



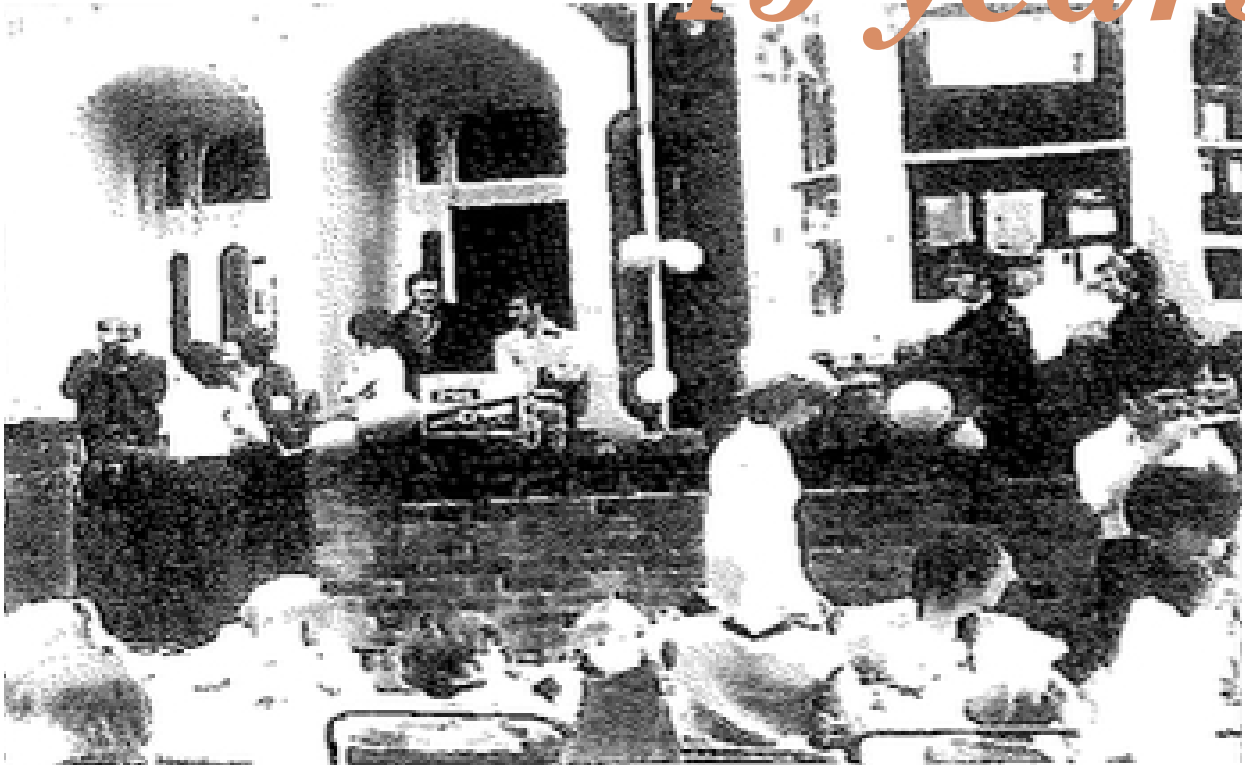
*“...staff made me feel comfortable and I could be myself”*

# The Gingerbread Centre **impact report** 2021/22



*giving hope and opportunity to families without a home*

# *45 years*



The Gingerbread Centre first started operation on the 5th December 1977 in Baxter Street, Hanley. We have now been operating for nearly 45 years.



# gingerbread

Today, The Gingerbread Centre has two accommodation sites and a total of **33 units** of accommodation. Rothesay Court in Normacot, provides 22 self-contained flats, with 24-hour support for families in need. Catherine Court in Hanley, offers 7 units of supported accommodation, which is staffed 24-hours a day, as well as 4 move-on properties nearby for young families who are ready to take their next **step towards independence.**

As part of our support, we **deliver activities** to provide residents with **guidance, training and meaningful activities**, including a place where we promote playing together, for parents and children to develop and bond. We help residents to **engage with other services**, to better **manage their mental health**, **maximise income** and **reduce debt, improve confidence and self-esteem**, and their ability to **have a choice, control or involvement**. We also assist our service users to **find settled accommodation**.

