

# Launchpad Impact Report

For the Year Ending 30 June 2021



Supporting our Veterans

Company Registration Number: 08633047 | Charity Registration Number: 1153185



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## Reference and Administrative Details

<b>Registered charity name</b>	AF&V Launchpad Limited
<b>Charity registration number</b>	1153185
<b>Company registration number</b>	08633047
<b>Principal office and registered office</b>	3 Hansard Mews, Holland Park, London, W14 8BJ

<b>Our Trustees</b>	Nicholas Tubbs (Chair and Co-Founder) Major Kenneth McMillan MBE (Co-Founder) Lucinda Perriam (Deputy Chair) Lieutenant Colonel Richard Dixon-Warren Dr Philip Mixer QVRM DL Sharon Stainsby-Thompson Colonel Mark Underhill OBE DL
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<b>CEO and Co-Founder</b>	Major-General David Shaw CBE
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<b>Manager of Avondale House</b>	Phil Thompson
<b>Manager of Speke House</b>	Samantha Jackson
<b>Charity Secretary</b>	Amanda Crompton

# Foreword

Like many organisations and charities across the country, the effect of the pandemic has had a huge bearing on our operations. Our priority has been to keep staff and residents safe, while doing what we could to support each resident on their journey to independent living.

Our residents have really felt the impact of this pandemic and during lockdown there has been no face-to-face contact with staff or each other. Naturally, services and activities we arrange for them, have also been reduced and since Covid-19, the health and wellbeing of some of our residents has deteriorated.

Despite these challenges and difficult times, our staff have done a fantastic job to help, innovating with screen-based support, chats through windows and walks outside when permitted. We took on an additional in-house counsellor at both Avondale and Speke to provide extra support while outside services were missing, thereby continuing to help our residents when they needed us most but keeping health and safety paramount.

As a charity, we rely on personal and corporate donations and while the former has reduced significantly, we have received some very generous donations from corporate organisations and other charities to ensure we raise sufficient funding to be able to continue to deliver the excellent service we do.

On behalf of the trustees, I would like to thank Major-General David Shaw, our CEO, Samantha Jackson and Phil Thompson, our

House Managers, and Amanda Crompton, our secretary, for their work above and beyond this year. We are also extremely grateful to the organisations who have stood beside us - without your support we wouldn't have been able to achieve the amazing work that has been highlighted throughout this Impact Report.

It always gives staff and trustees great pleasure to see residents graduating to their own accommodation and employment, living independently, and contributing to society. Launchpad's purpose is to help veterans do just that, move on into a more successful life, and while the rate of doing this has fallen due to the pandemic, against the odds it has still been happening.

We also hit a significant milestone this year by welcoming our 500th resident. While a sad reflection that too many veterans struggle, we are very proud to have been around to help those who needed the charity's support.

I hope you enjoy reading some of our case studies and achievements this year.



**Nicolas Tubbs, Chair  
& Co-Founder**



Please consider making a donation by supporting our veterans  
<https://veteranslaunchpad.org.uk/campaigns/support-our-veterans/>



## Launchpad reaches significant milestone by helping 500 veterans



In February 2021, veteran Gary Wright moved into Launchpad's Avondale House and became the 500th resident the charity has supported. The 36-year-old self-referred to Launchpad after becoming homeless and sleeping in his car.

He served 10 years in the Royal Navy, initially as an aircraft engineer based at RNAS Culdrose and then later, working on Merlin helicopters as an Anti-Submarine Warfare Aircrewman, focussing on airborne surveillance and detection.

In 2007 he suffered a back injury and was medically discharged from service in May 2011. By 2019, he was suffering from depression and anxiety and took an overdose, which had a detrimental effect on his relationship.

He said:

“Avondale House is the right place for me to be. I know I can get the support and advice that I need to help me with my physical and mental health. It's a massive relief to be here and it gives me peace of mind.

“My flat is lovely and it's fully furnished. I've been made to feel very welcome and there is camaraderie between the residents. Places like Launchpad are a Godsend. What would we do without them?”

# Our Strategy

Launchpad provides veterans with accommodation (their own refurbished, one-bedroom flat) and communal facilities, for which they pay rent, either using housing benefit or income or savings, in most cases for up to two years.

Working with other organisations, Launchpad provides welfare and mental health support, as well as signposting to experts, as necessary; then Launchpad helps the veterans acquire jobs, via training where required, and permanent housing.

