilitating a 'Call and Response' system alongside a programme of co-produced and "share network" events that provide networking, training and connection opportunities for the VCSE sector and our community.

The 'Call and Response' system enables organisations to 'Request Support' directly into Totally Stoked. Totally Stoked will endeavour to find those who can 'Offer Support' in response to that call. Reversely, people and organisations can 'Offer Support' and we will find the places where that offer can have the most positive impact.

The Totally Stoked website launched in February 2020, unfortunately we were already entering a pandemic. The concept had already been noticed however, and as statutory bodies and the VCSE sector came together to work out how best to respond, the call and response mechanism of Totally Stoked was identified as the best means of reaching out and providing the support needed to the most vulnerable in our society. Within days Stoke-on-Trent Together was born.

The pilot funding ended in June 2020, but the concept of Totally Stoked lives on as the core principle behind the ways VAST supports the VCSE sector. The website is in the process of being updated, to remain a key place for the sharing of resources across the VCSE sector. The other support elements of the project have now been embedded in our ongoing support work, and our volunteer brokerage.



## Totally Stoked in Action

During November 2020 a local Company approached us offering 5,000 masks to be made available to local VCSE organisations. Thanks to their donation we have been able to support 26 local organisations with the PPE they need to keep their frontline staff, volunteers and service users safe.

The organisations supported include:

- Several specialist voluntary organisations providing support to carers, adults, and children living with a disability, helping them to maintain independence, including; Crossroads, Disability Solutions, MHA Communities, Staffordshire Sight Loss Association, Caudwell Children, Our Space and Silvertree.
- Gingerbread- providing supported accommodation for homeless families and teenage parents,
- Door2Door Transport - supporting those who cannot access public transport and do not have their own vehicle. Recently they have been busy supporting people going to their vaccination appointments.
- And various other local groups that play a vital role in supporting vulnerable individuals that are isolated and have needed help. Their roles include food deliveries, collection and delivery of prescriptions and keeping up to date with information about specialist support available - for example the Veteran Support Centre, Packmoor Community Association, Addaction, Staffordshire Buddies, Middleport Matters, ASHA, Better Together, TWOCO and St Pauls Church

One local organisation approached us who had experienced a disruption to their supply, we managed to fill their immediate need and get our donation matched with 1,500 masks from the City Council.

We have also supported a number of these groups to access Children's activity packs from Staffordshire Wildlife.

We are thrilled that after telling the Company of all the great organisations their offer supported we received a further donation of 5,000 masks to distribute to local voluntary and community groups.



## Stoke-on-Trent Together

**#STOKEONTRENT  
TOGETHER**

In late January 2020 it started to become clear that Coronavirus was something that wasn't just happening somewhere else. The situation quickly escalated and talk of a global pandemic led to the realisation that action was needed. As the government talked about potential restrictions being needed Stoke-on-Trent City Council called together a group of VCSE organisations to discuss how we, as a collective, could support and protect the most vulnerable members of our community. Stoke-on-Trent Together was born.

In the week prior to lockdown VAST developed and launched a web portal, in conjunction with Stoke-on-Trent City Council, where individuals or organisations requiring or offering support could register. Stoke-on-Trent City Council's staff responded to requests for support from individuals via the webportal and an associated telephone helpline whilst VAST staff worked with the organisations offering support to ensure their offer was fully understood and correctly advertised to the public and that they had the capacity to deliver the services needed. We also worked with organisations requesting support to ensure they had sufficient volunteers and to ensure that they were aware of any additional resources available to them. Our Vintage Volunteers and Totally Stoked teams worked tirelessly with all the individuals submitting offers of help to place them in appropriate volunteering roles as well as ensuring the website was constantly updated with the most current information, which often changed on a daily basis at the start of the pandemic.

We all thought that this would be a short-term problem, but as the weeks passed and the pandemic grew it became clear that we were not going to return to "normal" quickly.

VAST worked with VCSE organisations across Stoke-on-Trent to establish the effect that the pandemic was having on the sector both in terms of extra demand on capacity and also in lost financial resources either from chargeable services that had to stop or from fundraising that could no longer take place and campaigned both locally with the City Council and Nationally via NCVO, NAVCA and CFG to ensure the vital resource needed could be made available to the sector.

As the local infrastructure support organisation we saw that we were ideally placed to help and support the VCSE sector meet the inevitable increased demand on them once lockdown is over and our communities need to adapt to the new normal, facing whatever personal and economic hardships that may bring.

Through Stoke-on-Trent Together the VCSE sector and Statutory bodies in Stoke-on-Trent pulled together on the face of adversity, and the vital role of infrastructure support for the sector became clear. Funding has now been put in place by Stoke-on-Trent City Council to continue the strategic partnership formed during the pandemic into the future.

In September 2020 organisations seemed to be transitioning back from 'emergency response' and we started to see more of the usual requests for support we would expect. Organisations who had set up in response to the pandemic were also looking for support to formalise and other new groups were popping up, we were happy to be able to support these through our core support offers.

## #stokeontrenttogether in Action

When face coverings become mandatory in certain situations, we heard about how those with a hearing impairment found this difficult to communicate with others, particularly if they rely heavily on lip reading.

When Mandy from Girlguiding, and leader of a Stoke-on-Trent Rainbows pack, got in touch with #StokeonTrentTogether, this was exactly the problem she faced.

"One of our leaders has a hearing problem and relies on lip reading" said Mandy, "as the girls are older, they need to wear masks, but the leader will not know what they are saying."

The best way forward for Mandy was to use clear visors in the Rainbows group so that communication between the girls and leaders wasn't impacted. But with the spring-summer lockdown and the group not being able to get together, money was tighter than normal, and the expense of visors wasn't something they could afford to shell out for. They couldn't afford to buy the visors, but without them, they couldn't meet. The only other way for them to meet would be for that particular leader to not attend – which wasn't even an option for the Rainbows.

After Mandy had contacted #StokeonTrentTogether, VAST's Natalie Shields matched Mandy with 3D Crowd, an organisation who had 3D printed visors for the sector earlier on in the pandemic, and Mandy was able to collect them the following day.

"The small groups like us struggle to get things donated, it usually comes out of the leader's pocket" continued Mandy, "I've bought additional things like the sanitiser and we are asking girls to bring pens felt tips with them to save sharing."

Once Rainbows had their own visors, they no longer needed to worry about communication, and no one was going to be left out. To help to reduce risk of Coronavirus transmission, Rainbows initially met outside in the rain, but they were able to meet which was the main thing, and thanks to 3D Crowd, and another donation from a very generous local 3D hobbyist, they could do that safely.

