

STEPPING OUT PROJECT
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2024

Charity Number SC032371

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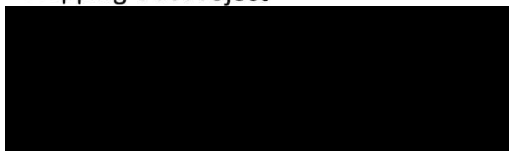
STEPPING OUT PROJECT
REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
FOR THE YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2024

The Management Committee are pleased to present their financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024

Charity Name: Stepping Out Project

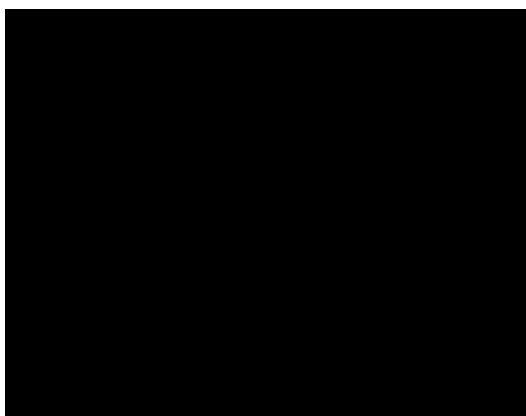
Registered office and operational address:

Stepping Out Project



Charity Registration Number: SC032371

Management Committee/ Trustees:



Project Manager

Independent Examiner:

EA Independent Ltd
5 South Charlotte Street
Edinburgh
EH2 4AN

Bankers:

Bank of Scotland plc
44 Court Street
Haddington
EH41 3PN

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

The charity is governed by its constitution most recently updated on 21st September 2023.

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Members of the management committee hold office for one year but are eligible for re-election. The committee elect from their number a chairperson and treasurer.

The members of the committee include representatives of organisations, bodies or individuals, whose co-operation will further the objects of the Stepping Out Project. These representatives have no voting rights on the committee.

Achievements and Performance

This has been another highly successful year of busy activity and personal achievement for all involved with Stepping Out.

The dedicated hard work and commitment of the staff has ensured that the organisation achieved its main aims of continuing to provide a wide array of activities while providing support and encouragement to each of the Stepping Out users/members.

Art classes, pottery, lunch and supper clubs, gardening, walking groups, creative writing, and cycling groups have continued to be very popular. The new greenhouse in the Healing garden survived the winter storms and has produced a bountiful supply of herbs and vegetables for the cooking groups.

A new music project proved to be so popular with service users/members that a second group was created. Photographs of performances on stage at the "Fringe by the sea" document the success.

The remarkable popularity of sea swimming is undiminished.

A new antenatal mental health group, to enable new Mums and Dads to understand and recognise the development of symptoms and signs of post natal mental ill health, has been well attended and highly valued by all.

More time has been devoted to providing assistance with social security benefit claims and attendance for appointments.

Our users provide persistently positive feedback about the beneficial impact of their Stepping Out experience upon their health and wellbeing.

At a time when national surveys show the prevalence rate of mental ill health to be increasing and that restrictions on NHS and Local Authority budgets are placing limitations upon traditional services it is clear that the need for an organisation such as Stepping Out has never been greater.

The management committee has met regularly throughout the year.

The committee has been pleased that staff retention is high. Pride is taken from our status as a good employer and in the organisation's reputation as a good place to work. Staff describe SO as having an enabling atmosphere and being a supportive and empowering environment to operate within.

An update of policies and procedures, including staff contracts relating to employment, sick leave, redundancy and pensions has been undertaken.

Succession planning remains active, for project manager, lifestyle motivator, book keeper and management committee chair roles.

Discussions about the pros and cons of making an application to become a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) have continued. Application is a complex process. Although having limited impact upon the day to day function of Stepping Out it is probable, however, that the protections and reassurances that come with incorporation will be attractive to prospective committee members and trustees.