Rothesay Court provides 24-hour supported accommodation to single mums and dads, mums to be and couples with children.

We have an Activity Club on site where children can play, take part in daytrips, be creative, and much more. We provide a variety of support and activities to our families, such as online training courses, cook and eat sessions and creative workshops. The skills our residents learn while they are at Gingerbread can be used when setting up their new home, when they move on from Gingerbread, and in the workplace.

Catherine Court is an accommodation based service that opened in 2002 to provide housing related support specifically for teenage mums. Today we provide our support to expectant teenage mothers, vulnerable teenage couples with children and lone teenage parents who need to develop the necessary skills to live independently. We work in partnership with various agencies to provide the highest quality of support. The support we offer our families is varied, in-depth and includes parenting skills, activities and craft sessions.

In addition to our supported accommodation, we provide support to our families when they move on from Gingerbread, into their own home.





*“I will never be able  
to thank Gingerbread  
enough”*



Eve was referred to  
Gingerbread at the age  
of 16 with her son.

Eve is now back at Catherine Court -  
able to support other young mothers  
in the way she was supported.





I started my journey into becoming a mother when I became pregnant at 15. I was referred into Gingerbread and moved into one of the flats at Catherine Court shortly after my 16th birthday. This was a very scary time of my life as not only was I pregnant, I was sitting my GCSEs and this was the first time I had received any kind of independence. I quickly came to fear that I wasn't going to be able to cope with the pressures of being a young mother and living alone.

Catherine Court very quickly became my home and some of the staff became like family to me.

The staff helped me through the hardest time of my life and without them or the unit, I wouldn't be the person, or the mother I am today. They supported me in reaching for my goals in life and I will always be grateful.

I lived in one of the flats inside the unit for a year, and one of the move on houses for an additional year. I moved out of Catherine Court when I was 18. Although I was still young, I felt prepared to live independently. I went on to finish my studies,

with the hope that I would be able to work in a career supporting young mothers in the future.

It has been almost 7 years since I had my son, and I am now back at Catherine Court as a staff member. Being able to support young mothers the way I was supported during my time here is the most fulfilling job. I look forward to coming

into work, as Catherine Court is still a home from home to me.

I will never be able to thank Gingerbread enough for everything offered to me, from providing me with a safe

home when I was 16, to providing me with a job that I love now that I'm 23.

*“The staff helped me through the hardest time of my life”*



*Jacob told Sarah  
that he has made lots  
of friends in Activity  
Club*



The Activity Club at  
Gingerbread organise  
weekly activities and  
trips out during school  
holidays.







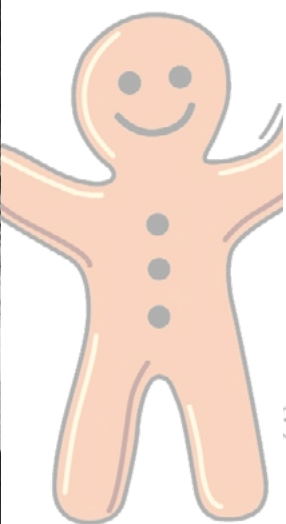
"Activity Club helped with the boys as the flat is very small for 5 children. It gave them someone to play with. Activity Club helped Arti herself relax when the boys are playing. Activity Club has helped me to spend time playing with Melanie as the boys have things to play with."

"It has stopped the boys from being bored in Gingerbread. Noah's favourite toys are cars, Oscar's favourite toys are air hockey, which he'd never played before, and the blowing ball game. Azvedo's favourites are basketball and board games."

"The boys told Sarah that they feel happy in Activity Club and feel like they can make friends easier. The boys really enjoy the new play area having lots of room to play."

Arti thanked Activity Club and mentioned how friendly the staff are and have been to the boys.