"Once again, I would like to say thank you for organising the visors, we really don't have the money to buy them. My husband took me to pick them up this morning. You acted so quickly, I only emailed yesterday and already have them."

"Thank you so much for organising the visors I cried when I knew I didn't need to buy."

# Totally Stoked Digital



As a result of the Covid 19 pandemic, some many VCSE organisations found the switch from face-to-face to online activities difficult to manage. They struggled to remain in contact with their teams or service users for many reasons including lack of technical equipment, appropriate software, skills, inadequate support or lack of confidence with technology.

Many got in touch with us for help and we were able to secure Covid 19 emergency funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to help close the digital gap for these organisations.

## Physical Digital Space

We have set up some well-equipped, physical spaces that are accessible to VCSE organisations at both The Dudson Centre and The Hub. These spaces provide hardware, software and connectivity for groups to run hybrid meetings and online activities and will enable organisations to meet the needs of a post pandemic world where not everyone wants to attend a meeting in person.

## Training

We partnered with local organisations to provide training and training materials for VCSE groups in need of additional skills and education for digital technology to reach their members and service users online and remotely. These material include a collection of training videos will remain available as a legacy to the project on the VAST website.

## Volunteer Tech Buddies

Through our work with the Stoke on Trent Together, we were aware of people who wanted to offer their time to support people with digital technology so we recruited and trained a number of volunteer tech buddies to work alongside people who needed technical support during the lockdown period. These were mainly individuals furloughed from their jobs and have since returned to work, but we are continuing to support organisations in need through our development and support work.

### Totally Stoked Digital in action

CAFAG were due to hold their AGM but with Covid restrictions were not sure how to effectively do this. We talked about recent local examples like Foodbank using YouTube and others using platforms like Zoom. The technical skills amongst the Trustees were really varied and they felt that a supported Zoom session would be the most accessible for their members. We had a technical run through the week before and answered any questions they had. On the day we started the session early to ensure all Trustees could log on and were comfortable with the technology. The AGM ran smoothly and the treasurer who seemed the least confident did a fantastic and clear summary of the annual accounts to those in attendance. Voting went well and everyone was able to have their voice heard. The group's confidence grew and the AGM was completed on time. The group now hope to keep pushing their limits and boundaries regarding use of technology, particularly in the current climate.

***"Thanks so much for all your help and support, we couldn't have done it without you" Linda- CAFAG***

## 6 MONTHS OF STOKE-ON-TRENT COVID-19 SUPPORT NETWORK





## Stoke-on-Trent together in Action

Journey Makers was a project that emerged following a directive from the Department of Transport around encouraging and supporting the public to use public transport once more. The effect of prolonged lockdown had left many feeling nervous, uncertain about the rules and uncomfortable, and so the project's aims were to recruit volunteers to reassure passengers, remind them about social distancing and face coverings and to offer a friendly face.

Hanley Bus Station had already been identified as a busy local site that would benefit from the scheme. Manager, Chris, explained that their busiest periods were the rush hour commute however those passengers didn't tend to need assistance. The passenger numbers he had noticed that remained low tended to be the daytime shoppers between around 10am – 3pm. We therefore recruited volunteers to operate in two shifts, 10am – 12pm and 2pm – 4pm.

Working in partnership with Douglas Macmillan Hospice, we identified and recruited 16 volunteers. Many had been volunteering in their charity shops but were unable to return to their roles yet and wanted something to do. We gave each an induction and training session either online or over the telephone.

Regular telephone and internet contact was maintained and all volunteers were aware of what to do in the event of a problem, which were thankfully few. The role proved to be enjoyable and well-received by both the volunteers and the passengers they were supporting. On a couple of occasions there was resistance to the reminder of face covering, which on one occasion became an argument, but this was swiftly resolved.

Feedback from the volunteers was that they enjoyed being out and about, meeting people and having friendly conversations with strangers. They reported that there were sometimes long stretches without anyone passing through, and so we tried to ensure there was always more than one volunteer per shift for company and support.

One of the successes of this role was its flexibility. Volunteers were able to drop in and drop out as it suited them, providing they were able to let the Volunteer Coordinator know within a reasonable timeframe. There was no obligation to commit to the same day or even more than once – although most volunteers did stick at it. One of the volunteers enjoyed it so much he continued beyond the end of the project and became a regular fixture at the bus station.

### **Journey Maker Tom told us:**

***"It has been the best experience of my life. Thank you so much for the opportunity"***

Another reason for the success of the project was the idea that volunteers were doing 'their bit' in the fight against COVID. In the same way that the vaccination volunteer roles have proven popular, volunteers like to feel they are part of the 'National effort' and report a sense of pride.

### **Chris Salmon Manager of Hanley Bus Station told us:**

The high point was seeing how enthusiastic the volunteers could be when faced with a situation which at best might be seen as menial, and at worst potentially confrontational. The low point was discovering how antagonistic certain members of the public could be when asked, politely, to comply – something particularly noticeable among a few of those people who claim exemption from the requirement to wear a face covering. It has freed up station staff to go about their normal daily tasks.



## #StokeonTrentTogether a statement from Councillor Abby Brown



Councillor Abby Brown reflects on “colossal” support and the success of the #StokeonTrentTogether support network.

Back in March 2020, the country entered its first lockdown to try and stop the spread of COVID-19. Social distancing, isolation, and home-schooling became the new normal, as a nation and as a community we faced some enormous challenges, and people in our local communities were struggling.

To try to ensure that support was there – for communities as well as the voluntary organisations supporting them – we teamed up with Stoke-on-Trent City Council to establish the #StokeonTrentTogether COVID-19

Support Network: a consortium of Voluntary and Community Sector organisations.

### **This is what Councillor Brown had to say:**

“Stoke-on-Trent is an area with high levels of deprivation, however it is also an area that is renowned for its friendly and caring population. At the start of the pandemic offers of support from the local community poured in to the Council. To harness this colossal goodwill, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, in partnership with VAST, developed a consortium of Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to setup the Stoke-on-Trent Together initiative and provide support to the most vulnerable people in the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The Covid pandemic has resulted in one of the most challenging operating environments many organisations have ever, and will ever, face, however this is nothing compared to the individual struggles of residents across the city over the past 12 months. The partnership between the city council and VAST brought together a diverse range of skills, knowledge and expertise in order to provide a responsive and proactive approach to helping the people of Stoke-on-Trent. VAST have played a central role in developing, delivering and maintaining this programme by leading on developing the website, IT systems, supporting volunteers and collating information to ensure support is available across the city. More significantly they have provided leadership for the sector and effective coordination in order to ensure that organisations, of all sizes, received support to help them meet the challenges.