A keen eye is maintained upon Stepping Out's financial position, in particular the need to address the organisation's long standing reliance upon an annual grant from one particular source. Further detail is provided by the treasurer below.

Financial Review

The charity had grant and donation receipts in the year of £141,223 (2023: £92,458). The increase is mainly due to successful funding applications to The National Lottery (£31,480) and Social Isolation and Loneliness Fund [SIAL] (£16,000). The 2023 picture appears low due to a grant from Volunteer Centre East Lothian [VCEL], which was received in the 2021/22 year but was for use in the year ending 31 March 2023.

In addition, receipts this year include a one-off £50,000 from Lothian Pension Fund (LPF), representing a return of pension scheme surplus following cessation of Stepping Out's future participation in the fund. The money is being employed to enhance charity activities, to bolster charity surplus, for limited capital expenditure and to contribute to an employee's NEST pension plan in lieu of their future accrual of defined benefit pension in LPF.

Therefore, total charity receipts were £191,223.

Total charity payments in the year were £122,604 (2023: £112,089), rising slightly partly due to salary costs.

Overall, net receipts for the year were £68,619 (2023: net payments of £19,631).

Total charity funds at 31 March 2024 were £172,499 (2023: £103,880). Of the increase, £50,000 relates to the return of pension scheme surplus.

The funds are now held between our Bank of Scotland current account, and a new Virgin Money notice account to take advantage of higher interest rates and to provide greater protection of charity assets.

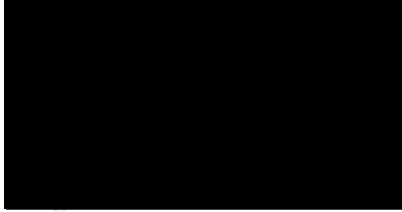
Total charity funds are made up of Unrestricted Funds (£74,057), Restricted Funds (£77,742) and Designated Funds (£20,700). The Designated Funds are earmarked for future employer pension contributions to NEST in lieu of an employee's future accrual of defined benefit pension. The restricted grant funding from The National Lottery, SIAL and ELC – Next Steps hasn't quite been enough to deliver what was needed and that shortfall is covered by the unrestricted/general funds.

In light of the increasingly competitive and challenging charity funding environment and as our main core funding comes from one source, the Trustees now consider it prudent to increase the charity's surplus funds target. Accordingly, the aim is now to have sufficient charity funds (excluding Designated Funds) to cover closer to twelve months of operating costs (£151,798 vs £122,604) rather than the previous six months.

Accounts Preparation

The Members of the Management Committee confirm that the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 have been prepared so as to comply with current statutory requirements, the charity SORP and the charity's own governing document.

Approved by the Management Committee and signed on their behalf by:



 (Chairman)

Date: 14 NOVEMBER 2024
.....

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Stepping Out Project

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages 2 to 4 and the related notes on pages 6 to 11.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 ("the 2005 Act") and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) ("the 2006 Regulations"). The charity's trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the 2006 Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section (44)(1)(c) of the 2005 Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.


Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:-

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:-
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1)(a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Regulations, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Regulations have not been met, or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



