



INVESTING IN  
COMMUNITIES

## *VAST Services (1920)*

**Trustees' Report and Financial Statements**  
*Year Ended 31st March 2022*



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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 (resigned 8 December 2021)

Tim Edwards (resigned 28 July 2021  
appointed 30 June 2022)

Dawn Wickham (resigned 8 December 2021)

Susan Meredith

Lesley Morrey

Nick Maslen

Victoria Hardie (appointed 9 March 2022)

## 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

Charlotte Bennet - Strategic Projects Manager

Debra Hefferon - Finance Manager

Jackie Wheeler - Facilities Manager

## 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



We are all still concerned with the impact of COVID-19 on society, and particularly on the voluntary sector. The lasting effects continue to have repercussions for our sector and unfortunately have become the new normal.

This year has seen the staff at VAST provide an amazing level of support for many groups and individuals across our area which has been achieved with a change to more hybrid working practices to allow flexibility, something which we are seeing mirrored across many of our member organisations.

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 continued 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.

We have continued to focus on supporting our many members and the communities where they operate through the provision of our services alongside advocacy and representation. Obtaining finance for our sector has always been difficult, but this year there has been increased demand for our services and although it has not yet hit there are statutory budget cuts looming which have a knock-on effect. 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 meet our members needs.

During this year the Trustees have continued to explore and enact a long-term strategy to best position VAST for the future. Lisa Healings CEO and Finance Director with her senior leadership team, have revised the staffing structure across many of our services to ensure as strong a position as possible. Two of our long serving Trustees, Dawn Wickham and David Holton retired from the Board at the last AGM and we wish them well in their next challenges. This led to us revisiting the

Board succession plans and commencing a Board recruitment process which has already led to the appointment of Vicki Hardie, from the Chamber of Commerce, as a trustee.

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 VAST managing The Dudson Museum within the Dudson Centre, which is well worth a visit and is on the Heritage Trail for Stoke. Work has commenced to obtain accreditation for the Museum and a 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 struggle financially 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 reviews our strategic approach and has recommitted to being 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 all 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  
14th December 2022

# Strategic Report

The Trustees who are the Directors for the purposes of company law present their strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2022 in compliance with S414C of the Companies Act 2006.

## Fair Review of the Business

This financial year has been one of recovery and consolidation for VAST. The COVID pandemic hit for longer and harder than anyone could have imagined and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE) proved itself to be the invaluable, flexible and responsive sector that we always knew it to be. When others shut down the VCSE sector responded and delivered, and we are pleased to see that despite fears the large majority of organisations have survived and thrived. However, we are still not out of the woods and financially things are going to get harder as the cost-of-living crisis continues and funding becomes more scarce.

VAST continued to be there to support our local VCSE sector and have reviewed our services and operations to ensure that we can continue to provide the support, advocacy and representation that our members need to help them focus on delivering on their aims for their beneficiaries.

We have continued to build strong strategic partnerships with Stoke-on-Trent City Council and local health services as well as with key funders. We are heavily involved in the creation of a local NHSE VCSE alliance, in the form of new Healthy Communities Forums, between the new local

Integrated Care System and have worked to re-invigorate the Voluntary Sector Chief Officers' Group to become a valuable peer support network.

We have continued to develop our support services, community development work and volunteer brokerage thanks to funding from Stoke-on-Trent City Council and The National Lottery Fund and our two managed centres in Stoke-on-Trent and Stafford are slowly re-opening and tentatively returning to the vibrant social hubs that we knew previously.

Thanks to our funders and the hard work of our dedicated team of staff and volunteers we have had a financially successful year which is enabling us to rebuild our reserves, That had been hit hard by several tough years and will stand us in good stead to go forward into still uncertain times.

## Achievements and Performance

How we performed against our plans:

What we said we would do	What we did	How successful we were
<p><b>Chargeable Services</b></p> <p>Advertise more widely outside the membership base</p> <p>Develop provision to social enterprises and other types of not for profit</p> <p>Explore the market in surrounding areas where there is currently no similar CVS provision</p> <p>Develop a range of packages of support</p> <p>Deliver training packages around relevant thematic areas</p> <p>Develop governance support and project evaluation services</p>	<p>Restrictions on social contact and guidance to work from home continued to impact 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 and we made full use of online platforms such as Teams and Zoom. We did find however, that there were still lower levels of demand for non-essential services. In particular demand for meeting rooms for face-to-face meetings and footfall in the café was slow to recover. By the end of the year we were seeing an increase in bookings for meetings and the café was once again becoming a thriving meeting space.</p> <p>Our chargeable income covering our business support service, creative services, café and refreshment income and income from rentals was £528,874 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 most of our training packages and have focussed these around volunteering and governance support and have also held successful volunteering and funding fayres virtually.</p> <p>We are currently not focussing on project evaluation work due to staff capacity and the specialist nature of this work.</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> <p>Explore funding opportunities to ensure we can continue to deliver in key areas such as volunteering and VCSE developmental support</p> <p>Continually develop our role of strategic liaison between the sector and public bodies</p> <p>Facilitate collaborative partnership working across the local sector</p>	<p>We are continually looking for relevant funding opportunities and are working closely with Local Authority and Health Colleagues to secure continuation funding for our services. We have secured additional funding to expand our strategic liaison work and to continue the Community Health Champions projects as well as our core support, volunteering and advocacy and voice roles.</p> <p>Our role facilitating the Voluntary Sector Chief Officers Group and in establishing new Healthy Communities Forums has enabled the local sector to work together and with statutory bodies.</p> <p>Our Strategic Liaison Officer and our Senior Management Team continue to have seats on key Boards across the area.</p>	<p>We have funding in place for the next 12 months and 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, the war in Ukraine and a cost-of-living crisis.

We know that there will be cuts to local authority and health funding going forward which will have a knock-on effect to funding available for the sector and many funders spent their funds to alleviate pressures during COVID and simply do not have as much available now. There is still however a high level of need for VCSE services and resources are stretched.

The Local Authority has had to make very difficult budget decisions and the transformation of the NHS with the creation of Integrated Care Systems, 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 encouraging conversations, but only time will tell if they lead to tangible, long term, 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 has embraced the Place-Based Giving agenda and has identified Asset Based Community Development and locality working as a key strategy to develop moving forward, to achieve which requires greater co- production with the VCSE and the communities we serve.

These positive discussions and relationships are yet to impact upon local commissioning, this year, once again, has seen very little contracting with existing contracts rolled on for further periods, however we are involved in early conversations with both Health and Local Authority about commissioning differently for the sector.

Hopefully, the above positive initiatives will lead to future, longer term, investment in the local sector.

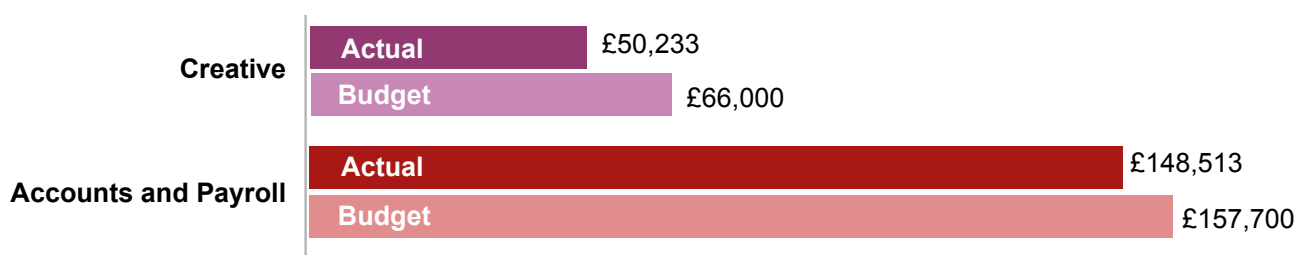


## Key Performance Indicators

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 set were challenging and recurring restrictions and lockdowns meant we were not able to return to normal levels of business during the year.