“The pandemic also led to ground-swell in volunteers offering support – with clear commentary that people want to give something back to those who have helped them during difficult times. VAST were critical in ensuring this goodwill was directed into the areas where it was most needed and keeping volunteers informed about opportunities. The success of this approach enabled us to successfully secure funding to develop Community Health Champions to maintain our community volunteers over the coming year.

“The long-term impact of the collective efforts of the team within the city council and VAST over this time cannot be overstated. The development of a single coordinated route to community-based support will continue beyond the pandemic, continuing to harness local energy to meet the needs of the city through the recovery. The close working relationship with the voluntary and community sector, with strategic leadership from VAST, will provide the foundation for our recovery from the effects of the pandemic.”

## VAST Volunteering



VAST are passionate about volunteering and believe it can improve health and wellbeing whilst making a huge difference to local communities. We help people to find volunteering roles locally, matching their skills and interests, as we know this could be an opportunity that helps someone get back into work, assists with a college/university course or simply helps someone to meet new people.

VAST has supported people into volunteering via our projects and through the Stoke-on-Trent Together partnership with Stoke-on-Trent City Council. During the Covid-19 pandemic we had a surge of volunteers wishing to help out across the city with us placing over 350 people into the community in the past year. This partnership has strengthened our role within the sector as a volunteer brokerage service and we continue to see high numbers of volunteers signing up.

Our Volunteer Management Training is popular and receives excellent feedback.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed this workshop; it has given me lots of practical ideas/guidance to take away".

"Really enjoyed the training session. Covered everything I needed to know plus more".

"I enjoyed the training and look forward to networking with VAST in future".

The team help local organisations with a variety of training and support around volunteering. From helping create engaging role descriptions and advertising opportunities on our website through to support with volunteer policies, training and management.

## Vintage Volunteers

After three fantastic years the funding for our Vintage Volunteers project concluded at the end of December 2020. Vintage Volunteers has made a real difference in the local community and influenced the way we view volunteering. All the experience and knowledge we have gained through this project is now embedded in the volunteering support we will continue to provide via VAST Volunteering. The Vintage Volunteers website will remain as a lasting legacy of the project, celebrating our learning, sharing our resources and some of the stories from our wonderful volunteers.

[vintagevolunteers.vast.org.uk](http://vintagevolunteers.vast.org.uk)





## VAST Volunteering in action

Simon contacted VAST via the Stoke-on-Trent Together portal after finding himself on furlough and realising how having nothing to do was impacting his wellbeing.

He was matched with Etruria Matters as a delivery driver where he delivered food parcels a few days a week to vulnerable residents in the community.

Simon expressed how much he enjoyed delivering the food parcels and the positive impact it had on himself as well as those he delivered to.

When speaking to Project Officer Kelly Smith, he said "Delivering the food parcels was like delivering flowers, everyone was so pleased to see me.

I regularly had a quick chat with the customers on their doorstep as often they hadn't spoken to anyone face to face for days.

I hope I brightened their days as I know they brightened mine."

Simon continued to volunteer for Etruria Matters until the food parcel service came to an end. This prompted Simon to re-engage with VAST to ask for another volunteer role to keep him busy. He has since been matched with a The cog Pearl Academy where he fundraises for local foodbanks by selling donated items on eBay.

824

People offered  
to volunteer



318

Volunteers placed  
into opportunities



716

Subscribers to our  
Volunteer Newsletter



87 Active volunteer opportunities



# Advocate

Our strategic presence and national connections allow us to be a voice for the grassroots VCSE community who could otherwise go unheard

## Stoke Parent Carer Forum



Parent Carer Forums are part of the SEND code of practice which states “Parent Carer Forums are representative local groups of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities who work alongside local authorities, education, health and other service providers to ensure the services they plan, commission, deliver and monitor meet the needs of children and families”.

VAST is facilitating the development of the Stoke Parent Carer Forum and are working with regional and national organisations Contact a Family and NNPCF (National Network of Parent Carer Forums) to help us achieve this.

Establishing a new forum was difficult during the height of the pandemic. However the steering group, made up of key local VCSE sector organisations, started to take shape and build momentum in the new year. Members of the steering group have jointly developed the governance structures to ensure this is locally owned and driven on behalf of local parent carers and are now busy planning some key areas of focus for 2021/22.

Through our already established Strategic work we are well placed to enable a strong new voice to provide a critical friend role to our local statutory services.



# VAST Strategic



## Strategic Engagement

VAST is an advocate for the VCSE sector and facilitates the strategic engagement of the sector with a range of statutory partners including the Clinical Commissioning Groups in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire, the wider Together We're Better Partnership (shadow Integrated Care System) and Stoke-on-Trent City Council to support and enable the VCSE sector to play an active role in improving health and wellbeing for our local population.

The aim of this engagement between the VCSE sector and statutory bodies is to promote mutual understanding between the two sectors and enable them to work better together in partnership and collaboration to best serve the local population.

This year the role of the VCSE sector has come to the fore both nationally and locally. The vital role that organisations have played in supporting people in their communities has been widely recognised by our partners and has led to a renewed focus on them working better with the local VCSE sector and learning from the experiences of the pandemic.

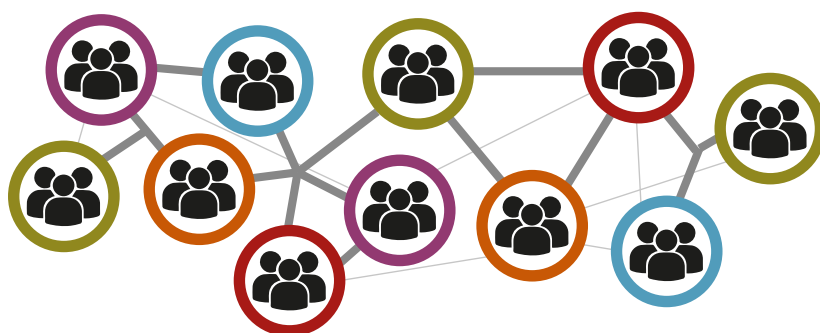
Many of the health and care system's pre-covid boards and steering groups were paused making way for emergency response coordination. VAST's strategic liaison role enabled sector representation at these whilst maintaining ongoing links with health colleagues to support recovery and transformation.