EA Independent Ltd
5 South Charlotte Street
Edinburgh
EH2 4AN
19th November 2024

**STEPPING OUT PROJECT
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENT**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	2023/24 Total	2022/23 Total
RECEIPTS						
Grants and Donations	2	13,286	47,480		60,766	14,305
Activities for Generating Funds	3	330	-		330	1,638
Incoming resources from charitable activities	4		78,583		78,583	76,515
Pension surplus refund				50,000	50,000	-
Bank Interest		1,544			1,544	-
Total Incoming Resources		15,160	126,063	50,000	191,223	92,458
PAYMENTS						
<u>Project costs</u>						
Supper Club			6,710		6,710	4,691
Lifestyle Motivator			15,199		15,199	13,401
Art Club			2,194		2,194	2,563
Sea Swimming			110		110	-
Pottery			411		411	-
Garden Project			2,251		2,251	1,656
Fundraising Costs			428		428	344
Client Outings			1,840		1,840	3,940
Healthy Minds - Happy Babies			3,798		3,798	27,284
Miscellaneous Expenses			1,534		1,534	1,497
Next Steps Project			51,108		51,108	19,688
Cycling			-		-	225
Pavilion café			1,929		1,929	2,123
<u>Support Costs</u>						
Wages and Salaries	5		29,046		29,046	28,867
Travel and Subsistence			-		-	548
Insurances			1,823		1,823	1,255
Postage and Stationery			1,491		1,491	792
Bookkeeping Fees/Audit Fees			2,410		2,410	2,320
Training Costs			183		183	48
Telephone/Website			138		138	847
		-	122,604	-	122,604	112,089
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources		15,160	3,459	50,000	68,619	(19,631)
Transfers		24,101	5,200	(29,300)	0	0
Total Funds brought forward		34,796	69,084	0	103,880	123,511
Total Funds Carried Forward		74,057	77,742	20,700	172,499	103,880

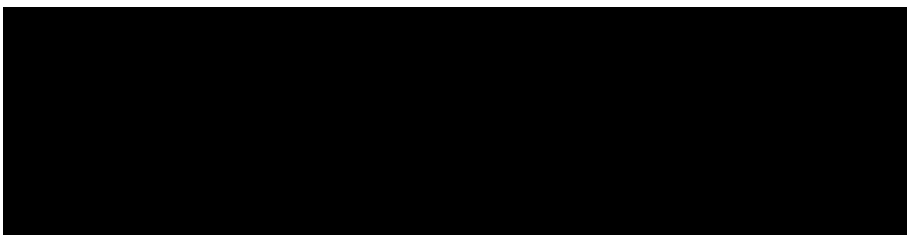
**STATEMENT OF BALANCES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	2023/24 Total £	2022/23 Total £
Opening Funds at 1 April		34,796	69,084	-	103,880	123,511
Net Receipts/(Payments) for the year		15,160	3,459	50,000	68,619	(19,631)
Transfers		24,101	5,200	(29,300)	-	-
Closing Funds at 31 March		<u>74,057</u>	<u>77,742</u>	<u>20,700</u>	<u>172,499</u>	<u>103,880</u>
Represented by Bank balances at 31 March		<u>74,057</u>	<u>77,742</u>	<u>20,700</u>	<u>172,499</u>	<u>103,880</u>

For information only, the fee for the Independent Examination of the 23/24 accounts is £400 and is a creditor at March 2024 (March 23: £400).

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with the Charities & Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf.



(Chairman)

(Treasurer)

Date:.

14/4/24

STEPPING OUT PROJECT
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR TO 31 MARCH 2024

1. Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with the Charities & Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

Fund accounting

- Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.
- Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Trustees for particular purposes.
- Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Receipts and Payments as it is received into the bank.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on a Payments basis. Expenditure includes VAT, which cannot be recovered and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates.

Pension scheme

During the year, the charity ceased future participation in the Lothian Pension Fund, which operates a defined benefit scheme for employees of local authorities and other bodies in the former Lothian region. The charity had one employee member of the scheme.

The trustees decided to cease participation on the basis of significant and potentially very volatile costs, inconsistent with a charity of our size and means. The employee is now a member of the NEST defined contribution pension scheme, along with two further employees.

The pension costs included in the Statement of Receipts and Payments represent the amount of employer's contributions paid to Lothian Pension Fund and NEST in respect of the accounting period and in accordance with the scheme rules. The NEST contributions include regular contributions made equally on behalf of the 3 current members, plus additional discretionary payments made from the Designated Fund.

Taxation

The entity is a charity within the meaning of Section 506 (1) of the Taxes Act 1988. Accordingly, it is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or Section 256 of Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that such income or gains are applied to exclusively charitable purposes.