*Artimissa, Parent*




"Lee had never been to a play group until Activity Club and he has enjoyed every bit of it. I think coming here has helped with social skills and confidence. Lee has enjoyed play-time outside and the ball pit and anything with lights and noise. We really enjoyed doing hand and feet prints."

"This has definitely made Lee more confident and better at playing with other babies. All the staff have been lovely. I can't fault anything!"

*Parent*







***“As well as having a home, Sharon is debt free and has completed a course about domestic violence”***

Sharon was experiencing issues with substance addiction and had suffered domestic violence.

Sharon is now debt free, has her own home, has completed a course in domestic violence and has learned childcare skills and advanced parenting skills.





Before Sharon moved into The Gingerbread Centre, she was experiencing issues with substance addiction. She had just had a child and was evicted from her home. Sharon's ex-partner perpetrated Domestic Abuse against her, after they were separated.

Sharon had no one to support her and she couldn't support herself, so she asked for support from Gingerbread.

Sharon lived at Gingerbread for over a year and received various kinds of support from the service. This included emotional support and help with debts, preventing drug use, parenting skills, mental health, dealing with domestic violence and finding a home. After leaving the supported accommodation Gingerbread provided. Sharon received floating support from her Key Worker, in her new home.

The support that Sharon received came from her Key Worker, Gingerbread's Well-being Worker and from agencies outside The Gingerbread Centre, such as; New Era and CAB. Sharon was referred to Stoke Community Drug and Alcohol Service (CDAS) and Stoke Recovery, however, her substance misuse was not prolific enough to receive support from CDAS and Stoke Recovery could not provide support until Sharon's drug use had stopped completely. The support Sharon

needed with her drug use was therefore provided by Gingerbread.

The support received from Gingerbread has helped Sharon in many ways. She has learned how to budget and has received support with her emotions, particularly when her child was removed. She has learned to be more confident and has got her new home.

Sharon has achieved a lot with the support

she received from Gingerbread. As well as having a home, Sharon is debt free, has completed a course about domestic violence, has learned childcare skills and advanced parenting skills, and she now understands anxiety.

*“Sharon  
is going to  
college in  
September to  
study joinery”*

When asked what she thought her life would be like if she hadn't got support from Gingerbread, Sharon said she would; “be in the same old rut, probably worse to be fair”.

After moving on from Gingerbread, Sharon feels positive, motivated, happy and confident.

Sharon's plans for the future are to find a career she is happy with, have her daughter back in her care and to carry on doing courses. Sharon is going to college in September to study joinery.

# Throughout the year

## Accommodation

We supported **65** families  
This included **83** children

## Own Home

**16** families moved on into their own home

## Age Range

The age range of parents was **16** to **43**

## Referrals

In total, we received **113** referrals

## Domestic Violence

**33** families experienced Domestic Violence

## Mental Health

From **33** new families coming into Gingerbread - **18** had mental health issues

## Support Given

Tailored support packages - including budgeting, parenting, benefits, domestic violence, resettlement, lifestyle

## Other Impairments

Blindness / partial sight: **1** Mobility: **1**  
Cognitive: **2** Social / behavioural: **1**

