



The Homeless Service for Chesterfield, North East  
Derbyshire and Bolsover

# Annual report

## 2022/2023



# Chair's Introduction

Welcome to our Annual report. I hope you enjoy reading what has been happening at Pathways.

In 2022 we were still dealing with the tail end effects of Covid but regardless of this, the work of Pathways continued. We have seen increasing pressure on the service. Despite the success of "Everyone In" during the Pandemic, the number of those affected by homelessness locally has increased above pre-covid levels due to shrinking of the affordable rented sector, freezing of benefits and the cost-of-living crisis resulting in increasing evictions.

Our CEO Sian and all of our staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly as essential frontline workers, seeing clients face to face, providing food, clothing and bedding, as well as housing and benefit advice, outreach and tenancy support. Our specialist nurses have continued to support and facilitate care for those dealing with mental and physical health needs as well as substance and alcohol misuse.

We have been able to develop more client groups this year as part of tenancy support and we hope to see this continuing. We are particularly indebted to our volunteers who support all aspects of our work and are immensely valuable members of our team.

A lesson that we have learnt over the last few of years is the effectiveness of partnership working and relationships have continued to strengthen between the different agencies supporting those facing homelessness in Chesterfield, with Pathways taking a central role, alongside the three local Borough Councils, who have commissioned our services, and P3.

Other local organisations including Hope House, Foodbank and Church on the Bus, have also been instrumental in keeping people fed and safe.

We owe thanks to those who have supported us financially over the last year. This includes those who have given us grants such as: Chesterfield Borough Council, North East Derbyshire Council and Bolsover Council (who fund our main hub), our local Clinical Commissioning Group (who

# Chair's Introduction

fund our nurses), the Police and Crime Commissioner (who funds our Volunteer and Activities Coordinator) and P3 (who funds our tenancy support worker). Plus, the ongoing and generous support we receive from organisations and individuals. We are very grateful to everyone as without this there would be no Pathways.

Last year I said that we wanted to start looking ahead, making strategic plans for the future, rather than having to react to external events, and true to this, we applied for and were awarded a 3 year grant by the National Lottery. This funding helps secure our future over the next 3 years.

We have also started work on improving our website and have recruited two new trustees during the course of the year, so strengthening the Board. We are particularly pleased that one of our new trustees has lived experience of homelessness and so will bring us a valuable perspective.

Looking forward to 2023 and 2024, we are developing better provision for women who often face barriers when seeking help, and are also working on a peer mentoring scheme.

No doubt there will be new challenges ahead but with your support, Pathways will continue to provide a beacon of hope for those who are facing homelessness in our boroughs.

**Cathy Madden**

**Chair of Trustees, Pathways of Chesterfield.**

# CEO's Report

880 people  
supported

Pathways is now into its 17<sup>th</sup> year of running. Every year since joining Pathways I seem to start my report with how this year has been busier than the last and this is no exception, with Pathways supporting over 100 more people than the previous year.

This year we did a key piece of work as a team to establish values for Pathways. The vision and mission have been in place since Pathways began but we didn't have a core set of values that really lets you know how we work. It was an enjoyable workshop to do with the team to see that even without values in place the team very much had the same priorities and vision of how we work and how we want to develop. A key element that really stood out to me, and I feel really is the essence of the team, is that we never give up. All too often the people we support don't quite fit organisations remit or are too complex, too challenging or don't engage well enough and this results in people just going from pillar to post often never receiving the right support. I feel proud that the team at Pathways will always keep working on someone's behalf to get the right housing and right support in place.

This year we have supported 880 different people and supported 280 people into new accommodation. Not all the 880 were homeless some had problems with housing or were at risk of eviction and were supported to remain in tenancies or reconcile differences with family members. Our housing team has been run off their feet but continue to tirelessly look for new solutions and housing options to ensure people can move forwards. We welcomed Wojciech to the housing team. Having already worked in Chesterfield with people who are homeless as part of the winter provision Wojciech quickly hit the ground running to offer people support.

The current climate brings a whole new host of difficulties to the homeless field with the cost-of-living crisis making it extremely difficult to fund even the most basic of needs on a low income and even with all the "hacks" of how to save money. In many cases this does not come close to adding up. This year sadly we have seen more people become homeless due to life just being unaffordable and losing tenancies through nonpayment of rent. Coupled with the capped housing

280 people  
housed

# CEO's Report

benefit that does not come close to meeting the cost of most rent within the private sector making there even less affordable housing. There is no wonder there has been an increase in the number of people who have become homeless and need support.