New relationships and collaborative working was built locally through the Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit and nationally through our work with NAVCA as part of the Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership (VCSEP). These allowed us to feed issues, concerns and intelligence, as well as sharing best practice and expertise, at both local and national levels.

VAST's strategic liaison role acted as system lead for the NHS Volunteer Responders scheme enabling us to support local NHS and Local Authority colleagues to better understand and utilise the resource as part of the emergency response. The NHS England led Embed and Evaluate programme allowed us to feed local intelligence back and enabled a route to share concerns about top-down volunteering approaches which cut across and undermine locally led provision.

VAST remained engaged with the strategic boards which remained operational via virtual meetings and fed into the development of the city's new Health and Wellbeing Strategy as a VCSE sector representative on the Health and Wellbeing Board.

VAST continues to support the development of the Voluntary Sector Chief Officers Group (VSCOG) and facilitated sessions with members over the autumn to shape the future direction of the network. The network now meets bi-monthly and has a renewed city focus which provides peer support for the city's VCSE sector leaders and a collective VCSE sector voice and engagement mechanism for statutory partners.



**THE VCSE SECTOR  
WAS REPRESENTED  
AT 16 REGULAR  
STATUTORY BOARDS  
AND STEERING  
GROUPS THROUGH  
VAST'S STRATEGIC  
LIAISON ROLE**

# Organisation Structure

VAST is governed by a Board of not less than three Trustees who are appointed by the board based upon a skills matrix to ensure a range of skills and representation from all communities. This is achieved in one of three ways:-

- Any voluntary organisation or community group either based in or operating in Staffordshire is eligible for voting membership, on becoming voting members they may nominate trustees.
- Trustees try to ensure an ongoing and appropriate skills and diversity balance, where any gaps are noted they seek to appoint appropriately through an application process.
- Occasionally the trustees may co-opt individuals with relevant skills to strengthen the Board. All of these appointments are then ratified by members at the AGM.

The day to day management and running of the charity has been delegated to the Chief Executive supported by the senior management team via a written scheme of delegation, which is reviewed and updated annually.

The Board meets quarterly and also has a finance audit and risk sub-committee which also meets quarterly. Task and finish working groups are set up and meet as required to deal with specific issues.



**Neil Dawson**

*Chair*



**Dawn Wickham**

*Sub-committee*

*Human Resources*



**Mark Barnish**

*Treasurer*

*Sub-committee Finance*



**Lesley Morrey**



**John Beech**



**Nick Maslen**



**Susan Meredith**

*Sub-committee Finance*



**David Holton**

*Sub-committee Finance*

# Governance

## Governing Document

VAST is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its memorandum and articles of association, last amended in 2020.

### Trustee Induction and Training

All trustees receive an induction into VAST and receive a handbook. Training is provided for all trustees as required and all best practice guidance is reviewed and discussed at Board meetings regularly.

### Public Benefit

The trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission guidance on Public Benefit when planning the activities of the charity.

### Statement of Trustees Roles & Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of VAST for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the trustees have elected to

prepare the financial statements 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 charitable company

and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for the year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP.

- Make judgements and accounting 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 operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are

also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking

reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

### Pay Policy for Senior Staff

The trustees consider that the board of trustees and senior management team comprise the key management personnel of the charity. All trustees give their time freely and no trustee received remuneration for their services in the year. Details of any related party transactions are disclosed in note 8 & 19 to the accounts.

The pay scales for senior staff are set by the trustees and are benchmarked against other similar size organisations operating in the area. Pay of individual members of the management team

### **Related Parties, Partnership Working and Networks**

The Charity continues to support and participate in several key and strategic partnerships representing the interests of the VCSE.

VAST is a member of NAVCA (National Association of Voluntary and Community Action) and is also extensively involved in several networks and

partnerships including –VSCOG (Voluntary Sector

Chief Officers Group) The North Staffordshire Collaborative Network & Team Staffordshire.

### **Related or connected charities:-**

The Dudson Centre is an independent charity (reg. No. 1059186), the trustees of the Dudson Centre have subcontracted the management of The Dudson Centre to VAST. VAST is a member of this charity.

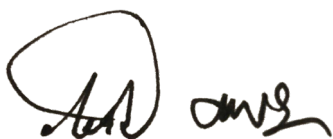
VAST's annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 have been prepared by the trustees in accordance with the Charities Act 2011.

The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice FRS102 in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

### **Auditors**

Geens will be reappointed in accordance with Chapter 2 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006.

This trustees report was approved by the board on 8th December 2021 and signed on their behalf by:



Neil Dawson

Chair

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF VAST SERVICES (1920) FOR THE  
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021 (REGISTRATION NO:1049663)**

**Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of VAST Services (1920) for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (including the income and expenditure account), Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and Notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, 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 2021 and of the charitable company's incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

**Basis for opinion**

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

**Conclusions relating to going concern**

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

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

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



## **INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF VAST SERVICES (1920) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021 (REGISTRATION NO:1049663)**

### **Other information**

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Trustee's Report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. 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' Report, which includes the directors' report and the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' Report, which includes the directors' report and 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 their environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the directors' report included within the Trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the charitable company 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; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime.

## INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF VAST SERVICES (1920) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021 (REGISTRATION NO:1049663)

### Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities Statement set out on page 44, 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

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

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue 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, is detailed below.

As part of our planning process:

- we enquired of management the systems and controls the charity has in place, the areas of the financial statements that are most susceptible to the risk of irregularities and fraud, whether there was any known, suspected or alleged fraud. the charity did not inform us of any known, suspected or alleged fraud.
- we obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks applicable to the charity. We determined that the following were most relevant: the Charity SORP. FRS 102, Charities Act 2011. Companies Act 2006.
- we considered the incentives and opportunities that exist in the charity, including the extent of management bias, which present a potential for irregularities and fraud to be perpetuated, and tailored our risk assessment Accordingly.
- using our knowledge of the charity, together with the discussions held with the charity at the planning stage, we formed a conclusion the risk of misstatement due to irregularities including fraud and tailored our procedures according to this risk assessment.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF VAST SERVICES (1920) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021 (REGISTRATION NO:1049663)**

**Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements (continued)**

The key procedures we undertook to detect irregularities including fraud during the course of the audit included:

- identifying and testing journal entries and the overall accounting records, in particular those that were significant and unusual.
- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and determining whether accounting policies have been appropriately applied.
- reviewing and challenging the assumptions and judgements used by management in their significant accounting estimates.
- assessing the extent of compliance, or lack of, with relevant laws and regulations.
- assessing the validity of the classification of income, expenditure, assets and liabilities between unrestricted and restricted funds.
- obtaining third party confirmation of material bank balances.
- documenting and verifying all significant related party balances and transactions.
- reviewing documentation such as charity board minutes for discussions of irregularities including fraud.