Furthermore, the charity provides confidence-boosting, character-building and social development activities, working with other partners, to aid veterans' transition and integration into civilian communities.

Launchpad aims to get its veterans into employment and permanent housing, thus contributing to society, within two years. The charity uses the Outcomes Star tool to monitor veterans' development.



# Service Delivery

Each veteran is assessed on arrival and a specific developmental plan is put in place. It will take into account the individual's health, wellbeing and ambitions.

One of the major benefits of living in one of the Launchpad houses is the ability for veterans to mix with individuals who have been through similar experiences while in the military; they usually feel part of a team again and can help and support one another.

Through a mix of voluntary social events and physical activities, many referred to as diversionary activities, the veterans gain confidence and social skills.

We work with many other agencies and charities to provide support to our residents including, when the individual is ready, training and employment, followed by housing advice.

When the veteran is ready, or when he or she decides, we help them move on to independent living. Unfortunately, some veterans move on prematurely, but they still benefit from their stay at Launchpad, however brief it is.

# A year in the Pandemic



The year has been dominated by the pandemic and Launchpad's priority was to keep staff and residents safe, while doing what we could to support each resident on their journey to independent living.

In effect, the Launchpad houses are similar to care homes in the way residents live - self-contained flats with communal areas and supported by staff - so risks of transmission of the virus are high in each of the houses.

However, staff worked hard to inform residents of the dangers of transmission and the ways in which risks could be minimised; this included use of PPE, carrying out good hygiene and social distancing.

Activities were reduced and social interaction was limited according to lockdown rules. Staff maintained contact with residents and we employed a new member of staff in each house last year to help those with mental health and addiction challenges.

These appointments turned out to be crucial as many organisations that support Launchpad's veterans were furloughed or carried out sporadic remote communication. House staff reinforced NHS and Government advice about the vaccination programme. Up to the point of writing (Oct 21), there have been a handful of Covid cases and all services are back to normal or near-normal now.

The staff have conducted their work outstandingly well through the year and, barring a few exceptions, the residents have also played their part to limit the impact of Covid-19. Residents rated Launchpad support 9.5/10 during the pandemic.

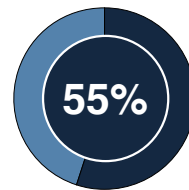
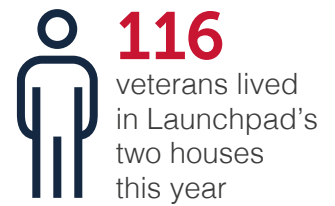
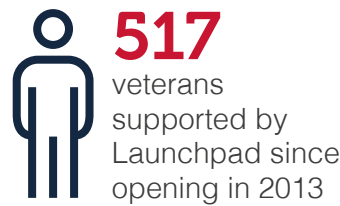
We remain vigilant to subsequent pandemic developments. In the meantime, staff are taking as many actions as they can to sustain the residents' wellbeing and health, working with whichever of our partner organisations are currently operating to help our veterans with their successful transition.

# Achievements and Performance in YE June 2021

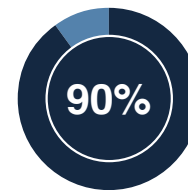
Our achievements and performance were severely impacted by the Pandemic as organisations either shut down or became remote. It had a debilitating effect of veterans' mental health. As with the last year, Covid-19 lockdown period brought a halt to most activities that helped the resident veterans build new lives.

When last measured (comparing pre-COVID vs COVID), the statistics that most indicate how well the charity is doing, 'Employment on Move-on' and 'Successful Move-on' dropped from 42% to 36% and from 69% to 62% respectively.

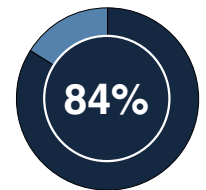
Given that the lockdown period ran for some of the period and the starting point for most of the residents was homelessness, again, we are actually pleased with those results but more can and should be done.



of veterans came from sleeping on the streets



from homelessness



from long-term unemployment

Category	Avondale House	Speke House	Total No. (% of whole)
Residents during year	51	65	116
Residents at year-end	27	36	63 (58 moved on)
Residents from a homeless background	48	57	105 / 90%
Residents gaining employment in the year	16	21	37 / 32%
Residents from HMP	5	5	10 / 9%
Successful move-ons from Launchpad	18/24 (75%)	18/34 (53%)	36/58 (62%)
Employment on move-on	15/24 (62%)	6/34 (18%)	21/58 (36%)



## David Weighman Avondale House

David joined the army in 1975 age 17. He was attached to the Corps of the Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers (REME) as a vehicle mechanic.