Within Pathways this year there has been a large focus on consolidating the work we do. A lot of focus has been on income generation to continue to fund the strong services we provide. We have been successful in gaining grants to continue to fund the staff roles for the next 12 months. This is always a challenge but right now with the huge numbers of people to support we would not cope with fewer staff.

Our nursing team have been stretched this year with the sad departure of our long-standing nurse Sarah Sammans who has moved on to a new challenge. This left us with quite a large period of time with just one part time nurse whilst we recruited. Tom Leahy has worked extraordinarily hard to try and meet the health and mental health needs of all the people accessing our service and has done some amazing work to support some people who have struggled with mental health for a large part of their lives finally supporting them to get the proper treatment.

Our groups have been thriving this year and have built up a lovely supportive community within them, with people meeting up and spending time together outside of the groups. Some of the work produced in these groups is fantastic, I wish I had those artistic capabilities. More than anything it's the smiles and giggles I hear from the groups and people leaving in a happier frame of mind that makes them so worthwhile.

Our tenancy support has been going well with 96% of the people we have supported remaining in their tenancy and moving forwards. Nev Maxwell who worked with us has sadly moved on to a new challenge at Mansfield council. We were fortunate to have a very smooth hand over with this role to one of our housing team Jules Naylor moving into the role. The service continues to go from strength to strength with a large focus on getting people engaged in support for their holistic needs to ensure both their tenancy and wider needs are being met. One of the people we are supporting with their tenancy didn't have the luxury of learning computers at schools and is just about to start a new course to learn about this.

# CEO's Report

We felt the loss of our office manager this year, who was off on maternity leave but were fortunate to have Claire Wood come in to cover, bringing her boundless positivity with her. We look forward to welcoming Laura Roberts back shortly plus the first Pathways baby since I have worked here.

A real positive of this year is the relationship we have forged with HSBC Bank making it simple to support people who have No Fixed Address to get access to a bank account. We are able to book appointments and get the account set up in one appointment with the majority of people.

Our volunteer team keeps going from strength to strength and they are a huge part of the work we do, from helping to run drop-in, to cooking for group, supporting groups and befriending they add so much value and positivity to our service. This year our Volunteer and Activity Coordinator Claire Douglass organised to run a bucket collection at Chesterfield Footballs Club with her volunteer team. It was a fun evening getting to chat to some of the fans about the work we do and raising money to support people who are homeless in our community. Thank you to the Football Club for allowing us to be there.

Whilst we go into the next financial year with trepidation, hoping that we can manage the number of people who need support we are also excited for the new developments we plan to introduce to enhance our service.

We have plans for a women's service. Too often women remain part of the hidden homeless due to finding it too difficult to access homeless services due to them being male dominated.

We also plan to introduce a new recovery element to our support, to help people who are or have struggled with substance misuse to help build support networks and move forwards.

Finally, our website is in the process of being recreated to bring us up to date with all our changes, Pathways has developed hugely in the last 6 years and we wanted our online presence to demonstrate this, watch this space.

**Sian Jones**

**CEO, Pathways of Chesterfield.**

# The Support We Offer



Housing Advice and Support



Specialist Nursing



Tenancy Support



Activities



Provisions



Dentist



Peer Mentors

# Specialist Nurses



Our nursing team have had a very busy year, and this was made more difficult due to Sarah Sammans moving on to a new challenge and with a long gap whilst recruitment took place. We supported over 50 people with longer term interventions and another 80 with brief interventions.

Our nurses have been supporting people with all sorts of things from crisis mental health to regaining access to health care, pregnancy when homeless, vaccination and a million different things in between. The nurses act as advisors, support and advocates for our clients to ensure they can get access to health care to meet their needs.

Over the year a big challenge for pathways nurses has been getting clients with severe mental illnesses, who eventually would require mental health residential care, admitted to a mental health unit under the mental health act.

Another big issue that our nurses have played a large role in is the number of vulnerable clients post covid who have been cuckooed and/or exploited, and the number of VARMs (Vulnerable adult risk management) our nurses have initiated or been involved in.



