



Durham Action on Single Housing Ltd



# **DASH Annual Report**

***April 2019- March 2020***

*We believe that everyone, regardless of circumstances, should have a fundamental right to a place of shelter, and help to rebuild their life.*

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# Staff & Volunteers

## Management

Trevor Atkinson  
Janet Boyle

## Staff

John Branthwaite	Gary Raisbeck
Robert Conn	Graham Rodham
Lauren Cooper	Shaun Rooney (left July 2019)
Vicki Davies	Wendy Simpson
Angela Elliott (left August 2019)	Rachel Wilkin
Michelle Forster	Heather Witham
Annette Golightly (left January 2020)	Aimie Wood
Jenny Laverick	Gareth Wood
Stephen Lowther	
Vicki Lyall	

## Management Committee

Madeleine Ashdown (Chair)	Marie-Therese Pinder
Gary Eaborn (Treasurer)	Helen Burton
Alireza Foroozani (resigned March 2020)	Catherine Curry
Ruth Craige (elected Secretary Nov 2019)	Patrick Conway
Les Punton (Secretary/ elected Chair Nov 2019)	Mark Reid
	Michele Woods

## Volunteers

Chloe Bellas	Osla Henniker-Major
Samina Bi	Anh Nguyen
Richard Callaghan	Lauren Powdrell (Durham University Student Community Action)
Emma Christie	Jesie Qian
Veronica de Freitas	Mark Tallentire
Chloe Ellison	Emily Taylor
Eloise Fritsch	Amy Taylor Wright
Izzy Gale	
James Hembrow	

## Group Volunteers

EE	Emmanuel Church, Belmont
Nando's Durham	

# Chair's Report

Throughout the year, DASH has sustained and grown its housing and support services from the previous year, offering homes to up to 60 people across the range of DASH projects. We have continued with our long-term strategy to explore and secure diverse funding streams and strengthen our financial stability, so that we may continue to improve and expand our services and become a more sustainable organisation.

It has been a significant year because, after a very long and difficult application process, DASH finally became a Registered Provider of Social Housing in March 2020. This status is important in that it opens up funding opportunities with Homes England and gives us valuable status as a housing provider. I would like to thank our staff, and particularly Trevor Atkinson, for their hard work to enable DASH to secure Registered Provider status. I would also like to thank the board members involved, in particular Madeleine Ashdown, for their effort during the long application process. This is a massive achievement for DASH, which takes our charity to another level. Special thanks should also go to the guidance given by Alison Stanners, our consultant advisor during the later stages of the registration assessment process.

We will continue to look for development opportunities and seek additional and appropriate site locations and buildings to expand our housing provision into affordable general needs housing.

Not long after the elation of gaining Registered Provider status, the Covid pandemic lockdown was implemented by the government. The management team acted swiftly to put into place the appropriate protocols and safety measures that kept residents and staff safe from the virus, while still maintaining our high-quality services.

Collectively, the staff, management team and board members have enabled DASH to continue to deliver a high-quality service to our residents throughout the year, and are constantly developing new initiatives to add value to the experience that we offer to our residents. Their support is very much appreciated. Corporate volunteering has also continued to grow this year, including teams from a number of local organisations giving their time to help with painting, gardening and various other tasks.

Thanks must also go to Heather Witham, Finance Officer, and Gary Eaborn, Treasurer, for their excellent financial management. I would also like to thank Ruth Craige who was appointed as Secretary in November 2019 and has done an excellent job.

Thanks also to Gary Raisbeck for his hard work in maintaining our website as a pro-active business tool and developing our social media platforms, all of which is succeeding in raising the profile of our work, boosting donations and encouraging volunteering help and other valuable support.

Many thanks to the various organisations who kindly donate either money or gifts in kind to our residents, and also the expanding team of volunteers who help us with a variety of tasks and projects. Their support is very much appreciated. Corporate volunteering has also continued to grow this year, including teams from a number of local organisations giving their time to help with painting, gardening and various other tasks.