## Well-Being

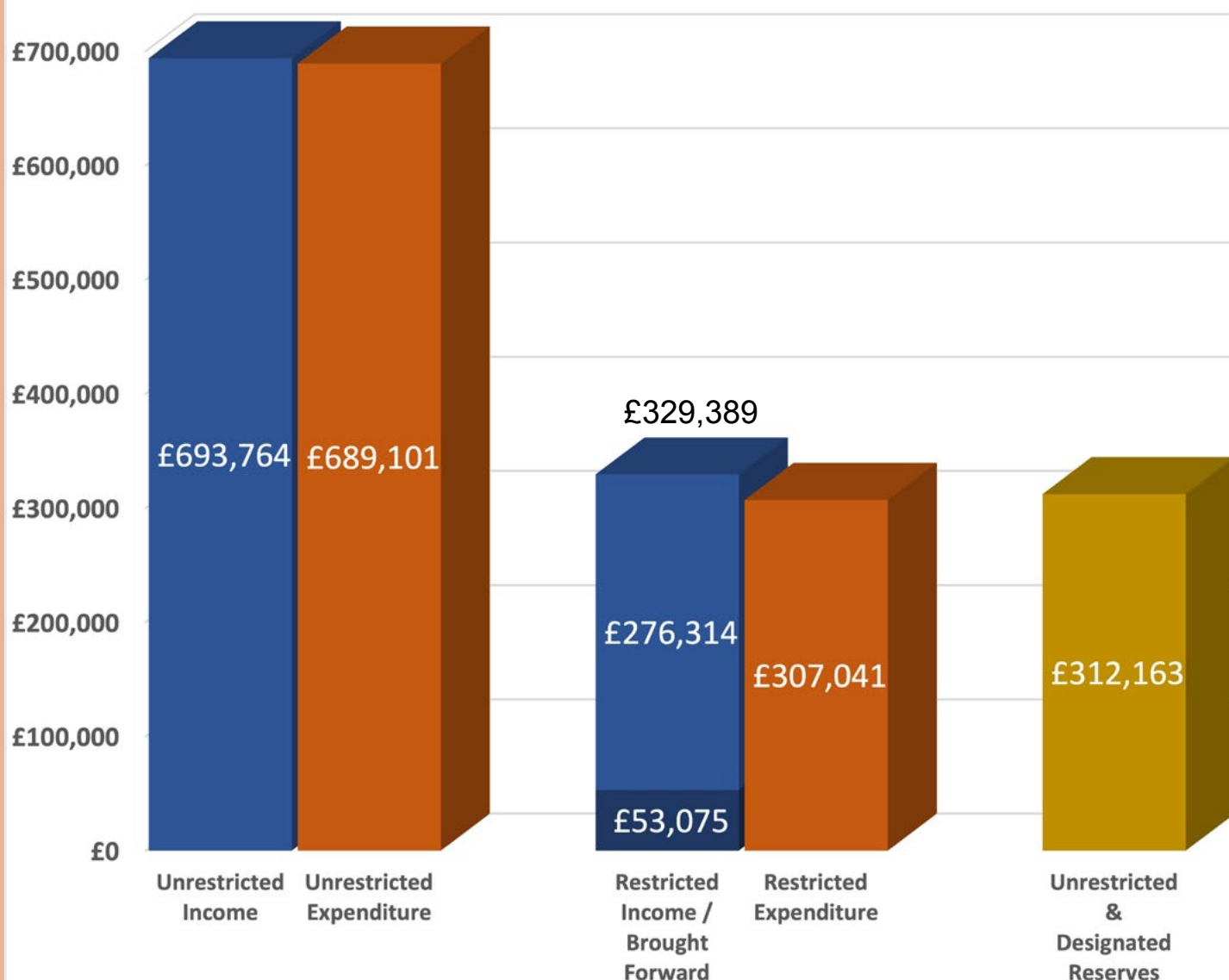
We delivered **1,476** well-being sessions

## Activity Club

**64** children attended the Activity Club



## The Gingerbread Centre - Income & Expenditure 2021/22



### Our Reserves Policy

To ensure Trustees comply with current legislation and recommendations from the Charity Commission regarding reserves and their use.

To maintain a sufficient level of reserves to allow the charity to continue to operate for a period of up to 2 months, should a shortfall of income occur.

To maintain a sufficient level of reserves to allow the charity to wind down, should it be necessary.

To take account of potential financial risks to the charity.

To prepare for contingencies that may arise from time to time.

To ensure the level of reserves is reviewed on an annual basis.

To ensure reserves are used to generate income.

To ensure the management of reserves is exercised in the best interest of the charity.

### Trustees

Mrs Eleanour Morrissey (Ch)  
 Mrs Anne-Marie Tierney  
 Miss Fiona Miller  
 Mrs Adele Wakefield (Sec)  
 Ms Leanne Kerry  
 Mrs Jacqui Riley  
 Dr Farah Mendlesohn  
 Mr Jack Brereton  
 Mr Malcolm Joliffe (Tr)  
 Mr Paul Willstead  
 Mrs Suzanne Banks  
 Mrs Emma-Jayne Williams



*“an overwhelming  
gratitude to the team  
at the Gingerbread  
who helped me pick  
myself up and help  
me realise I could  
have a future”*

Natalie came to Gingerbread with her 5 year old daughter when she was 20.