## Facilities

Overall income from the Dudson Centre and The Hub

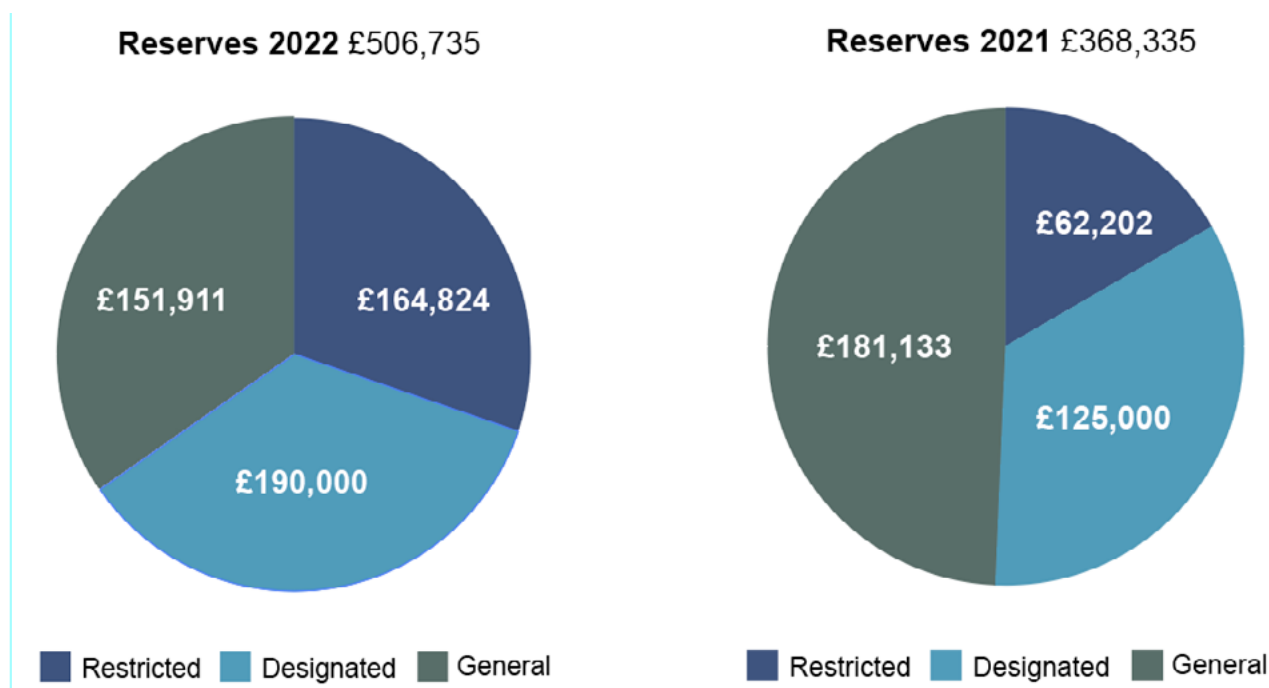
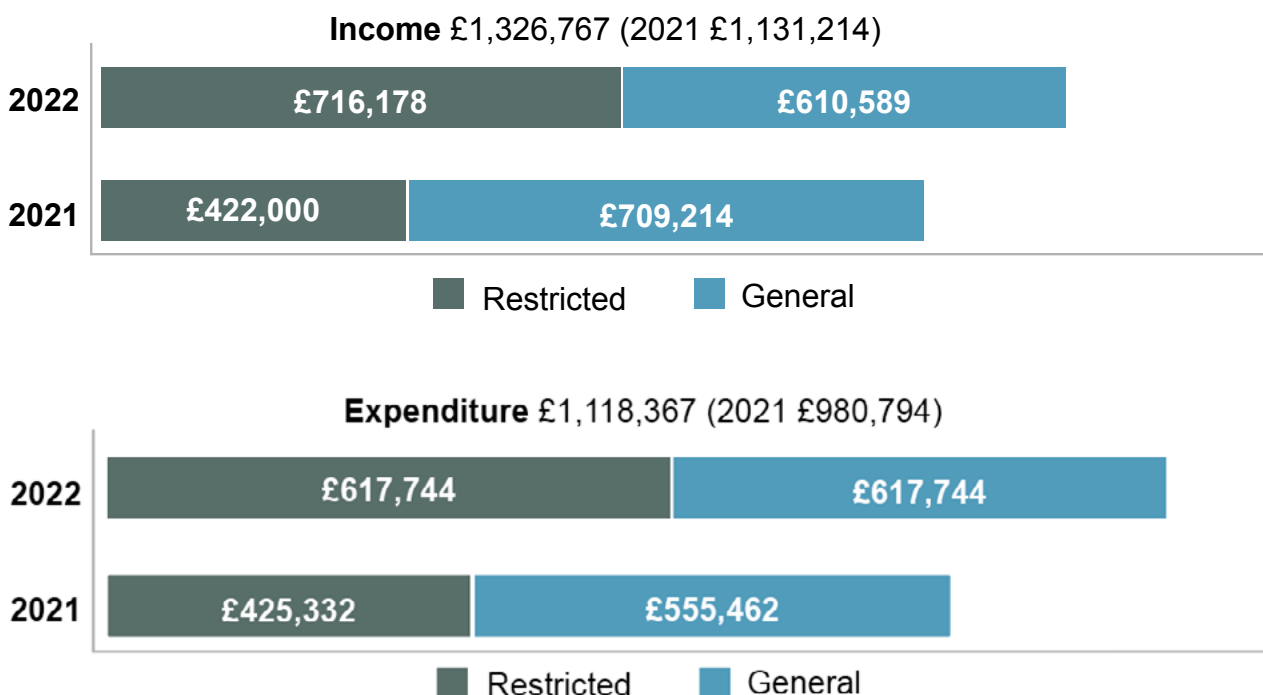


For the year to March 2022 based on income received against total possible income the Hub was 58% occupied and The Dudson Centre was 91% occupied.

Occupancy levels remained good at The Dudson Centre, however we have seen occupancy levels at the Hub fall due to the large amount of competition from other office space providers in Stafford.

## Financial Review

Overall our income has increased slightly from £1.1m to £1.3m.



Of the designated reserves £25,000 is set aside to allow for times of under-occupancy and unexpected repair work at The Dudson Centre, £100,000 is set aside for under-occupancy and unexpected expenditure at The Hub and £65,000 is set aside for the running of the Dudson Museum should funding not be available.

## Financial Review

VAST's principal funding sources for 2021/22 were Stoke-on-Trent City Council who fund our work with the local VCSE sector and the Community Health Champions project, Stoke on Trent and North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups who fund our Health Strategic Liaison post and The National Lottery Community Fund who fund our Totally Stoked Support project.

A large amount of VAST funding comes from our chargeable services, which in 2021/22 accounted for 40% of income (87% 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
- Sunflower Families Support Group
- North Staffordshire Medical Institute
- Staffordshire Sight Loss Association
- Number 11 CIC
- SkinJase in the Community
- Silverdale Parish Council
- Keele Parish Council
- Open Door Stoke on Trent
- Lea Road Community Church
- Newcastle Community Transport
- Sage (Staffs)
- Biddulph Youth & Community Zone
- Stone Community Hub
- Chit Chat 4U
- TWOCO

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 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 £54,000 to £354,000.

Currently we hold £65,158 of free reserves. Total reserves stand at £506,735 of which £341,911 is unrestricted, and of this £190,000 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 support, inform, connect and advocate for Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations to improve the quality of life of local residents.

### **Key objectives**

- To be the recognised voice of the VCSE sector in our chosen geography
- To be a first-choice provider of services and a centre for innovation
- To have adequate resources to sustain and grow both our organisation and the local VCSE sector

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

We will achieve the above by implementing the following activities;

### **Chargeable Services**

- Growing payroll bureau provision
- Advertising more widely outside membership base
- Developing provision to Social Enterprises and other types of not for profit organisations
- Exploring the market in Cheshire and other surrounding areas where there is currently no similar CVS provision
- Developing a range of packages of support for VCSE and SMEs for example start up package etc.
- Exploring additional geographical areas

## Grants and Contracts

- Explore funding opportunities to ensure that we can continue to deliver in key areas such as Volunteering and VCSE developmental support
- Continue to develop as needed to meet demand of the Integrated Care system and changes within Local Authority.
- Develop projects in line with identified needs of the local VCSE sector and national agendas.

## Advocacy & Voice

- Ensure VAST remains the recognised representative and voice of the local sector.
- Develop and grow networks and forums according to identified need.
- Remain strategically engaged with the City Council and Integrated Care System.

## Principal 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 principal 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 level of 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 is 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 **14th December 2022** 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 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.**



# Accounts and Payroll

## Service Summary

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 145 community groups, charities and social enterprises and we are always keen to talk to new organisations about how we can help them.

## Our Services



## 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."*

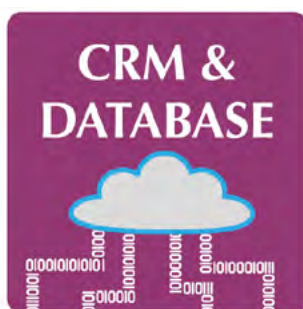
# Digital Services



## Service Summary

VAST's Digital and Creative department offers a full range of services for charities and the voluntary sector. We work with many types of organisations, but our main aim is to provide high quality creative and digital services for the voluntary sector at a price they can afford. We have worked with many third sector organisations on a variety of projects providing support from full re-brands and websites, to simple print management.

## Our Services



## 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.

## Digital Services feedback

*VAST have provided an excellent service, supporting BJJF to develop an exciting new website. VAST has been incredibly helpful (and patient!) and has always responded promptly to our queries and requests and they understands the particular needs of voluntary sector groups.*

*The website training was really useful and has helped us to be able to manage the information on the website ourselves. I would recommend VAST for any group wishing to create a new website; it is a great service and excellent value for money.*

Hilary Stefanelli - Beth Jonson Foundation

# Facilities



## The Dudson Centre & The Hub

During the year our managed centres were able to start to re-open and they have gradually returned to more usual levels of activity with meeting rooms occupied and The Dudson Café playing host to coffee mornings and drop-in sessions for service users of our tenants.