## Emily's Story

Emily presented at Pathways in 2019. She was a 63-year-old female who had been moving around the country staying in B&B's for many years. Emily informed us that she had left a violent marriage some years ago and had moved back home with her mother who had dementia and who then passed away leaving some inheritance which enabled her to travel.

# Specialist Nurses



Emily had arrived into the local area and had been self-funding a guest house for many months until her funds had run out. The landlord was quite worried about her and had allowed Emily to remain in the guest house whilst she sort help from the local authorities and Pathways.

Emily did not trust any services due to being sectioned historically and feeling it was unjust. It took months for staff to build up enough trust to be able to try and understand what support Emily required and what Pathways could do to help.

At appointments Emily seemingly exhibited paranoia and delusions so much so that it was extremely difficult to complete any official paperwork or have support from the local authorities or other services. Staff were increasingly concerned that Emily had some underlying mental health issues that were making her very vulnerable. Safeguarding referrals were completed but with limited medical evidence and Emily refusing support no actions were taken. Emily refused to access a GP or have any health referrals submitted, even with obvious signs of physical health issues, she was very distrusting of health services completely. She declined to sign any paperwork or provide identification to make an application for benefits, health or housing due to her beliefs that people were out to get her. Staff were concerned as it became apparent that Emily was neglecting her health and putting herself in a very vulnerable position due to strong beliefs and paranoid thoughts.

Due to no medical evidence or benefits in place and Emily refusing to cooperate with the local authorities there were no solutions to her housing crisis, and she was facing the possibility of becoming street homeless as the council's couldn't find a duty as she presented well during the short appointments with them. The landlord of the guest house did allow Emily to keep residing there, but tensions were fraught due to them not understanding the complexity or needs of this lady and or receiving any funds and this often led to them asking her to leave but then changing their mind, leaving Emily

# Specialist Nurses



anxious and worried. This case went on for three years with Emily coming and going from the service for months at a time, including through the covid lockdowns. When the relationship between Emily and the guest house were good, she refused support from Pathways stating she could remain in the guest house, but this never lasted, and Emily would be asked to leave again. Eventually Pathways were able to work alongside Emily enough to secure benefits and housing benefit for the guest house. This was a temporary measure however as the landlord of the guest house had asked Emily to source other accommodation.

Pathways mental health team continued seeking support from other mental health services and as a result was able to gather and submit enough medical evidence to the local authorities for Emily to be offered several accommodation viewings. Unfortunately, Emily declined them all, some because she felt they were unsuitable and some because of her paranoia and delusions making her afraid to accept them. Emily was neglecting her health and still refusing to seek medical attention for ongoing health issues, again due to her paranoia and beliefs.

Pathways mental health team managed to set up regular professional meetings with the Mental Health Team, Local Authorities and Social Care and Emily was eventually assessed by the AMHP team and admitted to hospital on a section to assess her physical and mental health and try to establish some stability with medication. Emily was given a social worker and professionals were then able to move in the right direction to find suitable accommodation and ongoing suitable care. As a result of this Emily is now stable and doing well in temporary residential accommodation whilst social care are sourcing more permanent residential care.

# Tenancy Support



Sadly, the contract ended for “everyone in” but we decided this role was essential to Pathways and were able to find funding to keep the post in place for another year.

Our tenancy support has gone from strength to strength this year. We have seen 97% of the people we are supporting remain in their tenancies and develop and improve skills to manage their tenancies. We have seen people take huge steps forwards as people who have never managed a tenancy or have not done it for a long time try so hard to make it work. We supported 48 different people with longer term tenancy support and a lot more with brief interventions such as setting up housing benefit or supporting people to get furniture.

One of the big challenges in tenancy support is where someone struggles with something or hits a roadblock, they lose a lot of confidence in themselves, and this can sometimes spiral out of control. Encouraging them to re-engage with support and allow them to see it as a learning opportunity rather than the end of the world can take a lot of time.

## Hannah Story

Hannah is single 63-year-old white female with a local connection to North East Derbyshire. She was referred to Pathways by the North East Derbyshire council homeless team

At the time of referral Hannah she was at risk of homelessness as she was the live in carer for her father. When he passed away her brother who is the chief executor to the estate put pressure on her to leave her father’s home so it could be sold.