## The Board

Due to an intensive recruitment campaign promoted by Trevor and Janet, three new Board members were welcomed to the Board through the year: Victoria Halliday, Mark Reid and Ruth Craige. The importance and appreciation of the free time the board members give up, and the expertise they add to the smooth running of the charity, cannot be emphasised enough.

In conclusion, DASH is in a good financial position, projects are in place to move DASH forward, and the result of DASH gaining Registered Provider status can only ensure that the work the organisation does will continue to be vitally important in providing help for those most vulnerable in our community for many years to come.

Regards,

*Les Punton*  
*DASH Chair*



# Treasurer's Report

*For the year ended 31st March 2020*

It has been a positive, stable, and consistent financial year, which, given the large amounts of uncertainty arriving from outside factors in March, is very reassuring with regard to financial security moving forward.

## Statement of Financial Activities

The Statement of Financial Activities shows a surplus for the year; £68,534, which is as expected, though lower than last year's £90,619. There was an evaluation of the property portfolio and the Board made the difficult decision to place three properties on the market. This meant both the loss of rental income from the properties and adjustments for the sale of one of the properties during the year. The proceeds from these properties will be reinvested into housing that better meets the needs of our residents. The Board has identified some development opportunities and, having received planning permission, will be looking to start work once all of the funding is in place.

## Total Income

There was an increase in total income for the year; £702,583, from £692,363 in 2019/20, which remains at a level consistent with recent years. Received donations increased slightly to £22,503 from £20,400 as we continued to receive larger one-off donations from Durham University, through support from Fashion Shows, and the CEO Sleepout. These combined with our regular donations from organisations such as St Brandon's Brancepeth PCC. A number of individuals who donate regularly also provide a welcome addition to our income. There was a decrease in rental income received from our unsupported properties, mainly due to the placing of three properties for sale on the market. One property was sold in July and the other two had offers accepted by March.

## Total Expenditure

The expenditure for this year rose slightly to £634,049 from £601,774 in the previous year. This was due primarily to an increase in legal and professional fees. During the year, a number of services were utilised, including legal fees relating to the sale of properties, surveys, architectural fees relating to development sites, and professional fees relating to our application to become a Registered Provider. DASH was assessed and awarded Registration at the end of March.

The Balance Sheet shows Fixed Assets of £938,471, comprising residential properties of £735,575, with the Hudson House office at £200,000. This is lower than last year, due to the sale of the property during the year.

## Net Current Assets

Net Current Assets are £692,042, compared to £559,428 on 31st March, 2019. This change primarily relates to the surplus added to cash reserves, plus the sale of the property. The cash reserves are expected to decrease over the next couple of years when work begins on new developments. With the Housing Benefit payment period falling at the end of March this year, the majority of the 'Debtors' on the Balance Sheet consists of prepayments made during the year, which cover parts of the financial year 2020/2021. A large part of these prepayments relates to Council Tax for the properties, as the bills are received in March for the following year. The largest individual item within prepayments is insurance, as the annual cover is renewed in December each year.

## Surplus Funds

The Charity retains its surplus funds on deposit at its bank, spread across a number of savings accounts and short-term bonds. All savings accounts are covered by the FSCS.

## Total Assets less Liabilities

The Total Assets less Liabilities of the Charity are £1,630,513, compared to £1,563,331 at the end of the previous year, reflecting the surplus for the year.

## Staff

There were sixteen full-time and two part-time members of staff employed by the Charity; two members of staff forming the Finance Team, with a further fourteen staff involved with financial matters.

## Thank You

Thanks to the Finance team and all staff involved in dealing with matters of a financial nature. Finally, thanks to all financial agencies for their support, including Mitchell Gordon Accountants, David Tolson Partnership and FMP Payroll Services.

Copies of the full accounts are available from the Finance Officer.

*Gary Eaborn*  
Treasurer



# Manager's Report

April 2019–March 2020 has again been a busy one for us here at Hudson House, sustaining and maintaining our housing and support services. We face uncertainty as we move forward in a national lockdown due to the global pandemic, but will do our utmost to continue to provide housing and support. However, despite the uncertainty of lockdown, we move forward as a Registered Provider of Social Housing, the registration being awarded in March. This has been achieved due to a lot of work and the willingness of trustees and staff to ensure that the years of work came to fruition.