### Our services

- Serviced Office space for VCSE organisations at The Dudson Centre, Stoke-on-Trent and The Hub, Stafford
- Meeting room hire
- Zoom Rooms functionality for hybrid meetings
- The Dudson Café

### Future Aims

- To continue to promote office space at both sites and increase occupancy levels
- To promote the availability of meeting room hire
- To encourage more tenants and users of the centre to hold social events and informal meetings in The Dudson Café
- To promote external buffets in the local area



# Development and Governance Support



## Summary, Achievements & Impact

Supporting the VCSE Sector is central to everything we do at VAST. We want to empower local organisations to deliver their services in the best possible way and to ensure vital services are there for the communities that need them. It is our mission to develop and promote a thriving local voluntary sector and, by linking closely with other VAST services such as volunteering, accountancy, and our digital team as well as our serviced resource centres at The Dudson Centre and The Hub, we can provide a holistic package to make this a reality.

Our support is often free of charge, thanks to funding from Stoke-on-Trent City Council and The National Lottery Community Fund, and, where we do need to charge, we keep this as affordable as possible to ensure it is fully accessible to those who need it.

### Case Study

**Support requested** - VAST were approached to provide training to staff and Trustees around the roles and responsibilities of Trustees so that both parties could fully understand how the role fits within an organisation, the demands of the role as well as the duties and responsibilities that come with it.

**Support given** - VAST put together a package of training tailored to the organisation to particularly focus on some of the challenges they were facing like scheme of delegation and managing conflict of interest. The broader training was based on the Charity governance code as good governance is fundamental to a charity's success. It enables and supports a charity's compliance with the law and relevant regulations. It also promotes a culture in which everything works towards fulfilling the charity's vision. This also enabled us to break it down into clear digestible chunks;

- Organisation purpose,
- leadership,
- integrity,
- decisions making, risk and control,
- Board effectiveness,
- Equality diversity and inclusion,
- Openness and accountability.

Staff, trustees and volunteers attended the sessions and we were able to deliver the information and facilitate some really useful discussion around challenges the organisation had faced. It was also a safe space for people to ask questions to enable them to really understand why certain decisions sometimes have to be made or things done in a certain way.

**The difference it made** -By helping the organisation to develop high standards of governance this will support them to be resilient, keep public confidence and ensure a strong and robust organisation that is able to support its beneficiaries.

**Future aims and plans** - VAST will continue to work with the organisation to look at the skills mix of their current trustees and help to recruit new trustees. We will also support them to develop a trustee handbook and their other volunteering policies.

## The VAST Bursary Fund



### Summary, Achievements & Impact

Since its inception in 2015, the VAST Bursary Fund has awarded more than £66,000 to more than 129 voluntary sector organisations –throughout Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire - an average of almost £10,000 per year. The fund awards a grant up to £500 towards eligible VAST business services.

During the period from April 2021 and March 2022 a total of 6 applications were received and subsequently awarded by the panel. The total awarded for this period was £2,458.00. Three applications were for accountancy services and the remaining for website design.

Of these applications, four were from Stoke-on-Trent, one from Stafford and the other from East Staffordshire.





## The VAST Vault

### Summary, Achievements & Impact

The VAST Vault is an online resource for Staffordshire's VCSE sector. The Vault is a source of information and advice on all aspects of running a VCSE organisation and working with local communities. Containing links to trusted, reliable sources of information and advice, it is a one stop shop to get accurate advice.

### Future Developments

The Vault continues to be updated to add new links as they become available to make sure VCSE organisations can always have the most current information and guidance at their fingertips.



# Door2Door Transport



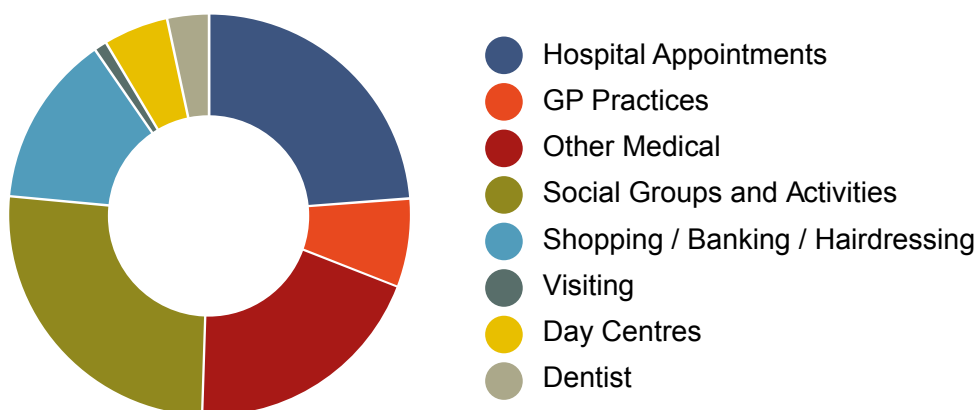
## Summary, Achievements & Impact

As we emerged from the coronavirus pandemic Door 2 Door transport was needed more than ever. People needed to access their medical appointments and social activities started to re-open. Many of the service users would not be able to leave the house without the support of the service and it is crucial to reducing loneliness and isolation for service users and volunteer drivers alike, with real bonds and friendships formed. The main challenge during the year was to recruit enough drivers to fulfil the demand for journeys as a number of our drivers were themselves vulnerable and continued to isolate.

Funding from The Realise Foundation for the project ended in October 2021 and, as their priorities for funding had changed, we were not able to apply to them for continuation funding. We are, however, very grateful to The Community Foundation for Staffordshire who have provided 12 months funding to continue the service.

## Future Developments

As we look to the future, we will be carrying out a survey with key stakeholders and service users to gather more information on the need for the service and are looking for longer term funding to ensure that the service can continue into the future.



**13 active drivers**



**160 service users**

## Door2Door Feedback

*I have been using Door 2 Door for about 6 months now, to get backwards and forwards to cancer treatment. I am blind and unable to drive. They have been incredibly kind and caring and helpful when I come out of a chemo session, feeling unsteady and unfocussed, and made sure I get home safely. I am also a guide dog owner and have the reassurance that there will be no problem transporting her to and from the hospital.*

*I have had experience of three of their drivers, and it's always felt like having an extra worry lifted from my shoulders. Margaret even joined me when I rang the bell after completing chemo, which was lovely to have someone familiar around as friendly support. They always have clean and spacious vehicles, with plenty of accommodation for my dog, and always arrive a tiny bit ahead of my pick up time, and are more than happy to wait until I've got my stuff together without making me feel rushed.*

*My drivers have all worn masks during the journey, which I was pleased to see as I was immune compromised during treatment. They are easy to make a booking through, and even if I leave a message, one of the office staff will return my call the next day.*

*They've been such a wonderful find, and I will continue to use them in the future.*

Door 2 Door client

# Donate IT

# Donate IT

## Summary, Achievements & Impact

Life is becoming increasingly digital and many services need to be accessed online. Whether it's for home learning, banking, shopping, applying for jobs or looking after your health, most of us need to own a digital device. The digital world has also become increasingly important in the fight against loneliness and isolation, but there are still many people in our community that do not have digital access.

To combat this VAST have teamed up with The Community Foundation for Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and local IT partners, to set up a digital equipment recycling scheme so we can ensure that the most vulnerable members of our community in Stoke-on-Trent can get connected.

During the year we have received 99 donated pieces of equipment including laptops, desktop computers, keyboards, mice and monitors. We have allocated 10 sets of equipment to local community groups and a further 12 sets to individuals in need in our communities.

## Future Developments

In a world which is becoming ever more digital we will continue to source unwanted digital equipment to recondition and pass on to those most at risk from becoming disadvantaged due to digital exclusion.

## Case Study

Burslem Jubilee Group approached VAST to discuss their need for a couple of laptops. These would be useful in the weekly sessions they hold for families across the city who are currently seeking asylum and trying to build a new life in Stoke-on-Trent.

VAST agreed that their application to the Donate IT scheme for some devices should be quite straightforward as the evidence of need seemed obvious.

Sheila said that the two laptops have been a great help are used every session that they run their project. Burslem Jubilee run two sessions a week with 15 -17 adult individuals attending every session.

The attendees are mostly asylum seekers who originate from different countries such as Sudan, Kurdistan, Turkey, South America, Eritrea, Pakistan and they often need to use the laptops with completing the applications for their asylum and ESOL (English as a Second Language) courses. The organisation's volunteers also use them for emails and following up applications, research and other information.

Sometimes children come along to the sessions with their families for a short period, this is because they don't have school placements yet. For the first few weeks that children arrive in the area they are waiting to find a place at a local school, so the laptops have been useful to help keep the children occupied whilst their parents are dealing with complicated and important paperwork and also help them to be distracted from the more stressful situations, they are finding themselves in.

Toddlers enjoy cartoons and fun games whilst some of the older ones can make use of the laptops for schooling and getting used to the language and new culture they find themselves living in.

