

Report of the Acting Treasurer for the year 2021

This report marks a year of exceptional sadness for everyone associated with the Mary Thompson Fund. Our Treasurer, a Socialist, a Humanist, a Feminist and a devoted campaigner for refugee rights died in August. Her illness had forced her to officially resign in February and from that point it was agreed that the Secretary would 'hold the financial fort' until a new Treasurer could be recruited.

This proved to be more difficult than any of us would have hoped. Even our Treasure, in true selfless fashion, actively tried to encourage one of our former clients with accounting skills to take on the role, but for all sorts of practical reasons, this wasn't possible. Eventually, Stephen Nuttall graciously accepted the position and was formally ratified at the October Trustees meeting. One of the first jobs which he kindly undertook was to assist in the completion of the Annual Return to the Charities Commission.

It was agreed that as Acting Treasurer would complete the 2021 accounts so that Stephen could take over from 1st January with a 'clean sheet'.

General accompanying notes:

Requests for help were received from refugees from the following countries: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Cameroon, Cote D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Honduras, Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Lithuania, Nigeria, St. Lucia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

Income:

We receive a regular monthly income of £1,153 in Direct Debits which is augmented by one-off donations, grants etc.

We have benefited from the fundraising efforts of others and over the last year our Chair has given talks for which we received specific donations from Middlesbrough Soroptimists and Yarm Lions. In addition, we received donations from Saltburn Labour Party and the friends of one of our Trustees whose friends kindly donated to MTF in lieu of gifts, to mark a very special birthday!

We have been able to include regular accessible payments to Hartlepool clients thanks to the willingness of our Vice-Chair to administer this through her outreach Caseworker role for Justice First.

We began the year with each client receiving £45 per month which comprised a £10 per week emergency payment plus, in recognition of the need to be in touch with family and friends during covid, an additional £5 for 'phone calls. Spending was closely monitored by the Treasurer who reminded us that this level of expenditure may not be sustainable, so we had a brief period when payments were reduced.

In February our High Interest Account was closed and the £17,000 balance was transferred to the main account.

In April we were extremely grateful to receive a generous grant for £30,000 from the Jill Franklin Trust which has provided stability, relieved the need for frantic fundraising, enabled us to restore weekly payments of £10 to each client and provided a fund to meet the additional needs of clients, for example the cost of school uniforms.

Also, in April we received a Gift Aid payment of £1432.43 from HMRC.

An application in May to the National Lottery Awards for All yielded a grant of £1,400 to assist with developing a website and updating an information leaflet. This is still in progress as there was an issue with the website using 'PayPal' for any donations to MTF, which remains unresolved, but which Stephen has undertaken to look into.

We were touched and grateful in June to receive a donation from the estate of our late Secretary who had served as a Trustee in the early years.

In August, as the world was shocked by the emerging brutality of the Taliban, our supporters simply increased their donations and we have been able to respond to local requests for help as a result.

We received a number of donations to help cover legal costs for a Nigerian family whose plight had touched the hearts of a support group in East Cleveland.

A gift in memory our Treasurer was tinged with sadness, but received from her family with gratitude.

Expenditure:

In addition to the regular hardship payments made (since covid restrictions) on a monthly basis which have helped around 75 destitute people registered as having no recourse to public funds, we have spent £2,948 on food and

toiletries, with other items being donated from local business, community supporters and a regular significant donation of shopping vouchers from one individual supporter. There is also a scheme whereby local customers buy fairly traded rice and donate it for our clients. It is mainly our Middlesbrough clients who benefit from this spend as the 'Melting Pot' volunteers who run the Stockton Drop-in receive food donations from St Nicholas Church in Durham.

We pride ourselves that every penny raised goes to help our vulnerable clients, but although Trustees are generous with their time and commitment to our work, we don't think it acceptable that they should be substantially out of pocket, so this year £108.46 was spent on administrative costs which included the cost of printing covid letters for clients, newsletters for those registered supporters without the technology to receive online information and postage.

We also bought face masks and hand sanitiser to keep our Drop-in volunteers and clients safe during the pandemic.

We could not manage without our wonderful volunteers. Sadly, we cannot reward them financially, but they do receive reimbursement for any costs they incur when volunteering, plus entitlement to a destitution payment where appropriate.

Over the course of 2021, notwithstanding the limited nature of our operations due to lockdown and other restrictions, volunteers made emergency payments to clients on 733 occasions, with a further 20 payments in Hartlepool and additional food supplies given to those in need who may not necessarily have qualified for cash.

We were able to liaise with local charity, Purple Rose who provided what amounted to hundreds of hot meals on several occasions for which MTF paid per head and felt was good value for money. This 'taste of home' was much welcomed and enjoyed by clients.

Trustees considered 39 applications for assistance for needs including: School Uniforms, Education & Training, essential clothing, household goods, medical needs, help with household arrears, 'phone top-ups, travel to appointments, translation of documents to assist asylum claims, photographs for Home Office documents and additional needs for children (trips etc).

Mary Thompson Fund Jan - Dec 2021
Statement of Accounts 2021 for account number 20103929

Date	income	expenditure	Balance
1 st January '21			
	credits	debits	
January	1,706.44	3,000.00	-1293.56
February	19,129.26	4,400.00	14,729.26
March	1,761.85	2,618.00	-856.15
April	5,520.43	2,582.85	2937.58
May	5,558.00	3,900.00	1658.00
June	7,131.61	4,018.00	3113.61
July	4,383.00	5,076.70	-693.70
August	6,732.17	1,485.00	5247.17
September	11,370.93	6,453.26	4917.67
October	5,597.50	3,499.84	2097.66
November	5,699.64	7,775.00	-2075.36
December	5,109.25	3,400.00	1,709.25
Total:	79,700.08	48,208.65	34,861.71
	Opening balance: 3,370.28		
	Credits: 79,700.08	Debits: 48,208.65	

	Total:	83,070.36	Balance 31.12.21:	34,861.71	
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Bank statements January -December 2021