After completing trade training, he was posted to Soest in Germany and spent 13 years in the army until October 1988, during which time, he had worked in Canada, Belize, Lemgo in Germany, Lisbon and Ballerkelly Ireland.

On leaving the army, David moved to Bradford where he struggled to find work and quickly went downhill, becoming dependent on alcohol.

He struggled to settle and moved a number of times, living in Worcester, Hull, Darlington and St. Ives.

He said:

“I only spent three weeks in St. Ives before Covid-19 set in so I headed north again, this time with my camping gear and was camping in the Yorkshire Dales until the police moved me on. I moved into the backpackers’ hostel in Byker and was engaged with Crisis Skylight and after three weeks, the hostel offered me a bedsit. This was unbearable due to others smoking and myself being a non-smoker, so Crisis Skylight managed to put me in touch with Avondale House.”

David is grateful to Crisis Skylight for the support they provided, ultimately referring him to Launchpad and into Avondale House where he feels he has a fresh start at least.

He continued: “The staff at Avondale House have been fantastic from day one. They have given me a purpose in life again after being on a downward spiral where I had thoughts of suicide. It is not a place I ever want to go back to in my life and Avondale House saved me from taking my life.

“I engaged in many activities and found new hobbies thanks to my keyworker Sam. I help in the garden, put out bird feeders and am part of the photography group where I have just completed a project called Covid through the camera.

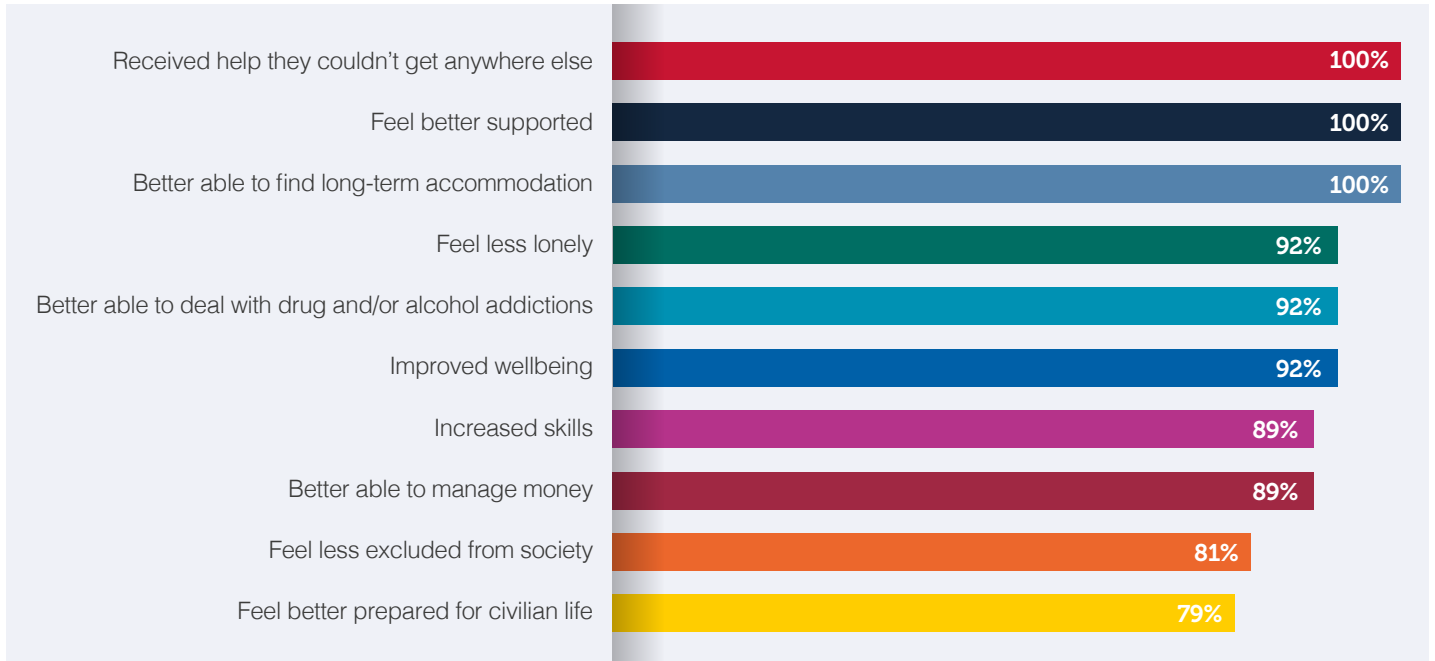
“I have since left Avondale House and now live in Marske House, an over 50’s accommodation run by Riverside Housing. I have my own self-contained flat but still have access to communal areas to meet with other residents.