Hannah suffers with anxiety and depression. Her anxiety is so bad that she struggles to leave the house and has a friend that does her shopping for her. She has contemplated taking her own life in the past and has been admitted onto the psychiatric ward previously.

# Tenancy Support



Pathways started to support Hannah with accessing the housing register with Rykneld homes, and legal support through Derbyshire Law centre. Over a brief period of increased pressure from her brother to vacate the property, he changed the locks while she was away visiting family, making her homeless.

Hannah initially moved in with her daughters, but due to overcrowding and a breakdown in relationship, her mental health deteriorated, and she was admitted to hospital.

North East Derbyshire Council investigated her situation and accepted a duty of care. She was temporarily housed by them at a hotel with a provision to move to one of their temporary accommodations when one became available.

Hannah has had additional support through Pathways to get a birth certificate so she could register for housing and has been linked up with the mental health nurses at Pathways to offer support around her anxiety.

Hannah's application to Rykneld homes was completed and she was successfully direct matched for a property close to her main support network. Pathways is providing ongoing support with an application to Derbyshire Discretionary Fund for items and rent in advance and will continue support with setting up her new tenancy once she signs for the property.

Since being placed Hannah has started attending a social group with support and hopes to keep going. She stated she did not know where she would be without the support of Pathways and the council and is extremely grateful.

# Activity Groups



Pathways offer a variety of activity groups to support people who are homeless, vulnerable of becoming homeless or have just been housed after being homeless. We provide a safe environment where people can spend time with others, relieve isolation and boredom, and build self-esteem and self-fulfilment. We provide a nutritious meal during most of the sessions which we find encourages people to come along initially and once they've come to a few sessions they keep coming back. Having something productive to do as well as the networks people build at these sessions are invaluable to keeping people stable and happy and reduces the likelihood of them returning to homelessness after they've been housed.

We run groups every day of the week including: Games Group; Art and Craft group; Allotment Group; Womens Group; Restoration Group and Music Group.



# Geoff's Story

Geoff is a 67-year-old man who attended our drop-in service, where he presented himself as homeless after being evicted from his council property. Geoff had struggled due to the death of his wife and life seemed quite impossible without her, he accumulated over £3,500 worth of debt due to non-payment of rent and his mental health had deteriorated significantly. Geoff needed support to acquire new accommodation and was assigned one of our homelessness workers who originally greeted Geoff on his initial visit to Pathways.

In addition to making referrals to housing agencies Pathways provided food bank vouchers, pension assistance, clothing, toiletries, and involved P3 to help with supporting Geoff on some appointments. We accompanied Geoff to his Lighthouse housing assessment, but the process meant that there was a wait until final decisions were made. Geoff was placed in a town centre B&B and stayed there for a few weeks. Geoff was accepted by Lighthouse and Pathways covered the service charge costs so he could move in as quickly as possible (Geoff wasn't able to afford this). Geoff moved in to his new home and has flourished in his new environment. Shortly after being housed Geoff decided to come to Pathways Restoration group and has been attending every Friday since. He is a positive, chatty and kind gentleman who is liked by all and although he clearly still feels lost without his wife he manages to talk about her often and leaves each session having had much laughter and also having achieved some great upcycling work. Geoff has even upcycled some pieces of furniture for other people using our service that can't attend group. Geoff loves his football and making people laugh, he seems settled, and content and we very much enjoy seeing his confidence continue to grow.

This is what Geoff said about us:

*"I was at my lowest ebb when I walked through that door, without Pathways I am sure I would still be at rock bottom or no longer here. Pathways has always been there for me, everyone is so kind and helpful. The restoration group every Friday gives me structure each week, the banter and company lifts me, I actually enjoy it that much I wish restoration group was on every day. All the staff at Pathways are first rate."*

# Service Development

We have some exciting new developments for the coming year.

## Recovery support

We have received some funding from Derbyshire County Council to provide a recovery service for people moving forward from drugs and alcohol. This includes harm reduction groups, activity groups to help people do something different with their time and peer mentoring for people more advanced with their recovery. We are really excited to provide this as a number of the people we support really struggle to make changes to their substance misuse and we hope by having this service easily accessible at Pathways we will make it a little bit easier.