2. Voluntary income: grants and donations

	Unrestricted	2023/24 Restricted	Total	2022/23 Total
	£	£	£	£
East Lothian Council – Online Digital			-	499
The National Lottery		31,480	31,480	-
SIAL		16,000	16,000	-
North Berwick Trust HMHB/Cycling/Supper			-	7,718
People's Postcode Trust			-	2,000
North Berwick Golf Club	8,388		8,388	-
Other grants/donations	4,898		4,898	4,089
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	13,286	47,480	60,766	14,306
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

3. Activities for generating funds

	Unrestricted	2023/24 Restricted	Total	2022/23 Total
	£	£	£	£
Fundraising activities	330	-	330	1,638
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	330	-	330	1,638
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

4. Incoming resources from charitable activities

	Unrestricted	2023/24 Restricted	Total	2022/23 Total
	£	£	£	£
<u>Grants</u>				
East Lothian Council: Adult Social Care		64,683	64,683	62,615
East Lothian Council: Next Steps	-	10,000	10,000	10,000
East Lothian Council: One to One Social care	-	3,900	3,900	3,900
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	78,583	78,583	76,515
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Notes to Support Costs

5. Salaries and wages

Admin and Project Manager salaries are shown as support costs, all other salaries are included within project costs.

	2023/24	2022/23
	£	£
Admin Costs	4,159	4,337
Project Manager	22,198	22,198
Employers Pension - Lothian Pension Fund	814	977
- NEST	978	589
Employers National Insurance	897	766
Total	<u>29,046</u>	<u>28,867</u>
Other Salaries included in project costs	63,700	60,415
Total	<u>92,746</u>	<u>89,282</u>

Employers National Insurance is the amount incurred net of the £5,000 employment allowance.

The average number of employees during the year was as follows;

	2023/24	2022/23
	Number	Number
Project Manager	1	1
Admin (part time)	1	1
Project Workers (part time)	5	5
Total	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>

Trustees' Remuneration and Related Party Transactions

No trustees received any remuneration during either the current or previous year. No expenses were reimbursed to trustees.

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year.

The Trustee's Indemnity is a part of a commercial combined policy to protect the charity from loss arising from the neglect or default of its trustees or employees and the consequences of any such neglect or default.

6. Funds

FUNDS NOTE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfers £	Balance at 1 April 2024 £
Unrestricted Funds					
General Funds	34,796	15,160	-	24,101	74,057
Designated Fund		50,000		(29,300)	20,700
	34,796	65,160	-	(5,200)	94,757
Restricted Funds					
National Lottery		31,480	(34,328)	2,848	-
SIAL		16,000	(17,447)	1,447	(0.00)
East Lothian Council - Next Steps		10,000	(10,905)	905	-
East Lothian Council - Social Care		3,900	(3,900)		-
East Lothian Council - Adult Social Care	69,084	64,683	(56,024)		77,742
	69,084	126,063	(122,604)	5,200	77,742
Total Funds	103,880	191,223	(122,604)	-	172,499

The Designated Fund receipt of £50,000 was from Lothian Pension Fund on 18th March 2024. This relates to the exit of the project leader from the Scheme and subsequent return of valuation surplus. Of this, £29,300 has been transferred to General Funds for use in enhancing charity activities and bolstering surplus funds. The trustees consider retaining the balance as a designated fund is prudent to ensure they can contribute to an employee's NEST pension plan in lieu of their future accrual of defined benefit pension in LPF.

The restricted grant funding from The National Lottery, SIAL and ELC – Next Steps hasn't quite been enough to deliver what was needed and that shortfall is covered by the unrestricted/general funds.

Adult Social Care Service: Funding from East Lothian Council (ELC) to allow Stepping Out to provide support to people with mental health issues in East Lothian by providing a range of activities to promote a better quality of life and to increase public awareness of mental health issues.

The National Lottery, SIAL and East Lothian Council - Next Steps allows Stepping out to fund our Next Steps programme which provides tailored support to people with severe and enduring mental health issues. It focuses on reducing isolation and improving the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in East Lothian.

7. Related Parties

There were no related party transactions in the current or previous years.