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. The 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 for the audit of the financial statements is located 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 and to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 or Part 8 of the Charities Act 2011 and regulations made under section 154 of that Act. 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.



Karen Staley FCA BSc (Hons)  
(Senior Statutory Auditor)  
For and on behalf of Geens Limited, Statutory Auditor

Geens Limited is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

68 Liverpool Road  
Stoke on Trent  
Staffordshire  
ST4 1BG

Date: 8/12/2021

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £
<b><u>Income and endowments from</u></b>				
Other trading activities	2	486	-	486
Investments		83	-	83
<b><u>Charitable activities</u></b>				
-Chargeable services	3	415,717	2,169	417,886
-Grants & Contracts	3	292,928	419,831	712,759
<b>Total</b>		<b>709,214</b>	<b>422,000</b>	<b>1,131,214</b>
<b><u>Expenditure on</u></b>				
Raising funds	4	23,919	-	23,919
Charitable Activities	4	531,543	425,332	956,875
<b>Total</b>	4	<b>555,462</b>	<b>425,332</b>	<b>980,794</b>
<b>Net income/ (expenditure)</b>		<b>153,752</b>	<b>(3,332)</b>	<b>150,420</b>
Transfers between funds		(138)	138	-
<b>Net Movement in Funds</b>		<b>153,614</b>	<b>(3,194)</b>	<b>150,420</b>
<b><u>Reconciliation of Funds</u></b>				
Total funds brought forward	15-16	152,519	65,396	217,915
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>306,133</b>	<b>62,202</b>	<b>368,335</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing operations.

The notes on pages 54-69 form part of these financial statements.

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR  
ENDED 31 MARCH 2020**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2020 £
<b><u>Income and endowments from</u></b>				
Other trading activities	2	48,352	-	48,352
Investments		639	-	639
<b><u>Charitable activities</u></b>				
-Chargeable services	3	541,213	13,881	555,094
-Grants & Contracts	3	-	443,983	443,983
<b>Total</b>		<b>590,204</b>	<b>457,864</b>	<b>1,048,068</b>
<b><u>Expenditure on</u></b>				
Raising funds	4	57,723	-	57,723
Charitable Activities	4	612,626	436,725	1,049,351
<b>Total</b>	4	<b>670,349</b>	<b>436,725</b>	<b>1,107,074</b>
<b>Net income/ (expenditure)</b>		<b>(80,145)</b>	<b>21,139</b>	<b>(59,006)</b>
Transfers between funds		(3,398)	3,398	-
<b>Net Movement in Funds</b>		<b>(83,543)</b>	<b>24,537</b>	<b>(59,006)</b>
<b><u>Reconciliation of Funds</u></b>				
Total funds brought forward	15-16	236,062	40,859	276,921
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>152,519</b>	<b>65,396</b>	<b>217,915</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing operations.

The notes on pages 54-69 form part of these financial statements.

**BALANCE SHEETS AS AT 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2021**

		<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>Notes</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Tangible assets	10	155,695	252,670
		<u>155,695</u>	<u>252,670</u>
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Café Stock		-	-
Debtors	11	105,639	152,174
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>718,832</u>	<u>61,641</u>
Total Current Assets		824,471	213,815
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Creditors:			
Amounts falling due within one year	12	(566,831)	(203,570)
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		<u>257,640</u>	<u>10,245</u>
<b>Total Assets less Current Liabilities</b>		<u>413,335</u>	<u>262,915</u>
Provisions for Liabilities	13	(45,000)	(45,000)
<b>Net Assets</b>		<u>368,335</u>	<u>217,915</u>
<b>The Funds of The Charity</b>			
Capital funds		6	6
Unrestricted funds - General	15	181,133	127,519
Unrestricted funds - Designated	15	125,000	25,000
Restricted funds	16	<u>62,196</u>	<u>65,390</u>
		<u>368,335</u>	<u>217,915</u>

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice –Accounting and Reporting by Charities FRS102 and in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime under the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements on pages 50-69 were approved by the Board on 8 December 2021 and signed on its behalf by

Mark Barnish  
Treasurer





**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2021**

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities:</b>			
Net cash provided by/ (used in) operating activities	21	<u>657,108</u>	<u>(17,524)</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Dividends and interest from investments		83	639
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		-	(3,456)
<b>Net cash provided by/ (used in) investing activities</b>		<u>83</u>	<u>(2,817)</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		<u>657,191</u>	<u>(20,341)</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		<u>61,641</u>	<u>81,982</u>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>		<u>718,832</u>	<u>61,641</u>
<b>Cash and Cash Equivalents Comprises:</b>			
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>718,832</u>	<u>61,641</u>

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### **1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

#### **Summary of significant accounting policies and key estimates**

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

#### **1.1 Accounting convention**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with Financial Reporting Standards in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements were prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

VAST Services (1920) meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

In preparing the financial statements the Trustees have made a key judgement following a dispute with Staffordshire County Council (SCC) regarding the lease agreement for 17 Eastgate Street, Stafford and the issuance of recharge invoices going back over a number of years. The judgement is that the lease will continue to the original end date and a satisfactory financial settlement will be reached within the amounts provided for in the financial statements. The Trustees judgements are supported by negotiations nearing agreement with SCC post the balance sheet date. No other judgements have been made apart from those involving estimates in the process of applying the charity's accounting policies. No assumptions concerning the future have a significant risk of causing material adjustment to the carrying value of

assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

#### **1.2 Going Concern**

The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis. The trustees have reviewed budgets and cash flow forecasts for the next 12 months and consider that the charity will be able to meet all obligations as they fall due for the foreseeable future. The charity regularly has to tender for grants and contracts. If these tenders are not successful the operations of the organisation could be scaled back to ensure that all expenditure could be met within the level of income available.

#### **1.3 Income**

Income is credited to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which it is receivable.

Grants, including grants for the purchase of fixed assets, are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met.

Income from investments is included in the year in which it is receivable.

Income from chargeable services and facilities management are recognised, net of vat, at the point at which the service is completed.

Trading income is recognised, net of vat, at the point of sale.

In addition to the income disclosed in the financial statements VAST also receives help and support in the form of voluntary assistance. This help and support is not included in the financial statements. This voluntary assistance is very much appreciated.