“The house itself sits high on the cliff with beautiful views over the sea. I spend my time walking and taking photographs. Without the support of Launchpad, this would never have been possible. I visit on a regular basis to see staff and residents of Avondale House and continue to be supported by them. Thank you everyone.”

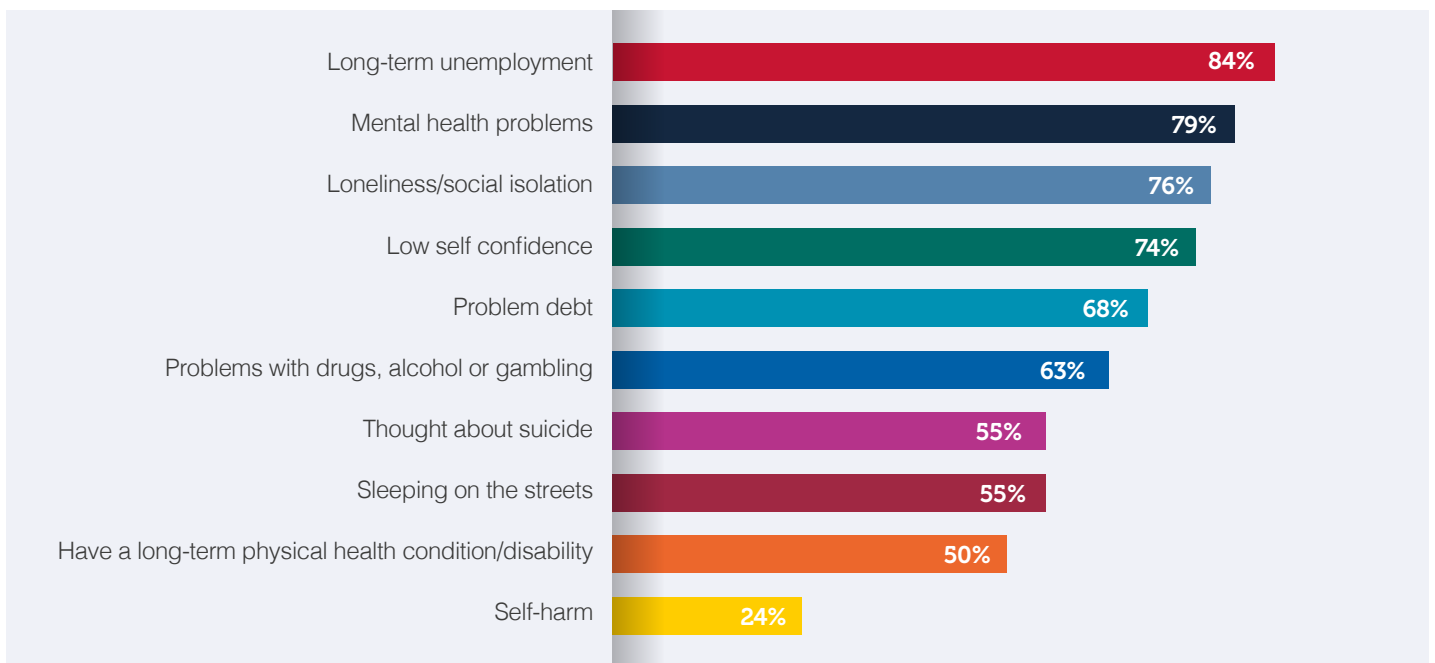


Periodically, we undertake in-depth research with our residents to measure the outcomes they achieve and to ensure we are providing the support people need.

Our research found the following outcomes:



And these were found to be situations that veterans found themselves in before coming to Launchpad:





## New allotment area at Speke House

In 2020, Launchpad received a two year grant from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Positive Pathways initiative providing Speke House with funding to create their own allotment. Initially, we had a large area of our garden that had been left unattended for many years due to a large mound of soil making the space unusable.