Some of our outlying houses through the Empty Homes Community Grants Scheme have been difficult to let and manage as shared properties, 1 has been sold and 2 have offers on them. This will enable us to get more suitable properties as we move on as a Registered Provider.

We continue to offer housing and support to our residents, and we would like to thank the staff who do this, including ancillary staff, without whom we could not function. Our residents have enjoyed various activities during the year, over and above the support they receive around housing and signposting to other services.

Our contract with Durham County Council Adult Commissioning is continuing until at least March 21, with the possibility of x2 6-month extensions.

This year saw staff changes with 3 members moving on, one as a team leader in housing of asylum seekers and another to operate within the police call centre. The other left due to ill health. An Accommodation Worker at the Vulnerable Women's Project was successful in the role of Housing and Support Worker, and a Support Work Assistant there took on the role of Accommodation Worker, the other posts being filled with new appointments.

We hosted 2 student social workers from Sunderland University, with their placement officers and tutors, giving good feedback on the range of work experiences we can offer.





*Volunteering*

*Throughout*

*the Year!*



# Business Development Report

## The Volunteering Programme

The volunteering programme has continued to expand this year, with student volunteers and others helping out in various ways; including property painting, furniture up-cycling, gardening, and contributions to the website, marketing & communications and fundraising.

Our engagement with Durham University has continued to develop and this engagement has strengthened our relationship with the university in terms of volunteering and fundraising opportunities. There were successful outreach days throughout the year with about 60 students involved from different colleges and student groups. Corporate volunteering has also continued to grow, with teams from various local organisations all carrying out tasks at our head office and other properties.

## Donations

In total, we received £18,614, compared with £16,398 in 2018. This included £5,949.66 from online donations and £9,719.23 from groups. We received many other donations, including bedding, clothing, food and furniture.

## Fundraising

Fundraising has continued to increase. The market stall in Durham Market in September made £270, and the stall at the Durham Christmas Market made £280. A pop-up shop on North Road, Durham, raised £100 before Christmas.

St. Aidan's College at Durham University nominated DASH as recipients of their Charity Fashion Show in March, which raised £11,400.



*Setting up our market stall, Market Place.*

## Marketing and Communications

Website usage has increased from 8,700 visits in 2018 to 28,589 visits in 2019. Online donations are increasing and the number of repeat donations is also on the increase. Social media use has increased and the circulation for the DASHtalk e-newsletter has increased to about 700 people.

## Funding

Funding was secured from the County Durham Community Foundation, Hospital of God, Hadrian Trust, Durham Rotary Club and the Durham Area Action Partnership.

## Quality Management

An external audit of the ISO 9001 Quality Management System was carried out on 10th July and we passed the assessment without any non-conformances.

## Projects

Projects this year have included the Residents Health & Wellbeing Programme, where residents were involved in activities such as walking, exercise, cooking skills, Tai Chi, art & crafts and ceramics.



Tai Chi Class

## Future Plans

Our application to become a Registered Provider involved putting in place new governance procedures and strengthening existing governance, in order to comply with the Governance and Financial Viability Standard.

There are a number of other Standards which we will need to comply with now that we are registered, and the Management Committee has developed a plan for achieving this.