**Feedback from two children** - *"We cannot go to school yet because we don't have a placement. We can use the laptops while our parents are in ESOL."*

**Quote from Adult Attendee** - *"We can ask for help at the project if we need to search for information. The volunteers are very helpful."*



# Discover Digital



## Summary, Achievements & Impact

Discover Digital is a partnership of organisations funded through the UK Community Renewal Fund. The project was set up to help people in Stoke on Trent to discover the things they need if they want to use digital and online services and to combat digital exclusion. We want to make sure that everyone can find and use the digital services they need so the project offers grant funding both to community-based organisations who have a great idea to combat digital exclusion and also to individuals who need digital equipment. This is complemented by bespoke community-based training and underpinned by community consultation and enquiry to ensure we capture the relevant evidence to develop future projects and to lobby for real change.

## Future Developments

To further expand the reach of this project the partnership is opening a pop-up shop in The Potteries Shopping Centre during April 2022 to take the consultation work and information to those that need it most. People will be able to drop in to a friendly space and ask the questions they are too afraid to ask others as well as get information on keeping themselves safe online. They will have to opportunity to share their stories of the effects of digital exclusion on their lives.

Resources developed during the project, findings of community consultation and enquiry work and the formal evaluation report on the project will all be available on our website at the conclusion of the project to enable others to share in and benefit from the work of the project.

## Grants

16 Get Connected grants were awarded with a value of: £9,464

5 Innovation grants were awarded with a value of: £18,741



# 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

## Service Summary

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 use mulitpal social media, email and websites communication channels for the different projects.



Total emails sent: **151**  
Average open rate: **32%**  
Average click rate: **7.0%**



**Articles Posted**  
2021/22 - **997\***  
2021/20 - **585**

\*Posted across all websites including VAST, Totally Stoked and Community Health Champions



# Community Health Champions

## Summary, Achievements & Impact

The COVID-19 pandemic brought to the forefront the need for people to be getting clear and accurate health messages to help them make the right choices to look after their health and wellbeing. Unfortunately, messages from public sector bodies do not always reach those who need them the most as many people do not listen to, or cannot understand, organisations that they cannot relate to and, instead, take advice from their peers, even if this is not always accurate. Those most in need are often those hardest to reach so we recognised that there needed to be a different way to communicate with them.

Community Health Champions are local volunteers who help improve the health and wellbeing of people in Stoke-on-Trent. They are people central to and embedded in their communities. People who are trusted and listened to by their peers.

The project, funded by Stoke-on-Trent City Council, aims to help people better understand health issues and to share clear and accurate health information in their communities.

Our network of Community Health Champions are well informed. Through regular newsletters, training opportunities and question and answer sessions with professionals they are able to get the information they need and also provide feedback about what their communities want.

In addition, the project has provided grant funding to grassroots organisations who are embedded in local communities to help them be health champions for their communities.

## Future Developments

We are in the process of producing a series of short, animated films, voiced by local champions, to reinforce key health messages in the community and are very excited that we will be able to launch these in 2022.

We will also be working on partnership with Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Staffordshire County Council and the Staffordshire Integrated Care system on a complementary project to carry out a Citizens Enquiry into local health needs and to Help Community Health Champions and local grassroots organisations to develop innovative ideas to help fill gaps in provision.





## Community Health Champions - Case Study

**A case study illustrating the Community Health Champions project in action supporting a local organisation to assist their service user to access his Covid and Flu vaccinations.**

VAST received a request by local voluntary organisation that is part of our Community Health Champion (CHC) team asking for help for one of their service users who was having difficulties accessing a covid booster and flu jab from home. Due to a decline in health the gentleman, aged 84, had not been able to leave the house and had no friends or family to support.

The gentleman had contacted the GP to ask why he had not received an appointment to say when he would be visited at home to be given his third Covid booster and flu vaccine. He was informed by his GP practice that he was not eligible for a home visit and that their surgery was not part of the scheme doing the boosters. No information was provided by GP practice on how service user could go about making arrangements to have his vaccines.

As the gentleman is supported by a voluntary sector organisation via phone, his support worker had made numerous attempts to contact the GP practice without success, so they approached VAST for guidance. Due to our contacts through the CHC project we were able to share the concerns directly with the appropriate teams for support and fed back the advice.

However this didn't match his experience so, having sought permission to share the gentleman's details (D.O.B., Contact and practice details), we went back to our contact at the CCG to ask for guidance on how to move this forward. With their support and contacts we linked with NHS England to resolve the problem.

On follow up a few weeks later, we were able to get confirmation from CCG as well as the service user that this issue had been resolved and the gentleman had been visited at home and received his vaccines. He was very grateful to VAST for helping and told us that moving forward, he is now listed as being housebound at his surgery so should get his support via home visits.



# The Dudson Museum



## Summary, Achievements & Impact

We were very grateful that The Dudson Museum was able to secure funding from two additional rounds of the Culture Recovery Fund which enabled us to retain staff and get the museum ready for when it was able to re-open safely. Since re-opening the number of visitors has increased slowly and we held a very successful showcase event to promote the Museum to local schools.

As a result of this, and our marketing events, the numbers of schools visiting has started to grow. We have also been very successful in launching school holiday activities for children with very busy sessions held throughout the summer holidays, and half term breaks where children could take part in craft activities and quizzes and listen to a story told by our very own Mrs Potts.

We have continued to work on eligibility for accreditation for the Museum as this will open up more opportunities for us in the future.

## Future Aims

- Continue to promote and grow the number of school visits
- Develop activities and events for wider age groups
- Expand displays into the wider Dudson Centre to create a heritage centre experience



# Connect

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



# VAST Volunteering



## Summary, Achievements & Impact

VAST are passionate about volunteering and strongly believe that it can improve health and wellbeing whilst making a huge difference to local communities. Through our volunteer bureau we help people find volunteering roles local to them that ideally match their skills and interests. Our popular online volunteer noticeboard advertises opportunities in the local VCSE sector for those who just want to browse for themselves and we produce a regular newsletter showcasing the opportunities available or our knowledgeable and supportive staff will work with people to ensure they find the right opportunity and will even attend with them to give them the confidence to give it a go.

We also support VCSE organisations who want to recruit volunteers to ensure they have the right policies and procedures in place and can provide a safe and supportive environment for their volunteers.

Our volunteer management training remains popular and we are continuing to grow our volunteer managers network which meets regularly and gives people working with volunteers in and around Stoke-on-Trent an opportunity to share ideas, network and provide mutual support. We have also run volunteer fayres both virtually and online to help local organisations recruit the volunteers the need to deliver their services.

## Future Developments

Going forward we are looking to grow the reach of our volunteering opportunities and are making links with local schools to ensure that volunteering opportunities are available to young people.

**309 volunteers placed**

**45 Members of volunteer managers' network**





## VAST Volunteering Case Study

Stoke-on-Trent Bid contacted VAST Volunteering to help recruit volunteers for the Better World Festival in August 2021. The events were to be held over the course of a whole weekend so many volunteers were needed, and these roles included marshalling, recycling, tidying up and helping set the sites up.

Natalie read the article about the festival in our Volunteering Newsletter and as she is in her second year of Business Management as a student at Staffordshire University, she had a strong interest in events. Due to her interest Natalie had already signed up to assist at other local events such as Staffs Fest and Just so Festival and was looking to gain an opportunity to assist at the Better World Festival.

Kelly caught up with Natalie after the events had taken place "Thank you for this opportunity, experience like these benefits me greatly. I met some lovely inspiring people from artists and entertainers to traders and charity personnel. Such a positive vibe and atmosphere in the town.

I am now looking for my next opportunity, although I have secured Just So Festival as an Area Manager (volunteer) this month, so I am looking ahead for the next few months."

April Jackson from Stoke-on-Trent Bid said "Natalie was instrumental in helping make Better World Festival a success. She volunteered over 3 days as a main point of contact for festival-goers and responded to each query politely and informatively so they could best enjoy the festival to its fullest extent.

Natalie is the gears, helping the machine run smoothly; her proactivity, coupled with her ability to work effectively on her own initiative, meant that the event management team were able to take the time to deal with issues behind the scenes, safe in the knowledge that Natalie was looking after attendees' needs.

Natalie's passion for the city centre, and her energy - evident from taking on multiple shifts across the weekend - are unparalleled. With a friendly, yet professional approach in speaking with festival-goers, Natalie was the perfect ambassador for the event and we would welcome to chance to work with her again."

# Totally Stoked

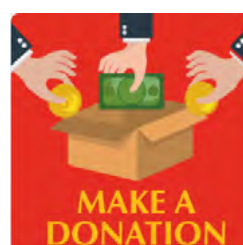


## Summary, Achievements & Impact

Totally Stoked is Stoke-on-Trent's answer to developing the VCSE sector in the most sustainable way. We believe everyone has something to give, and by sharing our resources we can add value to the wealth of activity already under way in our local communities, strengthening and enabling local organisations and community groups.

Totally Stoked encourages people and organisations to share their time, skills and knowhow as well as equipment and resources to support VCSE organisations in the city and its surrounding areas.

Totally Stoked also provides a link to support for our extensive VCSE sector, to empower them to deliver their services in the best possible way and to ensure vital services are there for the communities that need them.