## Peer mentoring

Most of the course is written and we are ready to launch this. So many of the people we support want to give something back and with their skills and lived experience are in such a brilliant position to do this. Seeing other people who have been through some of the same hardships as you and have made it through to the other side can be inspiring.



## Women's support

We are excited to launch a new woman only service element to our work at Pathways. We will have a weekly drop-in and women's group where people can come to a safe space to receive support. Our main building can be a bit daunting for some to attend as it is heavily dominated by male clients. By having this separate space available we hope this encourages women who are homeless and have been nervous to access support to engage with us.



# Bank

A real positive of this year is the relationship we have forged with HSBC Bank making it simple to support people who are homeless to gain access to a bank account.

Gaining a bank account sounds so simple and is something we all take for granted, however when people are homeless it can be a real stumbling block to moving forwards. Many people who attend Pathways for the first time do not have bank accounts and this can make it difficult to access benefits. People who are accessing benefits with no bank account are often having this paid into someone else's account which can leave them in a really vulnerable position.

We are able to book appointments and get the account set up in one appointment with the majority of people gaining a bank account by the end of the appointment. This pathway has been set up for people who are homeless by HSBC, so they understand the difficulty in providing proof of addresses and ID. The bank account is a basic account so stops people getting into trouble with debt but is invaluable in helping people move out of homelessness.

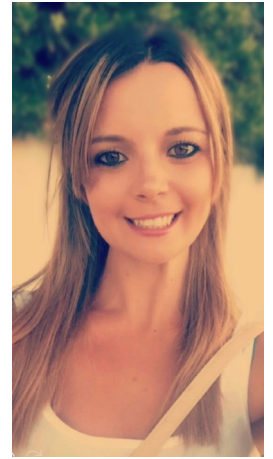


# Volunteers

Every year we say the same thing but it remains true, we couldn't run the service we do without our fabulous team of volunteers.

The team do so many different things at Pathways including supporting the housing staff team at drop in, helping at activity groups, providing a be-friending service, cooking, sorting out donations and any other tasks which come up.

They give up their own valuable time to support us and the people we work with and we're so grateful for their time and efforts.



# Values

We did a piece of work as a staff team this year to develop our values. These are now front and centre in everything we do and we have displayed them proudly around our buildings .

## **We never give up on people**



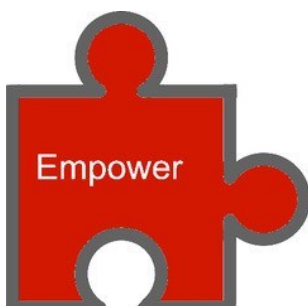
Even when people have lost hope, we provide a safe space and act as a constant mechanism of support providing encouragement, patience, and stability to empower people believe in themselves and work towards what they want to achieve, at a pace that suits them.

## **We are approachable**

Becoming homeless can be terrifying and have a huge impact on confidence. We work in a friendly empathic and non-judgmental way to make it as easy as possible to get support. We really listen to get an understanding of how people are, what they want to achieve and how we can support them with this.



## **We empower people**



We support people to build self-esteem to have the confidence in achieving their goals and making decisions through sharing knowledge, motivational work and encouraging resilience through learning.

# Values

## We respect people

We work in a respectful way with everyone we come into contact with from the people we support to partnership agencies, colleagues, and the wider network we meet. We support people in a non-judgmental manner and always treat people as individuals. We are open and honest and work in a transparent way.



## We work collaboratively

We build strong partnerships to ensure people get the best possible support to meet their needs. These strong partnerships enable us to advocate for the people we work.

## We continuously work to improve our service

We are constantly striving to improve our knowledge so that we can continually develop our charity and enable people improve their situation, using data, research and lived experience.



# Tom's Story

Tom is a 19-year-old male who found himself homeless after leaving supported accommodation to move in with his partner at the time. Sadly, this relationship broke down and Tom moved in with his father. Circumstances were difficult as Tom's father was in a new relationship, and this did not work out. Tom was unable to stay with his mum as there was no space.

Tom had contacted NEDDC (North East Derbyshire District Council) homeless team and been placed in Bed and Breakfast due to priority need based on his mental health. He suffered with anxiety and depression and there were concerns of Tom self-harming.