Natalie now runs her own charity supporting families in Stoke-on-Trent





I will never forget the Sunday evening when myself and my five-year-old daughter had nowhere to sleep and no support networks to turn to. I had heard of the Gingerbread and thought they could help. A few hours later, tired, scared, exhausted and ashamed I was standing at the door of the hostel with my black bag in hand and daughter at my side. A kind hearted lady greeted me and carried my small amount of belongings up to a small bedsit, which would be my home for the next nine months.

I remember the feeling of anxiety and the unbearable guilt looking at my daughter and the situation we were in. No home, no money and no confidence in my own ability to provide for myself and my daughter. Slowly I began to trust the staff and listened to the support and guidance they gave me. I am not saying it was easy, far from it, but I started to know that I had so much more to offer than the life I was living. I lived for many years being told I would amount to nothing, having my first child at 15 years old it felt like society had wrote me off.

I was supported to apply for housing and accepted an offer on a property, which would become our first proper home. It was exciting, but very lonely living in our new home. My support worker helped me to get furniture, apply for funding to carpet my home and supported me to find a school for my daughter, as well as encouraging me to find the strength to build a new life.

Once I was settled and my daughter was settled in school I started to think about what I wanted for my future. I knew I wanted to be able to support people in my position and provide them with the opportunities the Gingerbread gave me. I started by going to college and catching up the education I missed due to being a teenage mum. Once I had enough education I applied to university to study Psychology and went on to complete a Masters of Social Research. It was tough, there were days and many nights I wanted to give in, but drew strength from wanting to

prove Society's stereotypes wrong. One of the proudest days in my life was standing in front of the CEO and manager of Gingerbread being interviewed for my first role in Family Support.

Thinking about where myself and my daughter could have ended up if it wasn't for the support and commitment the team at Gingerbread showed us. At the same

time an overwhelming gratitude to the team at the Gingerbread who helped me pick myself up and help me realise I could have a future. What a great future it turned out to be! I have a home, a family I am proud of, a Degree, a Master's degree, working towards an MBA and leading my own charity providing family support.

Wherever my support workers are now I know that I could not lead the life I do now without them. I often wonder how my life would have turned out if it wasn't for the kind lady that opened the door for me that Sunday evening.

*“I started to know that I had so much more to offer than the life I was living”*



*“Fantastic support. There is always someone there and though I’m a single dad, I’ve never felt judged”*

Jay came to Gingerbread with his son.





# fundraising



As statutory income is reduced and the need for our services increases, The Gingerbread Centre has become more reliant on voluntary income raised over the last 12 months from individual giving, corporate partnerships and events. Grant income from specific applications to trust funds and grant awarding bodies has also become more important and will continue to be so. All income streams need to increase in the future to enable the charity to grow and develop its services going forward.

Just some of the amounts raised:  
**Enterprise Challenge - sponsored  
by the Swansway Motor Group**

**£ 5,081**  
**Celebrity Antiques Event**

**£ 1,559**  
**Walking Event**

**£ 491**  
**Christmas Jumper Day**

**£ 409**

15





*giving hope and opportunity  
to families without a home*

## **The Gingerbread Centre**

### **Rothesay Court (Head Office)**

*Providing accommodation for  
homeless families and single  
pregnant women.*

Rothesay Court  
Furnace Rd  
Normacot  
Stoke-on-Trent  
ST3 4LY

Tel: 01782 344740  
Fax: 01782 344741

### **Catherine Court**

*Gingerbread's Teenage Parents  
supported accommodation unit.*

Catherine Court  
30 Eastfield Drive  
Hanley  
Stoke-on-Trent  
ST1 3DJ

Tel: 01782 215656  
Fax: 01782 215700



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