Thanks to funding from the National Lottery Community Fund we are able to work with local communities in Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Staffordshire Moorlands, both geographical and communities of interest, to identify gaps in VCSE provision and to help them fill those gaps. Through community reference panels we work intensively to understand what is most important to them and what they would like to see develop and our project officers can then support them to form the community groups and organisations that will help deliver what they need. Our share networks are the ideal space for people to come together and share both practical resources and know how and information as well as to build networks and friendships.

Totally Stoked also helps local businesses to give something back to their communities through brokering Corporate Social Responsibility and Employer Supported Volunteering opportunities. It doesn't matter who makes the approach, it could be a VCSE organisation with a need to get something done or a local company that wants a volunteering project for their staff we are well placed to find the answer and create the links to get the job done.

If people prefer to donate money, we have linked with the Community Foundation for Staffordshire to promote their We Love Stoke Fund to make sure donations can remain local.

## Feedback

*As a Community Interest Company, Veterans Connect has had an uphill struggle to achieve recognition and position within our specialism. Partner companies and supporting charities are a vital part of the growth required to achieve the industry acceptance and community acknowledgement to facilitate the development of our services. Vast is an organisation that not only supports, but advises and hand holds smaller, developing charitable organisations like ours.*

*Without the steadfast dedication of the team at Vast and their unwavering support, the struggle for many would be too much to overcome. We highly recommend Vast for their services and support and in particular we admire the community focus shown in everything they do. We look forward to an ever developing relationship as we endeavour to fulfill the needs of our vulnerable communities within the great city of Stoke on Trent.*

Lee J West

# Stoke-on-Trent Together

#STOKEONTRENT  
TOGETHER

## Summary, Achievements & Impact

Stoke-on-Trent Together came into being as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a cross sector solution to protecting the most vulnerable in our communities through lockdown, however it has become much more. It has developed into a strategic partnership between VAST and Stoke-on-Trent City Council that will ensure that statutory and VCSE sector works together for the best outcomes for our communities. Together we have responded to critical incidents being declared across health and Social Care settings and in our hospital as well as providing support and co-ordination for the VCSE organisations supporting first Afghan and then Ukrainian refugees arriving in the city.

## Future Developments

Whatever the emergency or crisis faced by Stoke-on-Trent Together will ensure that we pull together to ensure that the VCSE sector can support the solution

### Stoke-on-Trent Together Case Study

**Support requested** - In the middle of March we were approached by the Assistant Director for Wellbeing at Stoke City Council as they were beginning to look at the Council's response to Ukrainian refugees and welcoming them into the City. They asked for our support to map the available support to those who might be arriving into Stoke through family or sponsorship routes; or who are placed in the area by central government.

**Support given** - It was early days and guidance coming from central government was very limited, we had no idea of numbers and the level of response needed was really uncertain. We met with the Council to discuss many of the fantastic organisations delivering services across the City and how they may adapt to meet the needs of new arrivals. We also talked about existing refugee and asylum seeker organisations across the City who we knew were already geared up to support but may need further support from VAST if they had to quickly scale up their services to meet a large increase in demand. At the same time we were getting questions from local organisations about the lack of guidance and what they should be doing. We decided in agreement with the Assistant Director for Wellbeing that to pull together a network of organisations providing support to Ukrainians would be beneficial for both sides. We met at the Dudson Centre and organisations had the opportunity to ask questions of the Council and feedback concerns coming from the community and directly from families. The Council were also able to get a good picture of the support available and discuss with us any gaps or areas of concern. The groups were able to network with one another to avoid duplication and create as comprehensive offer as possible across the City, knowing no matter which point of contact people hit they would receive the same advice and guidance.

**The difference it made** - The opportunity to come together and troubleshoot issues and come up with solutions made our response in the City strong. Organisations are better connected and everyone has a clearer understanding of what is going on and where to seek support.

**Future aims and plans** - We continue to support the network and organisations that have emerged through it. We keep them up to date with relevant funding opportunities to support their work and will bring the group together as required to discuss challenges and solutions.

*'The network has been so valuable, I've made lots of connections and the opportunity to ask questions and work together to find solutions has been great. It was great having representation from the Council to make sure we were getting the most up to date guidance and sharing the right information'*

# Stoke-on-Trent Community Directory

## STOKE-ON-TRENT COMMUNITY DIRECTORY

### Summary, Achievements & Impact

The Stoke-on-Trent Community Directory is an online platform which offers easy access to information about VCSE sector services available to people in the city. The Directory was originally built by VAST Services (1920) in 2019 and has been managed by VAST since its launch.

It currently has over 350 listings, for services from counselling and training services to sporting activities and social groups, and helps people find the services they need to improve their health and wellbeing and avoid social isolation. Funded by Stoke-on-Trent City Council we want to continue to grow this valuable resource so that everyone can easily access VCSE services.

### Future Developments

We will be redesigning the design of The Directory to ensure that it truly is a whole age directory of the VCSE services available to local communities with more streamlined search and navigation functions.



THINGS TO DO

HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH  
AND WELLBEING

CARE HOMES AND  
SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

INFORMATION AND  
ADVICE

KEEPING SAFE

TRANSPORT

HELP WITH CARING  
FOR SOMEONE

MONEY, BENEFITS  
& HOUSING

HELP AT HOME



# Communities Together

## Summary, Achievements & Impact

VAST are proud to support The Communities Together programme in Stoke-on-Trent. Communities Together is a programme being delivered in Stoke as part of the National Community Led Support programme led by Stoke-on-Trent City Council and is focussed on delivering social care services that people need in their local community. Utilising cross sector innovation teams to identify local need and the best locations for provision, the programme has so far developed community lounges in Burslem, Blurton and Bentilee where local residents can access the support and advice they need at the same time as taking part in community activities to combat loneliness and isolation. Services available include, mental health support, debt and benefit advice and support with housing related issues and are tailored to the needs of the specific community, allowing professionals to work together to provide a one stop solution for individuals.

## Future Developments

The programme has already identified many other areas of the city where community lounges can be rolled out to ensure that relevant services can be delivered in the best way for residents in their communities.



A place to talk and get support in your community

**Your Communities Together website is coming soon...**



# Advocate

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

# VAST Strategic Representation and Liaison



## Summary, Achievements & Impact

VAST is an advocate for the VCSE sector and facilitates the strategic engagement of the sector with a range of statutory partners. 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. VAST's strategic liaison role, funded by Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups and Stoke-on-Trent City Council, acts as a channel to achieve this.

We know that the VCSE sector is well placed to play an active role in improving health and wellbeing for our local population, so we amplify the voice of the sector and people with lived experience giving a stronger voice at a timely point to ensure that local VCSE organisations can contribute to discussion and influence decisions.

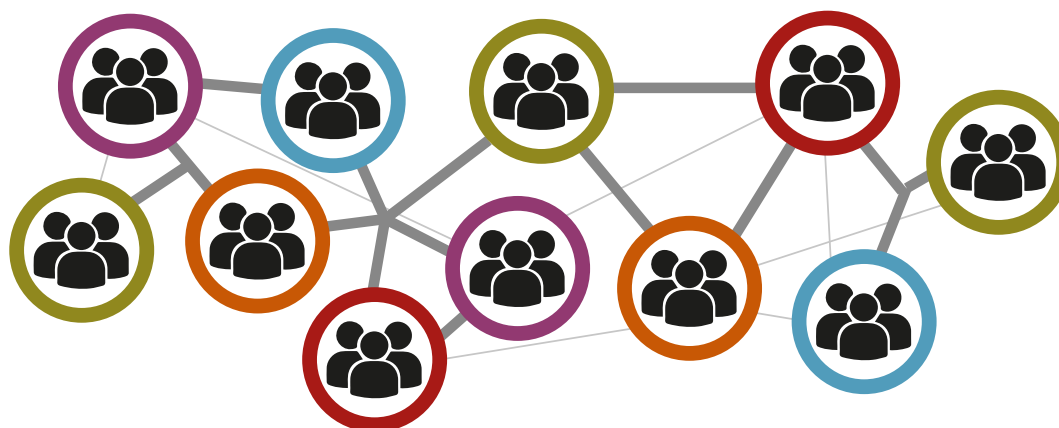
We know that the VCSE sector is best placed to understand it's local community and so can help deliver the best quality services for local people. We support a two-way flow of information between VCSE sector organisations and strategic partners and establish positive working relationships with stakeholders. Cross sector working has never been more needed to support our communities. We act at this strategic interface, establishing the links between workstreams and representing the VCSE sector at strategic meetings. We support the VCSE sector to understand and respond to the challenges and strategic priorities of our statutory partners. By working together we achieve more than we can individually. These links enable better partnership and collaboration to best serve the local population and coproduce solutions to improve health and wellbeing in Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire.

Through our strategic liaison function we share information and act as a communication link. We keep the local VCSE sector informed on the local landscape and national policy developments that may impact on commissioning, tendering and contracts or otherwise have a relevance to their organisation.