#### 1.4 Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources receivable or generated for the objects of the charity without further specified purpose and are available as general funds.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure that meets these criteria is charged to the fund together with a fair allocation of management and support costs.

#### 1.5 Stock accounting

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete items.

#### 1.6 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised in the year in which it is incurred.

Direct charitable expenditure is identified as cost incurred directly as a result of running the various projects, supporting voluntary groups that are members of VAST and delivering our chargeable services.

Costs of raising funds are those incurred in seeking voluntary contributions, and the costs of running the Dudson Centre café. They do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities.

Governance costs are those incurred in connection with administration of the charity and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Expenditure is allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates to the activity. However, management, administration and finance staff costs are apportioned on the basis of time spent on each activity.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the category of resources expended for which it is incurred.

#### 1.7 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Fixed assets over the value of £1,000 are capitalised with all assets valued at historic cost.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Computers	- 25% straight line
Office furniture and equipment	- 25% straight line
Telephone System	- 10% straight line
Leasehold Improvements	- over the term of the lease.

During the year the expected lease term of some leasehold improvements has been reduced to reflect a break clause in the lease agreement. In consequence of this the depreciation charge has increased so as to fully depreciate the assets by the break date.

#### 1.8 Leasing

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term to the statement of financial activities.

#### 1.9 Pensions

The pension costs charged in the financial statements represent the contribution by the charity on behalf of the employees to a Stakeholder Pension Scheme or other designated Personal Pension Scheme payable by the charity during the year.

#### 1.10 Deferred income

Amounts held as deferred income refer to funds received in the reporting period but specifically held for use in the following financial year due to either:

- Project activity not commencing until the following financial year.
- Funds being restricted for use in a future period.

- c) Invoiced amounts for services to be provided in the following financial year.

All amounts held as deferred income in the prior year have been released and are recorded within the total incoming resources figure for the current year.

Deferred income is released to income in the reporting period in which the conditions that limit recognition are met.

#### **1.11 Trade debtors**

Trade debtors are amounts due from customers for services performed in the ordinary course of business. Trade debtors are recognised initially at the transaction price. A provision for the impairment of trade debtors is established when there is objective evidence that the charity will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the receivables.

#### **1.12 Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and other short term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to insignificant risk of change in value.

#### **1.13 Trade creditors**

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods and services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the charity does not have an unconditional right, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least 12 months after the reporting date. If there is an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the reporting date they are presented as non-current liabilities.

#### **1.14 Provisions for liabilities**

Provisions for liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement and the settlement amount can be reliably estimated.

#### **1.15 Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

#### **1.16 Termination benefits**

Termination benefits are payable when employment is terminated by the charity before the normal retirement date, or whenever the employee accepts voluntary redundancy in exchange for these benefits.

The charity recognises termination benefits in the statement of financial activities when it is demonstrably committed to either (i) terminating the employment of current employees according to a detailed formal plan without possibility of withdrawal, or (ii) providing termination benefits as a result of an offer made to encourage voluntary redundancy. Benefits falling due more than twelve months after the end of the reporting period are discounted to their present value.

## 2. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 £	2020 £
Café income	486	-	486	48,352
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>48,352</b>
<b>Total 2020</b>	<b>48,352</b>	<b>-</b>		<b>48,352</b>

## 3. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

### CHARGEABLE SERVICES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 £	2020 £
Facilities Management & Rechargeable Services	415,717	2,169	417,886	555,094
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>415,717</b>	<b>2,169</b>	<b>417,886</b>	<b>555,094</b>
<b>Total 2020</b>	<b>541,213</b>	<b>13,881</b>		<b>555,094</b>

### GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 £	2020 £
Health	21,000	42,624	63,624	216,691
The National Lottery Community Fund	-	238,529	238,529	102,707
Stoke on Trent City Council	73,078	54,124	127,202	-
Charitable Foundations	85,000	-	85,000	100,585
Culture Recovery Fund	-	47,700	47,700	-
Other	26,500	26,455	52,955	24,000
CJRS grants	87,350	10,399	97,749	-
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>292,928</b>	<b>419,831</b>	<b>712,759</b>	<b>443,983</b>
<b>Total 2020</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>443,983</b>		<b>443,983</b>

#### 4. RESOURCES EXPENDED

##### Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Facilities Management	Rechargeable Services	Health Projects	Support & Volunteering	Other	Total 2021	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff Costs	112,787	109,878	26,518	144,337	81,664	475,184	617,983
Travel Costs	949	103	656	29	-	1,737	12,572
Training	-	348	115	271	-	734	889
Office Costs	50,569	3,768	25	21,296	6,746	82,404	66,440
Legal and Professional	2,437	14,159	2,857	1990	3,309	24,752	17,027
Advertising & Publicity	1,257	-	-	9,561	2,925	13,743	897
Premises Costs	101,805	-	1,535	15,881	4,803	124,024	147,764
Insurance	6,231	875	250	300	-	7,656	8,139
Sundry	278	-	-	-	-	278	249
Depreciation	95,910	278	-	-	-	96,188	27,609
Bursary	-	6,091	-	-	-	6,091	-
Events	670	-	-	2,155	30	2,855	14,398
Support Costs	11,575	11,575	21,349	55,492	21,238	121,229	135,384
	<b>384,468</b>	<b>147,075</b>	<b>53,305</b>	<b>251,312</b>	<b>120,715</b>	<b>956,875</b>	<b>1,049,351</b>
<b>Total 2020</b>	<b>426,194</b>	<b>186,432</b>	<b>254,462</b>	<b>84,577</b>	<b>97,686</b>		<b>1,049,351</b>



**4. RESOURCES EXPENDED (continued)****Analysis of expenditure on raising funds**

		<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
		<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>Café</b>		
	£	£	£
Staff Costs	19,232	19,232	30,512
Travel Costs	-	-	111
Training	-	-	24
Cafe Supplies	126	126	19,276
Office Costs	729	729	1,398
Legal and Professional	259	259	517
Advertising & Publicity	8	8	118
Premises Costs	756	756	623
Depreciation	238	238	238
Support Costs	2,571	2,571	4,906
	<b>23,919</b>	<b>23,919</b>	<b>57,723</b>