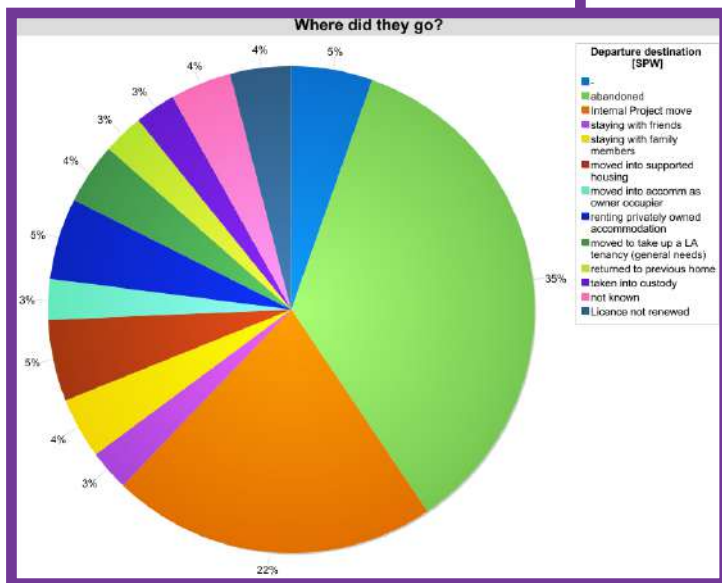
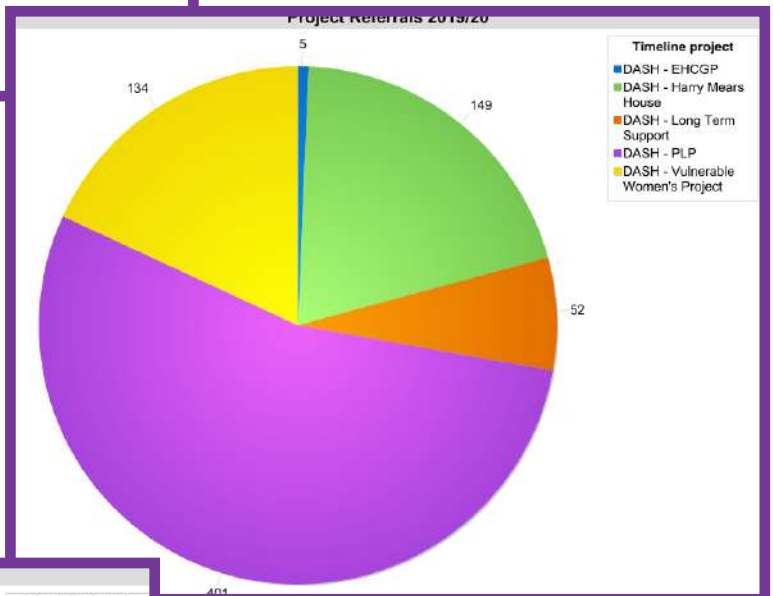
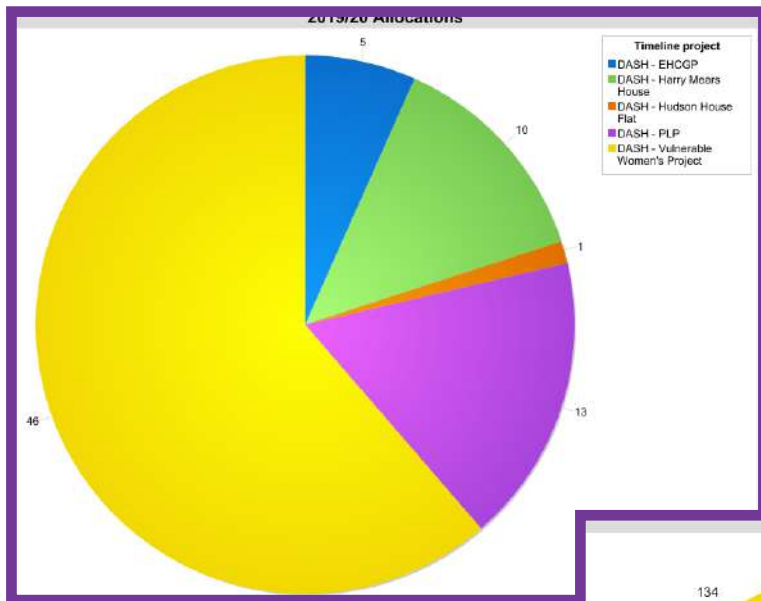
We plan to identify new sources of funding, both project based and longer-term income, including packages of funding for development projects. We also plan to diversify our income by continuing to increase the level of donations received and promote an increasing level of fundraising opportunities. Volunteers are key to developing this secondary funding and to raising the profile of the charity.

## Thanks to Our Partners and Supporters



Thanks to Olivia McCune, DASH Volunteer, for the design of this report

# Statistics



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