We remain active members of the Voluntary Sector emergencies Partnership (VCSEP) allowing us to feed in issues, concerns and intelligence as well as sharing best practice and expertise at both a local and a national level. We have also continued our links with NAVCA to ensure we are linked in on National issues that matter to the sector.

## Future Developments

We will continue to ensure that we can provide advocacy and voice for the VCSE sector with statutory bodies and provide structures through which partnership and collaborative working can be facilitated.



# Voluntary Sectors Chief Officers Group



## Summary, Achievements & Impact

The Voluntary Sector Chief Officers Group (VSCOG) is a network of Voluntary Sector Organisations in Stoke-on-Trent which seeks to provide a clearer, louder, and more unified VCSE voice to influence local agendas and create strategic partnerships with other sectors.

### **VSCOG members have common aims, which encompass:**

- promoting the role and value of Stoke-on-Trent's VCSE sector;
- securing the local VCSE sector's sustainability and prosperity;
- improving the quality of life for all through the VCSE sector;
- maximising the potential of the VCSE sector;
- helping the local public sector to maximise efficiency.

VAST facilitates the VSCOG network and is helping it to shape into a relevant supportive space for its members. We recognise that being the leader of a VCSE organisation can be lonely and we want to develop VSCOG to be a supportive peer network where members can get support, information and advice from those they trust. By building networks and relationships no one needs to be on their own. Through VSCOG we have developed a Peer to Peer Pledge that VSCOG Members are committed to sharing their skills and experience to:

- develop leadership capacity within Stoke on Trent's VCSE Sector, and
- facilitate a social-support system, trusting professional relationships, and a sense of inclusion and community for new VCSE leaders in Stoke on Trent.



## Voluntary Sectors Chief Officers Group Case Study

### Dr Ann Ewens, The Gingerbread Centre

"I was due to start at the Gingerbread Centre in 2021 and was new to the Sector. I knew of and had met Danny Flynn (CEO at YMCANS) at Staffordshire University and at NHS meetings. Danny had left a lasting impression on me in how he spoke about the local community and its young people. I made a cheeky approach to ask if Danny would mentor me in my first months at Gingerbread. Danny replied positively and has generously given of his time, his knowledge and expertise. I have met monthly with Danny who has supported and guided me and he has offered a number of really helpful insights and suggestions. He has introduced me to the work of Hilary Cottam and Asset Based thinking which I have aimed to steer our approach towards."

"I feel it has been a privilege to have this expertise shared with me and I am grateful for the support it has provided me. I am sure others would value knowing someone is there to talk things through with."

VSCOG Members recognise that peer support has an important role to play in growing and strengthening the VCSE sector in Stoke on Trent. This has occurred in an ad hoc manner and has been personality rather than process driven to date. VAST are keen to provide support and brokerage to ensure all local VCSE sector leaders can benefit from this support.

### Danny Flynn, YMCA North Staffordshire

"I had a call from Ann who told me she had been the successful candidate for CEO at Gingerbread and raised the possibility of me offering her some help. I don't think we used the word Mentoring or Coaching but we discussed expectations, values, capacity and what support might look like. We agreed to meet online every 6 weeks or so and Ann would bring issues and challenges she faced."

"We met online throughout Covid and we would spend an hour or so discussing and reflecting, unlocking, advising, laughing, lamenting, supporting each other. Issues included, personal stuff, organisational stuff, development stuff, business stuff, political and social policy stuff. We would start our conversations with a bit of an agenda setting our discussions."

"I guess the above may appear to look like I'm the expert and Ann the recipient, that's what didn't happen, rather it was two people with skills and experience and the impact was mutual, both parties having skills, talents and experience that were used for mutual benefit."

"It has been great and one of the best experiences I have had in my new role and it would be great if others were lucky enough to get have a similar mentor."

# Stoke Parent Carers Champions for Change



## Summary, Achievements & Impact

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, now known as Stoke Parent Carers Champions for Change, 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 pandemic however, the steering group, made up of key local VCSE sector organisations, started to take shape and build momentum and are planning events now this is possible again.

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.

## Future Developments

A new website and CRM are under development to enable the forum to further develop and recruit a wider membership to the forum in the coming year.



# Healthy Communities Forum

## Summary, Achievements & Impact

Health systems are in a period of transition with new integrated Care Systems (ICS) being established across the country from 1 July 2022. This is an ideal opportunity for the VCSE sector to strengthen its links to health systems and to ensure that there is a way from them to be involved in and influence decision making across the system.

Alongside colleagues at Support Staffordshire and with support from NAVCA VAST have been involved in the development of the NHS VCSE Alliance for Staffordshire to set out the way Health Systems will work with the VCSE sector. As a result of this work, we have developed Healthy Communities Forums, aligned to the identified Places of the ICS where the VCSE sector can work alongside colleagues from the ICS and discuss the issues affecting the health and wellbeing of their communities.

The forums meet quarterly and are a recognised mechanism within the ICS.

## Future Developments

We will be developing a terms of reference for the forums to firmly establish the membership and role of the forums and will be working with colleagues at the ICS to develop a memorandum of understanding between the sectors going forward.

# 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*

*Sub committees Finance & Remuneration*



**Tim Edwards**



**Mark Barnish**

*Treasurer*

*Sub-committee Finance*



**Lesley Morrey**



**John Beech**

*Sub-committee remuneration*



**Nick Maslen**



**Susan Meredith**

*Sub-committee remuneration*



**Victoria Hardie**

*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 2022.

### 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 trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law 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 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 12 & 24 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 2022 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 14th December 2022 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 2022 (REGISTRATION NO:1049663)**

### **Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of VAST Services (1920) for the year ended 31 March 2022 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 2022 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.

### **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 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
- 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.

## **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities Statement, 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.

**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: 19.12.2022

## Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	<b>Note</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total 2022 £</b>
<b>Income and Endowments from:</b>				
Charitable activities	3	583,175	716,178	1,299,353
Other trading activities	4	26,316	-	26,316
Investment income	5	1,098	-	1,098
Total income		<u>610,589</u>	<u>716,178</u>	<u>1,326,767</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
Raising funds	6	(40,594)	-	(40,594)
Charitable activities	7	<u>(530,029)</u>	<u>(617,744)</u>	<u>(1,147,773)</u>
Total expenditure		<u>(570,623)</u>	<u>(617,744)</u>	<u>(1,188,367)</u>
Net income		39,966	98,434	138,400
Transfers between funds		<u>(4,188)</u>	<u>4,188</u>	-
Net movement in funds		35,778	102,622	138,400
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds brought forward		<u>306,133</u>	<u>62,202</u>	<u>368,335</u>
Total funds carried forward	21	<u><u>341,911</u></u>	<u><u>164,824</u></u>	<u><u>506,735</u></u>

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

The notes on pages 53 to 74 form an integral part of these financial statements.

	<b>Note</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total 2021 £</b>
<b>Income and Endowments from:</b>				
Charitable activities	3	708,645	422,000	1,130,645
Other trading activities	4	486	-	486
Investment income	5	83	-	83
Total income		<u>709,214</u>	<u>422,000</u>	<u>1,131,214</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
Raising funds	6	(23,919)	-	(23,919)
Charitable activities	7	<u>(531,543)</u>	<u>(425,332)</u>	<u>(956,875)</u>
Total expenditure		<u>(555,462)</u>	<u>(425,332)</u>	<u>(980,794)</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		153,752	(3,332)	150,420
Transfers between funds		<u>(138)</u>	<u>138</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		153,614	(3,194)	150,420
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds brought forward		<u>152,519</u>	<u>65,396</u>	<u>217,915</u>
Total funds carried forward	21	<u><u>306,133</u></u>	<u><u>62,202</u></u>	<u><u>368,335</u></u>

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

The notes on pages 53 to 74 form an integral part of these financial statements.



## Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	15	86,753	155,695
<b>Current assets</b>			
Stocks	16	1,185	-
Debtors	17	148,810	105,639
Cash at bank and in hand		827,574	718,832
		<u>977,569</u>	<u>824,471</u>
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	18	<u>(512,587)</u>	<u>(566,831)</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>464,982</u>	<u>257,640</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		551,735	413,335
<b>Provisions</b>	19	<u>(45,000)</u>	<u>(45,000)</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>506,735</u>	<u>368,335</u>
<b>Funds of the charity:</b>			
<b>Restricted income funds</b>			
Restricted funds	21	164,824	62,202
<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>			
Unrestricted funds		<u>341,911</u>	<u>306,133</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	21	<u>506,735</u>	<u>368,335</u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities FRS102 and in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements on pages 53 to 74 were approved by the Board, and authorised for issue on 14th December 2022 and signed on behalf by:



Mark Barnish  
Trustee

## Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net cash income		138,400	150,420
<b>Adjustments to cash flows from non-cash items</b>			
Depreciation	6	68,942	95,550
Investment income	5	(1,098)	(83)
		<u>206,244</u>	<u>245,887</u>
<b>Working capital adjustments</b>			
Increase in stocks	16	(1,185)	-
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	17	(43,171)	46,535
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	18	47,347	(110,131)
(Decrease)/increase in deferred income		<u>(101,591)</u>	<u>473,392</u>
Net cash flows from operating activities		<u>107,644</u>	<u>655,683</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Interest receivable and similar income	5	1,098	83
Sale of tangible fixed assets		<u>-</u>	<u>1,425</u>
Net cash flows from investing activities		<u>1,098</u>	<u>1,508</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		108,742	657,191
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 April		<u>718,832</u>	<u>61,641</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 March		<u><u>827,574</u></u>	<u><u>718,832</u></u>

All of the cash flows are derived from continuing operations during the above two periods.