Support Costs are allocated on a per capita basis

**Allocation of Support Costs in expenditure on Charitable Activities**

	<b>Facilities</b>	<b>Rechargeable</b>	<b>Health Projects</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Support &amp; Volunteering</b>	<b>Total 2021</b>	<b>Total 2020</b>
Number of Staff	9	9	2	2	4		
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff Costs	21,611	21,611	4,802	4,802	9,604	62,430	71,716
Staff Training	321	321	71	71	144	928	32
Travel Costs	218	218	49	49	97	631	3,287
Premises Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,159
Depreciation	176	176	39	39	79	509	863
Legal & Professional	4,029	4,029	895	895	1,791	11,639	5,817
Insurance	74	74	16	16	33	213	537
Advertising & Publicity	512	512	114	114	228	1,480	553
Events	50	50	11	11	23	145	2,736
Office Costs	4,878	4,878	1,084	1,084	2,167	14,091	18,764
Sundry	5,986	5,986	1,330	1,330	2,659	17,291	15,025
Governance Costs	1,939	1,939	431	431	861	5,601	4,010
Reallocate Restricted Management Fees	(28,219)	(28,219)	12,507	12,396	37,806	6,271	5,885
	<b>11,575</b>	<b>11,575</b>	<b>21,349</b>	<b>21,238</b>	<b>55,492</b>	<b>121,229</b>	<b>135,384</b>

#### 4. RESOURCES EXPENDED (continued)

##### Allocation of Support Costs in expenditure on Raising Funds

	Total	Café	Total 2020
Number of Staff		2	
	£	£	£
Staff Costs	4,802	4,802	5,976
Staff Training	71	71	3
Travel	49	49	274
Premises Costs	-	-	513
Depreciation	39	39	72
Legal & Professional	895	895	485
Insurance	16	16	45
Advertising & Publicity	114	114	46
Events	11	11	228
Office Costs	1,084	1,084	1,564
Sundry	1,330	1,330	1,252
Governance Costs	431	431	334
Reallocated agreed management fees	( 6,271)	( 6,271)	( 5,886)
	<u>2,571</u>	<u>2,571</u>	<u>4,906</u>

#### 5. NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES

	2021	2020
	£	£
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources are stated after charging;		
Depreciation and other amounts written off		
tangible assets	95,550	28,781
Auditor's remuneration - Audit	6,000	5,500
Operating lease rentals - Land & buildings	3,000	3,000
- Other	7,724	11,586
	<u>7,724</u>	<u>11,586</u>

## 6. EMPLOYEES

	2021 No	2020 No
The average monthly numbers of employees during the year were:		
Direct charitable activities	16	21
Generating Funds	9	8
Management and administration	3	1
	<u>28</u>	<u>30</u>

## 7. EMPLOYMENT COSTS

	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and Salaries	478,579	621,661
Social Security Costs	32,205	37,646
Pension Costs	40,282	43,052
Temporary and Seconded Staff	-	4,025
	<u>551,066</u>	<u>706,384</u>

No employee earned more than £60,000 per annum.

The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £127,061 (2020 £95,551)

## 8. TRUSTEES' EMOLUMENTS

Neither trustees nor any person connected with them has received or is due to receive any remuneration for the year directly or indirectly from the charity's funds. No trustee expenses were paid during the year. (2020 £nil).

## 9. PENSION COSTS

The charity contributes to defined contribution pension schemes. The assets of the schemes are held separately from those of the charity in independently administered funds. The pension charge contributions payable by the charity are £40,282 (2020: £43,052). Charity contributions totalling £nil (2020: £nil), including employees' contributions and amounts in respect of previous years were payable to funds at the end of the year and are included in creditors.

Trustees' Report and Consolidated Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

**10. FIXED ASSETS**

	Telephone System	Computers	Office Furniture & Equipment	Leasehold Improvements	Total
<b>Cost</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
At 1 April 2020	96,941	2,765	158,442	295,553	553,701
Additions	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	( 933)	-	( 1,324)	( 2,257)
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>96,941</b>	<b>1,832</b>	<b>158,442</b>	<b>294,229</b>	<b>551,444</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>					
At 1 April 2020	69,764	856	156,822	73,589	301,031
Charge for the year	7,615	458	436	87,041	95,550
Eliminated on disposal	-	( 253)	-	( 579)	( 832)
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>77,379</b>	<b>1,061</b>	<b>157,258</b>	<b>160,051</b>	<b>395,749</b>
<b>Net book values</b>					
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>19,562</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>1,184</b>	<b>134,178</b>	<b>155,695</b>
<b>At 31 March 2020</b>	<b>27,177</b>	<b>1,909</b>	<b>1,620</b>	<b>221,964</b>	<b>252,670</b>

**11. DEBTORS**

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade debtors	91,753	138,590
Other debtors	-	88
Prepayments and accrued income	13,886	13,496
	<b>105,639</b>	<b>152,174</b>

**12. CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year**

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	34,880	57,775
Other taxes and social security costs	15,148	35,664
Other creditors	14,178	20,396
Accruals	29,233	47,423
Deferred income	473,392	42,312
	<b>566,831</b>	<b>203,570</b>

Trustees' Report and Consolidated Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

Creditors include £473,392 (2020 £42,312) of income deferred into the following year due to the timing of the charity's entitlement to the income after any performance conditions have been met. There are no unfulfilled conditions attached to this income at the balance sheet date. This includes the following balances in respect of restricted funds:

-Health projects £66,600.

-Support & Volunteering projects £406,792.

**Analysis of movement:**

	£
Deferred income at 1 April 2020	51,312
Resources deferred during the year	473,392
Amounts released from previous years	(51,312)
Deferred income at 31 March 2021	<u><u>473,392</u></u>

**13. PROVISION FOR LIABILITIES**

	2021 £	2020 £
Other provisions	45,000	45,000
	<u><u>45,000</u></u>	<u><u>45,000</u></u>

**Analysis of movement:**

	£
Balance at 1 April 2020	45,000
new provision in year	-
Released	-
Balance at 31 March 2021	<u><u>45,000</u></u>

The provision of £45,000 arose in 2019, as a result of a claim for historical invoices from Staffordshire County Council (SCC), in respect of utilities and business rates at the premises on Eastgate Street, Stafford. Legal advice has been taken and both parties have agreed the principles of a settlement to this matter. Heads of terms have been drawn up in which the settlement figure will fully utilise the amounts provided.