The funding we received meant that we could bring contractors in to remove this excess soil and debris. Once this work was carried out, we were left with an open area which could be redesigned by the residents.

In summer 2021, residents of Speke House began working on what was going to be the allotment. Residents themselves designed and drew up their own plans of what their vision of the allotment would look like.

Works have begun and so far, residents have worked together to flatten out the remaining soil, planned and plotted out the allotment area, and made a concrete shed base, to support the shed which has now been constructed.

For our next steps, residents are focusing on a concrete base for the greenhouse, which has been purchased and is ready to be put up. They will also be creating some raised beds which will allow residents of all ages and fitness abilities to use and enjoy.

# Working in Partnership

Launchpad depends on partner organisations to effect the holistic support we bring to the residents.

Key partners, whom we would like to thank for their excellent work are as follows:

<b>Avondale House</b>	
Welfare	Human Kind, Unique Fitness, Veterans Response, SSAFA, Angling Trust, Operation Veterans, NE Counselling Service, Crisis Skylight, Plumber Court, WWTW Project Nova, WWTW Northern Care Co-ordination Partnership (project ended June 2021), OT Placements, Teesside University, Newcastle City Council, Northern Learning Trust, Veterans Cycle Hub, Gateshead Walking Club, Widows Sons, CNTW, We Are With You (formerly Addaction).
Mental health	Op Courage, MIND, Combat Stress, Veterans at Ease, TILS, Anxious Minds, Talking Therapies, Mental Health Concern, Samaritans, CRUISE, NHS Community Mental Health Team, Plummer Court, Veterans At Ease, Human Kind, Gateshead FC Foundation
Diversions activities	Crisis Skylight, RBL, St Michaels Community Centre, Recyke y'bike, St Michaels Church, Byker Primary School, Northern Weightlifting, Byker Community Trust
Employment training	GEON Construction, Learning Curve, Crisis Skylight, Finchale Group, Newcastle Rail Network, SODEXO, Amazon, RE:GEN, Back to Back, Lifeworks, Re-Co-Co, Newcastle University, Sunderland University, People Plus
Education and training	Walker HIVE, Northumberland College, RBL, Lifeworks, Bell Group (P&D), Learning Curve, Finchale Group, Crisis Skylight, Back to Back, Lifeworks, Re-Co-Co, Newcastle University, Sunderland University, SAVANT
Housing	Gateshead Council, AFOS (Northumberland, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Durham, Gateshead), HAC, Private Landlords, My Space, Changing Lives, Riverside, Veterans Gateway, Shelter, Byker Community Trust/Karbon Homes
Others	Money Matters, Veterans UK, CAB, SSAFA, RBL, ABF, EE, National Energy, Neighbourhood Police

<b>Speke House</b>	
Welfare	Sanctuary, Addaction, Veterans Welfare, RBL, Everton in the Community, Tom Harrison House, Rise, Project Nova
Mental health	Sanctuary, Talk Liverpool, Moss House, CHATS, Local GP/CPN support, Op Courage, PTSD UK
Diversions activities	Liverpool Veterans, Healthiness, Everton in the Community, Sovini Group, Bay Tree Cooking, Battle-Back Centre, Yorkshire Dales Guides, LFC Foundation, Gary Perriton, Plant a Tree Foundation
Training	Speke Training and Education Centre, DWP, Sovini Group, Liverpool in Work, Inside Connections, Veterans into Logistics
Job hunting	DWP, Reach, Liverpool in Work LCC, Inside Connections
Housing	South Liverpool Homes, Property Pool Plus, CC Housing, Riverside
Others	Warrior Programme, M&S Neighbourly, local councillors



## Working with the local community – Armed Forces Day

Up to 60 pupils from Byker Primary School in Newcastle learnt about Armed Forces Day thanks to staff and residents from Avondale House.

Armed Forces Day is a chance for the nation to celebrate and show our support to the men and women of the Armed Forces who have served for their country, past and present.

Phil Thompson, Manager of Avondale House organised the visit with his staff and residents to talk to Year 6 pupils about life in the military and why we celebrate Armed Forces Day. It was also an opportunity for the children to ask questions.

Thanks to funding from Karbon Homes, they were invited to make bunting, write thank you cards and design toppings for a celebration cake that was presented by some of the children to serving personnel at The Fifth Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers.

James Shield, Key Stage 2 Phase Leader at Byker Primary School, said:

“ Our children really enjoyed the activities designed by Launchpad and to learn about the armed forces and engage with veterans who they are likely to see in their local area.