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

### 1 Charity status

The charity is limited by guarantee, incorporated in England (registered number 02000818) , and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the trustees are liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the charity in the event of liquidation.

The address of its registered office is:

The Dudson Centre  
Hope Street  
Stoke-on-Trent  
ST1 5DD

### 2 Accounting policies

#### Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting 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.

#### 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 the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)) (issued in October 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements are 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).

#### 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.

#### Income and endowments

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

### ***Grants 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.

### ***Investment income***

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

### ***Charitable activities***

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

### ***Other trading activities***

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

### ***Voluntary assistance***

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.

### **Fund structure**

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.

### **Stock**

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

### **Expenditure**

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

### ***Charitable activities***

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.

### ***Raising funds***

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***

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

### ***Support costs***

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.

### ***Tangible fixed assets***

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

### ***Depreciation and amortisation***

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

<b>Asset class</b>	<b>Depreciation method and rate</b>
Leasehold improvements	over the term of the lease
Office equipment	25% straight line
Computers	25% straight line
Telephone system	10% straight line

### ***Pensions and other post retirement obligations***

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.

### **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:

- a) Project activity not commencing until the following financial year.
- b) 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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **Provisions**

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.



## 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.

## 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.

## 3 Income from charitable activities

	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total 2022 £</b>
Grants & Contracts	-	660,830	660,830
Facilities Management & Rechargeable Services	583,175	55,348	638,523
	<u>583,175</u>	<u>716,178</u>	<u>1,299,353</u>
	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Total 2021 £</b>
Grants & Contracts	292,928	419,831	712,759
Facilities Management & Rechargeable Services	415,717	2,169	417,886
	<u>708,645</u>	<u>422,000</u>	<u>1,130,645</u>

#### 4 Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2022 £
Trading income;		
Cafe income	26,316	26,316
	<u>26,316</u>	<u>26,316</u>
	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2021 £
Trading income;		
Cafe income	486	486
	<u>486</u>	<u>486</u>

#### 5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2022 £
Interest receivable and similar income;		
Interest receivable on bank deposits	1,098	1,098
	<u>1,098</u>	<u>1,098</u>
	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2021 £
Interest receivable and similar income;		
Interest receivable on bank deposits	83	83
	<u>83</u>	<u>83</u>

## 6 Expenditure on raising funds

### a) Costs of trading activities

	Unrestricted funds Cafe £	Total 2022 £
Staff Costs	17,266	17,266
Cafe supplies	7,114	7,114
Office costs	1,201	1,201
Premises costs	5,499	5,499
Legal fees	460	460
Marketing and publicity	122	122
Depreciation	238	238
Other direct costs of activities for generating funds	140	140
Support Costs	8,554	8,554
	<u>40,594</u>	<u>40,594</u>
	Unrestricted funds Cafe £	Total 2021 £
Staff Costs	19,232	19,232
Cafe supplies	126	126
Office costs	729	729
Premises costs	756	756
Legal fees	259	259
Marketing and publicity	8	8
Depreciation	238	238
Support Costs	2,571	2,571
	<u>23,919</u>	<u>23,919</u>

**7 Expenditure on charitable activities**

	<b>Facilities Management</b>	<b>Rechargeable Services</b>	<b>Health Projects</b>	<b>Support &amp; Volunteering</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total 2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Staff Costs	104,085	134,915	38,979	217,715	68,885	564,579
Travel Costs	780	156	3,224	145	235	4,540
Training	880	1,106	-	2,814	-	4,800
Office Costs	48,376	11,286	1,776	33,393	6,582	101,413
Legal & Professional	6,350	15,817	3,621	12,371	1,837	39,996
Advertising & Publicity	162	110	3,435	1,225	3,070	8,002
Premises Costs	102,856	-	-	5,686	8,286	116,828
Insurance	7,400	979	326	-	-	8,705
Management Costs	-	-	-	1	2,534	2,535
Sundry	1,728	-	-	1	1	1,730
Depreciation	68,059	278	-	-	-	68,337
Bursary	-	3,854	-	-	-	3,854
Partner Engagement	-	-	-	52,060	-	52,060
Events	1,881	3	42	10,806	4,184	16,916
Grants	-	-	-	79,347	-	79,347
Support Costs	<u>28,512</u>	<u>17,107</u>	<u>5,702</u>	<u>14,256</u>	<u>8,554</u>	<u>74,131</u>
	<u>371,069</u>	<u>185,611</u>	<u>57,105</u>	<u>429,820</u>	<u>104,168</u>	<u>1,147,773</u>

**7 Expenditure on Charitable Activities (continued)**

	<b>Facilities Management</b>	<b>Rechargeable Services</b>	<b>Health Projects</b>	<b>Support &amp; Volunteering</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total 2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Staff Costs	112,787	109,878	26,518	144,337	81,664	475,184
Travel Costs	949	103	656	29	-	1,737
Training	-	348	115	271	-	734
Office Costs	50,569	3,768	25	21,296	6,746	82,404
Legal & Professional	2,437	14,159	2,857	1,990	3,309	24,752
Advertising & Publicity	1,257	-	-	9,561	2,925	13,743
Premises Costs	101,805	-	1,535	15,881	4,803	124,024
Insurance	6,231	875	250	300	-	7,656
Sundry	278	-	-	-	-	278
Depreciation	95,910	278	-	-	-	96,188
Bursary	-	6,091	-	-	-	6,091
Events	670	-	-	2,155	30	2,855
Support Costs	11,575	11,575	21,349	55,492	21,238	121,229
	<u>384,468</u>	<u>147,075</u>	<u>53,305</u>	<u>251,312</u>	<u>120,715</u>	<u>956,875</u>

## 8 Analysis of support costs

### Support costs allocated to raising funds

	<b>Cafe</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Allocated by</b>		<b>£</b>
<b>no. of staff:</b>	<b>3</b>	
Staff Costs	3,939	3,939
Staff Training	64	64
Travel	26	26
Premises Costs	85	85
Depreciation	38	38
Legal & Professional	940	940
Advertising & Publicity	143	143
Events	158	158
Office Costs	659	659
Sundry	1,814	1,814
Governance Costs	688	688
	<u>8,554</u>	<u>8,554</u>
	<b>Cafe</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>2021</b>
<b>Allocated by</b>		<b>£</b>
<b>no. of staff:</b>	<b>2</b>	
Staff Costs	4,802	4,802
Staff Training	71	71
Travel	49	49
Depreciation	39	39
Legal & Professional	895	895
Insurance	16	16
Advertising & Publicity	114	114
Events	11	11
Office Costs	1,084	1,084
Sundry	1,330	1,330
Governance Costs	431	431
Reallocate management fees	(6,271)	(6,271)
	<u>2,571</u>	<u>2,571</u>



**Support costs allocated to charitable activities**

	<b>Facilities Management</b>	<b>Rechargeable Services</b>	<b>Health Projects</b>	<b>Other Projects</b>	<b>Support &amp; Volunteering</b>	<b>Total 2022</b>
<b>Allocated by no. of staff:</b>	<b>£ 10</b>	<b>£ 6</b>	<b>£ 2</b>	<b>£ 3</b>	<b>£ 5</b>	<b>£</b>
Staff Costs	13,129	7,878	2,626	3,939	6,565	34,137
Staff Training	213	128	43	64	107	555
Travel Costs	85	51	17	26	43	222
Premises Costs	284	170	57	85	142	738
Depreciation	127	76	25	38	63	329
Legal & Professional	3,132	1,879	626	940	1,566	8,143
Advertising & Publicity	475	286	95	143	238	1,237
Events	527	316	105	158	263	1,369
Office Costs	2,198	1,319	440	659	1,099	5,715
Sundry	6,049	3,628	1,209	1,814	3,023	15,723
Governance Costs	2,293	1,376	459	688	1,147	5,963
	<u>28,512</u>	<u>17,107</u>	<u>5,702</u>	<u>8,554</u>	<u>14,256</u>	<u>74,131</u>

	Facilities Management	Rechargeable Services	Health projects	Other	Support & Volunteering	Total 2021
Allocated by no. of staff:	£ 9	£ 9	£ 2	£ 2	£ 4	£
Staff Costs	21,611	21,611	4,802	4,802	9,604	62,430
Staff Training	321	321	71	71	144	928
Travel Costs	218	218	49	49	97	631
Depreciation	176	176	39	39	79	509
Legal & Professional	4,029	4,029	895	895	1,791	11,639
Insurance	74	74	16	16	33	213
Advertising & Publicity	512	512	114	114	228	1,480
Events	50	50	11	11	23	145
Office Costs	4,878	4,878	1,084	1,084	2,167	14,091
Sundry	5,986	5,986	1,330	1,330	2,659	17,291
Governance Costs	1,939	1,939	431	431	861	5,601
Reallocate Management Fees	<u>(28,219)</u>	<u>(28,219)</u>	<u>12,507</u>	<u>12,396</u>	<u>37,806</u>	<u>6,271</u>
	<u>11,575</u>	<u>11,575</u>	<u>21,349</u>	<u>21,238</u>	<u>55,492</u>	<u>121,229</u>

## 9 Grant-making

### Analysis of grants

	Grants to institutions	
	2022	2021
	£	£
<b>Analysis</b>		
Community Health Champion Grants	79,347	-
VAST Bursary	3,854	-
	<u>83,201</u>	<u>-</u>

The support costs associated with grant-making are £Nil (31 March 2021 - £Nil).