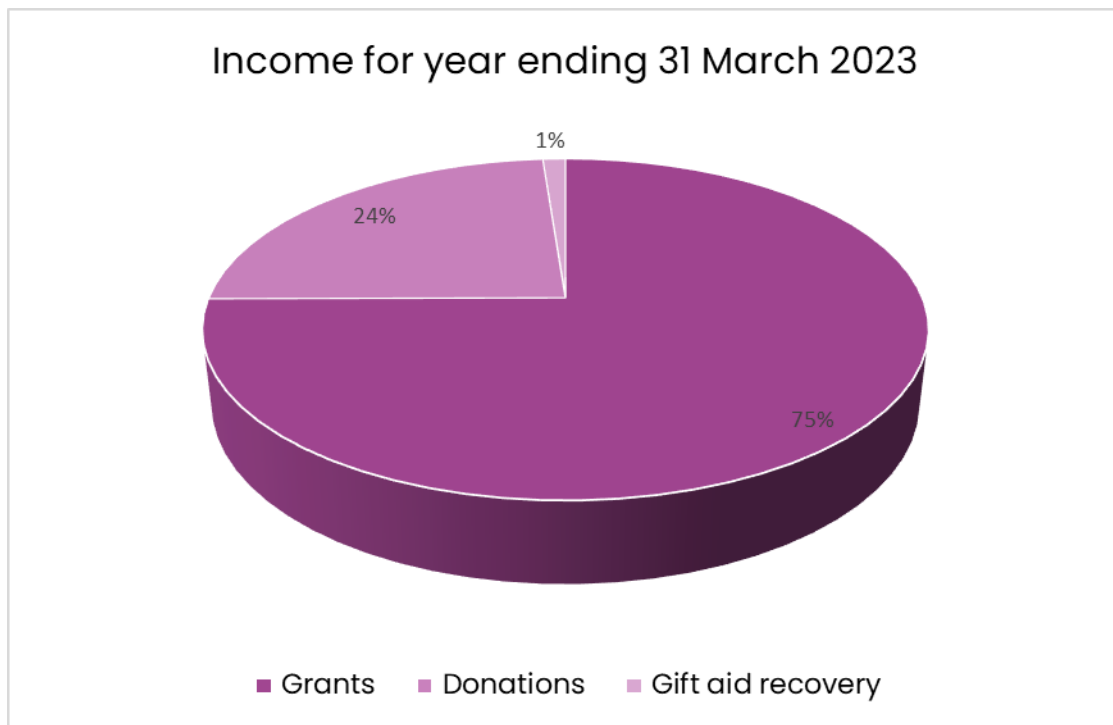
Tom came to Pathways after being sign posted to us by his housing worker at NEDDC. When Tom attended, he had no food and was not accessing benefits. We supported Tom to make an application for universal credit and provided some emergency food to tide him over. We also supported Tom to make an application for an emergency fund payment from Derbyshire Discretionary fund to help him buy essentials whilst waiting for his benefit claim.

We completed an assessment with Tom and discussed different housing options and he felt supported housing would be better for him right now both in terms of wanting help to get back on his feet and being able to afford it. We also discussed Tom's mental health and he felt he would benefit from a bit of extra support from our nurses. Tom talked about the future a lot and was really interested in looking at a career with the armed forces. We supported Tom to research information about this and agreed when he was in accommodation, we could support him to the Armed Forces Career Office to find out more, this motivated Tom to want to get things in place.

We worked with Tom and NEDDC homeless officer to apply for numerous supported housing options and supported him to carry out phone and face to face assessment. Tom was offered a place in a project outside of Chesterfield. Tom was pleased to accept it but was a little nervous to attend to sign up on his own. We supported him to this appointment and gave him provisions to get him on his feet in his new property.