“It is important for our children to be able to engage with groups in the local area and address any misconceptions such as ‘all veterans fought in World War Two’. They appreciate all those who are serving (and previously served) and it is the communication with the forces staff that will be the most rewarding.”

# Financial Review

Income for the year totalled **£995,995** (2020 - £1,055,282) which included restricted grant income of £238,922 (2020 - £332,015) and unrestricted income of £757,073 (2020 - £723,267) arising from rents, service charges, bank interest and donations.

Expenditure for the year totalled **£872,536** (2020 - £889,863) of which £164,974 (2020 - £158,320) was restricted expenditure leaving unrestricted expenditure of £707,562 (2020 - £731,543).

There was an overall surplus of **£123,459** for the year (2020 - £165,419).

Net assets at 30th June 2021 totalled **£1,368,845** (2020 - £1,245,386). This included fixed assets of £748,667, debtors of £32,367, cash at bank of £642,132 and liabilities of £54,321.

Launchpad's principal sources of income in the last year have been:

- Rental income
- ABF The Soldiers' Charity
- The Veterans' Foundation
- Queen Mary's Roehampton Trust
- Sobell Foundation
- Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- The Sun 50 Reader Fund
- Leathersellers
- Forces Support
- Steve Morgan Foundation
- Gwyneth Forrester Trust

We express our thanks to those funding organisations who have supported Launchpad. All expenditure has been used to sustain the activities of the charity, according to its objectives. Funding goes to pay rent on Avondale House to Byker Community Trust/ Karbon Homes, salaries, running costs, capital expenditure and veterans' activities. We have yet to build up sufficient reserves to require investment objectives, other than to maximise bank interest.

## Reserves Policy

Our aim is to build up sufficient reserves to cover the following:

- Unforeseen emergency (eg repairs) - £50K
- Temporary staff costs - £10K
- Income ceased, or halted unexpectedly - £50K
- Large future plans (SH repairs, setting up hub) - £80K
- Short-term cover between grants - £50K
- Closure: Redundancy £18K, 3 months running costs - £258K

This currently amounts to **£498,000**. Actual reserves excluding fixed assets were £455,441 at 30 June 2021.

# Statement of Financial Activities

(including income and expenditure account)

## Year Ended 30 June 2021

	2021		2020	
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
<b>Income and endowments</b>				
Donations and legacies	208,170	238,922	<b>447,092</b>	476,274
Charitable activities	539,109	–	<b>539,109</b>	573,219
Investment income	3,003	–	<b>3,003</b>	1,789
Other income	6,791	–	<b>6,791</b>	4,000
<b>Total income</b>	<u>757,073</u>	<u>238,922</u>	<u><b>995,995</b></u>	<u>1,055,282</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Expenditure on charitable activities	707,562	164,974	<b>872,536</b>	889,863
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<u>707,562</u>	<u>164,974</u>	<u><b>872,536</b></u>	<u>889,863</u>
<b>Net income</b>	<u>49,511</u>	<u>73,948</u>	<u><b>123,459</b></u>	<u>165,419</u>
Transfers between funds	101,253	(101,253)	–	–
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<u>150,764</u>	<u>(27,305)</u>	<u><b>123,459</b></u>	<u>165,419</u>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds brought forward	1,053,344	192,042	<b>1,245,386</b>	1,079,967
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<u>1,204,108</u>	<u>164,737</u>	<u><b>1,368,845</b></u>	<u>1,245,386</u>

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

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

# Statement of Financial Position



Year Ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
	£	£
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Tangible fixed assets	<b>748,667</b>	779,921
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Debtors	<b>32,367</b>	33,889
Cash at bank and in hand	<b>642,132</b>	476,102
	<b>674,499</b>	509,991
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>54,321</b>	44,526
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<b>620,178</b>	465,465
<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>	<b>1,368,845</b>	1,245,386
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>1,368,845</b>	1,245,386
<b>Funds of the Charity</b>		
Restricted funds	<b>164,737</b>	192,042
Unrestricted funds	<b>1,204,108</b>	1,053,344
<b>Total charity funds</b>	<b>1,368,845</b>	1,245,386

For the year ending 30 June 2021, the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

# Supporting our Veterans

Call us free: 0300 11 11 238

Apply or donate at: [www.veteranslaunchpad.org.uk](http://www.veteranslaunchpad.org.uk)