No individual grants made to institutions during the year were material.

## 10 Net incoming/outgoing resources

Net incoming resources for the year include:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Operating leases - other assets	6,006	10,724
Audit fees	7,000	6,000
Depreciation of fixed assets	<u>68,942</u>	<u>95,550</u>

## 11 Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs were as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Staff costs during the year were:</b>		
Wages and salaries	537,926	489,579
Social security costs	37,754	32,205
Pension costs	44,240	40,282
	<u>619,920</u>	<u>562,066</u>

The monthly average number of persons employed by the charity during the year was as follows:

	2022 No	2021 No
Direct charitable activities	17	16
Generating funds	8	9
Management and administration	4	3
	<u>29</u>	<u>28</u>

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year.

The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £173,156 (2021 - £127,061).

## 12 Trustee remuneration and expenses

No trustee, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charity during the year.

No trustees have received any reimbursed expenses from the charity during the year.

## 13 Pension and other schemes

### Defined contribution pension scheme

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The pension cost charge for the year represents contributions payable by the charity to the scheme and amounted to £44,240 (2021 - £40,282).

## 14 Taxation

The charity is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from taxation.

## 15 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold Improvements £	Furniture and equipment £	Computer equipment £	Telephone System £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>					
At 1 April 2021	294,229	158,442	1,832	96,941	551,444
At 31 March 2022	294,229	158,442	1,832	96,941	551,444
<b>Depreciation</b>					
At 1 April 2021	160,051	157,258	1,061	77,379	395,749
Charge for the year	60,281	589	458	7,614	68,942
At 31 March 2022	220,332	157,847	1,519	84,993	464,691
<b>Net book value</b>					
At 31 March 2022	73,897	595	313	11,948	86,753
At 31 March 2021	134,178	1,184	771	19,562	155,695

## 16 Stock

	2022 £	2021 £
Stocks	1,185	-

## 17 Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	136,268	91,753
Prepayments and accrued income	12,542	13,886
	148,810	105,639

**18 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade creditors	29,161	34,880
Other taxation and social security	47,854	15,148
Other creditors	13,995	14,178
Accruals	49,776	29,233
Deferred income	371,801	473,392
	<u>512,587</u>	<u>566,831</u>
	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Deferred income at 1 April 2021	473,392	51,312
Resources deferred in the period	371,801	473,392
Amounts released from previous periods	(473,392)	(51,312)
Deferred income at year end	<u>371,801</u>	<u>473,392</u>

Creditors include £371,801 (2021: £473,392) 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 £ 71,939  
 Support & Volunteering Projects £249,486  
 Strategic Liaison £40,376

**19 Provisions**

	<b>Other provision</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
At 31 March 2022	<u>(45,000)</u>	<u>(45,000)</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 amount provided.

There was no movement during the year ended 31 March 2022.



**20 Analysis of net assets between funds**

	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Capital Other funds £</b>	<b>Total funds at 31 March 2022 £</b>
Tangible fixed assets	86,753	-	-	86,753
Current assets	812,745	164,818	6	977,569
Current liabilities	(512,587)	-	-	(512,587)
Provisions	(45,000)	-	-	(45,000)
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>341,911</b>	<b>164,818</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>506,735</b>
	<b>Unrestricted funds General £</b>	<b>Restricted funds £</b>	<b>Other funds £</b>	<b>Total funds at 31 March 2021 £</b>
Tangible fixed assets	155,695	-	-	155,695
Current assets	762,269	62,196	6	824,471
Current liabilities	(566,831)	-	-	(566,831)
Provisions	(45,000)	-	-	(45,000)
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>306,133</b>	<b>62,196</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>368,335</b>

**21 Funds**

	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2022 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
<i><b>General</b></i>					
General Fund	181,133	610,589	(516,704)	(123,107)	151,911
<i><b>Designated</b></i>					
Dudson Centre					
Contingency	25,000	-	-	-	25,000
The Hub Contingency	50,000	-	(42,631)	92,631	100,000
Museum Contingency	50,000	-	(11,288)	26,288	65,000
	<u>125,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(53,919)</u>	<u>118,919</u>	<u>190,000</u>
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<u>306,133</u>	<u>610,589</u>	<u>(570,623)</u>	<u>(4,188)</u>	<u>341,911</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Health	21,206	59,402	(61,254)	2,365	21,719
Support & Volunteering	22,334	153,415	(153,064)	-	22,685
SOT CC	14,306	131,177	(116,120)	1,471	30,834
Other	4,350	33,716	(41,325)	352	(2,907)
Capital funds	6	-	-	-	6
Community Health					
Champions	-	289,250	(196,763)	-	92,487
Culture Recover Fund	-	49,218	(49,218)	-	-
	<u>62,202</u>	<u>716,178</u>	<u>(617,744)</u>	<u>4,188</u>	<u>164,824</u>
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>62,202</u>	<u>716,178</u>	<u>(617,744)</u>	<u>4,188</u>	<u>164,824</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>368,335</u>	<u>1,326,767</u>	<u>(1,188,367)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>506,735</u>

	Balance at 1 April 2020 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2021 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
<i><b>General</b></i>					
General Fund	127,519	709,214	(555,462)	(100,138)	181,133
<i><b>Designated</b></i>					
Dudson Centre Contingency	25,000	-	-	-	25,000
The Hub Contingency	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
Museum Contingency	-	-	-	50,000	50,000
	<u>25,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>100,000</u>	<u>125,000</u>
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<u>152,519</u>	<u>709,214</u>	<u>(555,462)</u>	<u>(138)</u>	<u>306,133</u>
<b>Restricted</b>					
Health	16,299	42,624	(37,717)	-	21,206
Support & Volunteering	24,182	254,119	(255,967)	-	22,334
SOT CC	-	54,124	(39,818)	-	14,306
Other	24,909	71,133	(91,830)	138	4,350
Capital funds	<u>6</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6</u>
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>65,396</u>	<u>422,000</u>	<u>(425,332)</u>	<u>138</u>	<u>62,202</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u>217,915</u>	<u>1,131,214</u>	<u>(980,794)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>368,335</u>

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:

**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.

**Purpose of restricted funds:**

The Health related projects are funds from the ICB 's (formerly CCG) PCT to fund the Strategic Development Worker for Health work and funding for the Door 2 Door transport service.

The Support and Volunteering Fund is funding from The National Lottery Community Fund for the Totally Stoked Support project.

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.

Community Health Champions funding is from Stoke-on-Trent City Council to fund the Community Health Champions project.

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

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.

## **22 Commitments**

### **Capital commitments**

There were no capital commitments at the balance sheet date.

## 23 Obligations under leases and hire purchase contracts

The total value of future minimum lease payments was as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Within one year	(8,007)	(12,154)
In two to five years	<u>(26,022)</u>	<u>(17,217)</u>
	<u><u>(34,029)</u></u>	<u><u>(29,371)</u></u>

## Operating lease commitments

Total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Land and buildings</b>		
Within one year	3,000	3,000
Between one and five years	12,000	12,000
After five years	<u>45,000</u>	<u>48,000</u>
	<u><u>60,000</u></u>	<u><u>63,000</u></u>
<b>Other</b>		
Within one year	6,006	12,154
Between one and five years	<u>26,022</u>	<u>17,217</u>
	<u><u>32,028</u></u>	<u><u>29,371</u></u>

## 24 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year.

## 25 Control Relationship

The charity is controlled by the trustees.

## 26 Financial instruments

### Categorisation of financial instruments

	2022 £	2021 £
Financial assets that are debt instruments measured at amortised cost	136,268	91,753
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	(29,161)	(34,880)

### 27 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 or other purposes.

At the start of the year the balance of held funds was £68,858 (2021 £42,986). Receipts of £2,520,726 (2021 £2,065,874) were received during the year and payments of £2,493,094 (2021 £2,040,002) were made leaving a year end balance of £54,197 (2021 £68,858).

### 28 Government grants

VAST received the following government grants during the year:

National Lottery Community Fund £153,415  
 Stoke on Trent City Council Closed Grant £18,000  
 Stoke-on-Trent City Council Community Health Champions £288,000  
 HMRC (CJRS grant) £9,106

The amount of grants recognised in the financial statements was £468,521 (2021 - £400,535).

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.