**14. ANALYSIS OF NET CURRENT (LIABILITIES)/ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS****2020-21**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>Capital Funds £</b>	<b>Total Funds £</b>
Fund Balance at 31st March 2020	152,519	65,390	6	217,915
Net Movement in Funds	153,614	(3,194)	-	150,420
Fund Balance at 31st March 2021	<u>306,133</u>	<u>62,196</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>368,335</u>
as represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	155,695	-	-	155,695
Investments	-	-	-	-
Net current assets	195,438	62,196	6	257,640
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(45,000)	-	-	(45,000)
	<u>306,133</u>	<u>62,196</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>368,335</u>

**2019-20**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>Capital Funds £</b>	<b>Total Funds £</b>
Fund Balance at 31st March 2019	236,062	40,853	6	276,921
Net Movement in Funds	(83,543)	24,537	-	(59,006)
Fund Balance at 31st March 2020	<u>152,519</u>	<u>65,390</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>217,915</u>
as represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	252,670	-	-	252,670
Investments	-	-	-	-
Net current assets	(55,151)	65,390	6	10,245
Provision for liabilities and charges	(45,000)	-	-	(45,000)
	<u>152,519</u>	<u>65,390</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>217,915</u>



**15. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS**

<b>2020-21</b>	<b>Fund Balances Brought Forward £</b>	<b>Income £</b>	<b>Expenditure £</b>	<b>Transfers &amp; Gains £</b>	<b>Fund Balances Carried Forward £</b>
General Fund	127,519	709,214	555,462	(100,138)	181,133
Designated Funds:					
Dudson Centre Contingency	25,000	-	-	-	25,000
The Hub Contingency	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
Museum Contingency	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
	<b>152,519</b>	<b>709,214</b>	<b>555,462</b>	<b>(138)</b>	<b>306,133</b>

<b>2019-20</b>	<b>Fund Balances Brought Forward £</b>	<b>Income £</b>	<b>Expenditure £</b>	<b>Transfers &amp; Gains £</b>	<b>Fund Balances Carried Forward £</b>
General Fund	161,062	590,204	670,349	46,602	127,519
Designated Funds:					
Dudson Centre Contingency	25,000	-	-	-	25,000
Development & Sustainability Fund	50,000	-	-	( 50,000)	-
	<b>236,062</b>	<b>590,204</b>	<b>670,349</b>	<b>( 3,398)</b>	<b>152,519</b>

**Purpose of Designated Unrestricted Funds:**

The Dudson Centre Contingency is to allow for underoccupancy or unexpected repair work at the Dudson Centre.

The Hub Contingency is to provide a fund for unexpected repair work at The Hub.

The Museum Contingency is to provide funds for the Dudson Museum whilst it becomes re-established and funding is sourced.

The Development & Sustainability Fund is a reserve designated to fund new sources of income and the development of services to replace areas of funding which are diminishing.

**16. RESTRICTED FUNDS**

<b>2020-21</b>	<b>Fund Balances Brought Forward £</b>	<b>Income £</b>	<b>Expenditure £</b>	<b>Transfers £</b>	<b>Fund Balances Carried Forward £</b>
Health	16,299	42,624	37,717	-	21,206
Support & Volunteering	24,182	254,119	255,967	-	22,334
SoTCC	-	54,124	39,818	-	14,306
Other	24,909	71,133	91,830	138	4,350
	<b>65,390</b>	<b>422,000</b>	<b>425,332</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>62,196</b>

**17. RESTRICTED FUNDS (CONTINUED)**

2019-20	Fund Balances Brought Forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Fund Balances Carried Forward £
Health	34,800	231,972	254,462	3,989	16,299
Support & Volunteering	6,053	102,707	84,578	-	24,182
Other	-	123,185	97,685	(591)	24,909
	<b>40,853</b>	<b>457,864</b>	<b>436,725</b>	<b>3,989</b>	<b>65,390</b>

**Purpose of restricted funds:**

The Health related projects use money from the PCT to fund the Strategic Development Worker for Health the Door 2 Door transport service.

The Lottery Funds relate to restricted project funding from The National Lottery Community Fund. This includes the Vintage Volunteers project, the Totally Stoked Support project, the Totally Stoked Digital project and COVID Emergency funding received for our work during the COVID 19 pandemic.

Funding from Stoke-on-Trent City Council relates to funding for our core development and volunteering work and funding for the Management of the Stoke-on-Trent Community Directory.

Other restricted funds relate to various small grants and pilot projects.

**Purpose of transfers:**

Transfers relate to unrestricted funding used to cover overspends on restricted grants and contracts or amounts remaining at the end of restricted contracts that are not required to be repaid.

## 18. FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

### Capital Commitments

There were no capital commitments at the balance sheet date.

### Operating lease commitments

At 31 March 2021 the total of the charity's future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

#### Group and charity

<b>Land and Buildings</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	£	£
Payable within one year	3,000	3,000
Payable between one and five years	12,000	-
	<b>15,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>
<b>Other assets</b>		
Payable within one year	12,154	12,154
Payable between one and five years	17,217	29,371
	<b>29,371</b>	<b>41,525</b>

## 19. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

There were no related party transactions that require disclosure during the year.

## 20. CONTROL RELATIONSHIP

The charity is controlled by the trustees.

**21. RECONCILIATION OF NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Net income/ (expenditure) for the year (as per the statement of financial activities)	150,420	(64,179)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	95,550	28,781
Interest and dividends from investments	(83)	(639)
Loss/ (profit) on sale of fixed assets	1,425	-
Decrease/ (increase) in stock	-	602
Decrease/ (increase) in debtors	46,535	(8,193)
Increase/ (decrease) in creditors	363,261	26,104
<b>Net cash provided by/ (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>657,108</b>	<b>(17,524)</b>

**22. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

<b>Group and Charity</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Financial Assets</b>		
Financial assets that are debt instruments measured at amortised cost	<u>91,753</u>	<u>138,590</u>
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	<u>(34,880)</u>	<u>(57,775)</u>

**23. CHARITY STATUS**

The charity is a private company limited by guarantee registered in England (registered number 02000818). The address of the registered office is The Dudson Centre, Hope Street, Stoke on Trent. ST1 5DD.

## 24. FUNDS HELD AS AGENT

During the year funds were held on behalf of the clients in respect of VAST acting as their agent for payroll purposes. These amounts have not been included in the results for the year or the balance sheet at the end of the year.

Movements in the year  
were:

	2021 £	2020 £
Balance brought forward	42,986	37,666
Receipts	2,065,874	1,735,103
Payments	<u>(2,040,002)</u>	<u>(1,729,783)</u>
Balance carried forward	<u>68,858</u>	<u>42,986</u>

## 25. GOVERNMENT GRANTS

VAST received the following government grants during the period:

National Lottery Community Fund £238,529

Stoke on Trent City Council £70,087

HMRC (CJRS grant) £97,749

The amount of the grants recognised in the financial statements was £400,535 (2020 £102,407). There were no unfulfilled conditions in respect of these grants at the year end.

No other forms of government assistance have been received by the Charity.