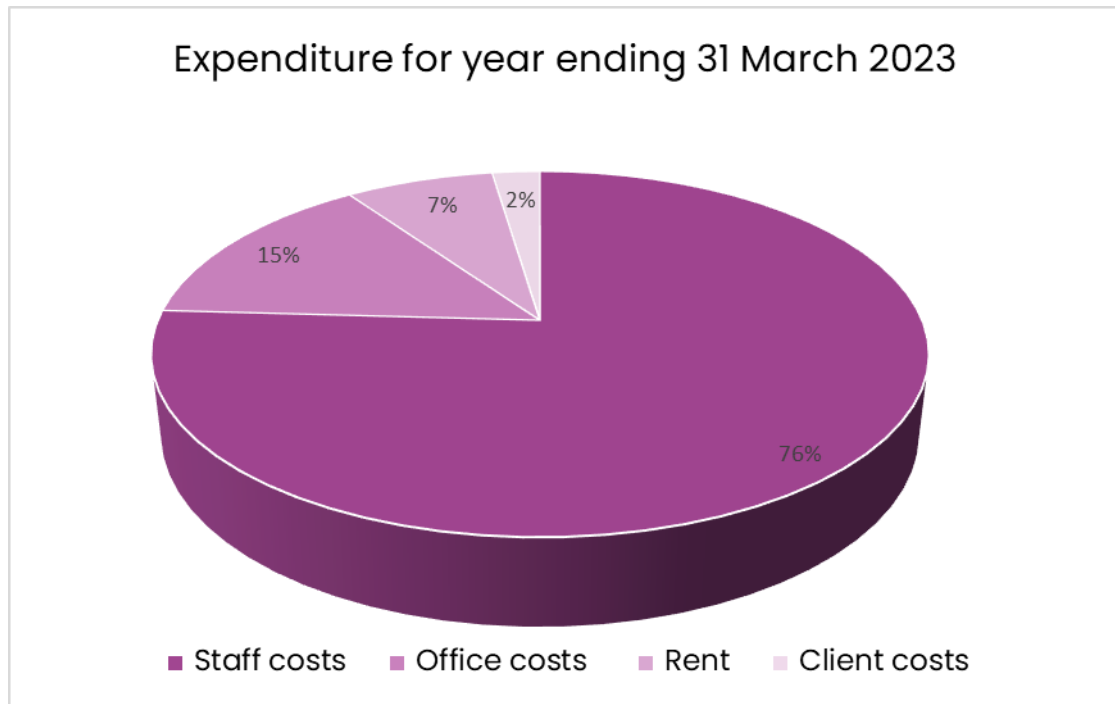
Tom is aware that we will support him when he feels ready to attend the careers information appointment. Tom has settled into the project and is doing really well.

# Finances



Income	£	%
Grants	£186,917	74.83%
Donations	£59,600	23.86%
Gift aid recovery	£3,000	1.20%
Interest received	£265	0.11%
	<b>£249,782</b>	

# Finances



Income	£	%
Staff costs	£226,741	74.98%
Office costs	£42,938	14.20%
Rent	£22,000	7.27%
Client costs	£7,085	2.34%
Other	£3,055	1.01%
Governance costs	£595	0.20%
	<b>£302,414</b>	


# Thank you

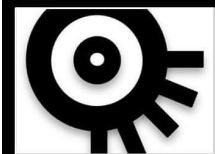
The work of Pathways could not continue without our generous funders and donors. We are always grateful for the money and supplies we receive that help us to support people who are homeless or at risk of becoming so.



# Thank you



 Independent Electric Group vs We Shall Overcome Uptown

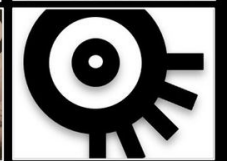


**JOE SOLO: ICHABOD WOLF**

MR BUNNY ALAN BROWN: KWORYL DEL SCOTT MILLER  
 THE HONEST POET POKE O'SWEDGERS: MY PLEASURE  
 KOOTCH: RESTLESS SPIRITS  
 MAY DAYS IN BARCELONA  
 PAY AS YOU FEEL: ALL PROCEEDS TO  
 PATHWAYS OF CHESTERFIELD  
 SATURDAY 16 JULY 2022: 2PM-11PM  
 CHESTERFIELD LABOUR CLUB :  
 113 Saltergate, S40 1NF



 **Pathways**  
 OF CHESTERFIELD



MUSIC AND POETRY FUNDRAISER FOR PATHWAYS  
 KOOTCH: POKE O'SWEDGERS  
 RESTLESS SPIRITS

FREE ENTRY - BUCKET COLLECTION WITH ALL PROCEEDS GOING TO PATHWAYS  
 CHESTERFIELD TO SUPPORT THOSE WHO ARE HOMELESS OR AT RISK OF  
 HOMELESSNESS

SATURDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2022 @ 7.30PM  
 CHESTERFIELD LABOUR CLUB :  
 113 Saltergate, S40 1NF



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