

USING THE HALL <sup>THE</sup> CHAIR'S  
CHANGES BIT  
LIVES WORKS ART  
AT FEARON

**FCA**

Fearon  
Community  
Association

GOOD FOOD  
DOING WHAT  
GOOD NEXT?  
LISTENING WE'RE  
FINANCIAL REVIEW

ARE WE REALLY <sup>ANNUAL</sup>  
DELIVERING? <sup>REPORT</sup>  
21-22

THE URBAN VILLAGE HALL  
IN THE HEART OF LOUGHBOROUGH



I Love it, love the people here. Never knew anybody before I came here.

Pauline  
Customer



# THE CHAIR'S BIT

Andy Rhodes

Chair

The beginning of the financial year saw the UK still in partial lockdown and whilst a phased easing of the rules had begun, it was not until February 2022 when the government issued its 'Living with Covid' guidance and all restrictions came to an end.

Our decision last year to keep the Association running during the Pandemic and the Hall open at every opportunity, despite the ever shifting rules, has allowed us to hit the ground running as restrictions eased, and our community began to feel confident enough to return to the 'new' normal.

Now more than ever it seems, is the need for us to provide the services needed in line with our strategic aims - support for families, reducing loneliness and isolation, tackling physical and mental health issues and improving confidence and self-esteem in those that find themselves particularly vulnerable in this post-pandemic period.

I am extremely proud of the way that our team at the Hall (staff and volunteers alike) have adapted to the circumstances and continue to deliver a varied yet relevant programme of activities - re-establishing old favourites and introducing new initiatives with a focus on a revived café, an exciting community arts programme and an introductory counselling offering.

We are delighted that The National Lottery Community Fund has recognised the vital role we play. Thanks to the generosity of the National Lottery players we will be able to continue to develop the range of activities and opportunities we provide and stay relevant to the needs of our modern society.

While this significant five-year funding is a blessing, it also comes with a great responsibility - ensuring the money is spent in the most effective way and achieving the best outcomes.

However, this funding, along with the continued support from Charnwood Borough Council through our renewed strategic partnership grant, does not mean we can rest on our financial laurels! Alongside this community delivery we have a sustained drive to generate income through bookings, room hire and fundraising events. It is extremely positive to see that the improvements to the Hall during lockdown are now paying dividends through an increase in bookings. All of this income is reinvested back into the Association in order to deliver our community benefit from the Hall so I must take this opportunity to thank all of you who pay to use the Hall through room hire, attending events and using our café.

There is still much work to do. As visitors to the Hall increase we have a balancing act to perform - to continue to deliver our charitable aims with the responsibility of running a financially viable business.

With the invaluable support of our financial partners and our incredible team, I am confident the Association will rise to the challenge.

# FINANCIAL REVIEW

Michael Welbourne

Treasurer

With the post-pandemic gradual reopening over this reporting period it is encouraging to see that revenue from activities in the Hall rebounded with some strength. However this coincided with an increase in expenditure in line with the return of a full opening. We will need to carefully manage this transition to a busier centre as we move towards our long-term goal of being financially viable without grant income.

Although overall income is down this year this is mainly due to the level of Covid support grants and the kitchen refurbishment grants in 2020-21. However revenues from Hall activities rebounded really well with room hire back up by just over £40,000, café takings up by over £18,000 and events and activities income back up by over £8,000.

We have seen associated costs increase in line with the return of regular activities such as cleaning costs up by £5,398, café costs and wages up by £22,480, volunteer expenses up by £1,407, computers/IT photocopying and telephone costs up by £4,359. Electricity and gas costs increased by £3,519 which is a combination of increased usage and increased prices.

Repairs and maintenance saw a significant drop of £41,771 due to the previous year including the kitchen refurbishment, but this still does remain a significant cost of £25,201. This does mean that much of the Hall has now seen highly overdue improvements and redecoration, but the schedule of future improvements will continue for the next couple of years or so.

Along with a beneficial revaluation to our pension scheme deficit of £8,371 resulted in a surplus for the year of £16,977. The coming year and the next few years beyond will still be challenging as the Association tries to meet its obligations to serve the community along with building up income to pay for staff and overheads to be viable without any grant income.

## BALANCE SHEET As at 31 March 2022

		2022	2021
FIXED ASSETS		4887	11601
CURRENT ASSETS	Debtors	4871	6757
	Cash	2099	323
	Bank	70616	51242
		77586	58322
CREDITORS	Due within 1 period	17391	9231
		60195	49091
TOTAL NET ASSETS		65082	60692
PROVISIONS FOR LIABILITIES & CHARGES		4082	16669
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		61000	44023
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	Accumulated Fund	61000	44023

Full accounts are available on request.



# USING THE HALL CHANGES LIVES

Activities  
& Bookings

I came to the Hall just before Covid. I enjoy the food and company and get support from the staff to help me manage my personal affairs. I don't think I'd be here now if it wasn't for one of my neighbours and the people at Fearon Hall.

Chay  
Customers



Bookings increased steadily during the year following the disruption caused by Covid. We are still not at pre-pandemic levels but the signs are positive. Groups and activities are starting to pick up again as our community regains confidence and fundraising events such as food and music nights have all contributed to our income. This in turn allows us to reinvest more in activities that make a difference in our community.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

Established a varied and successful weekly programme of activities working with partner organisations providing:

- Equivalent of 211 full working days (1268 hours) supporting isolated and lonely Hall users in the past 12 months.
- Equivalent of 255 working days (1531 hours) supporting families
- Equivalent of 360 days (2161 hrs) providing opportunities that build confidence and self-esteem.

Continue to support new start-ups in the post pandemic period to run activities which complement our strategic aims.

Decorating and buying new furniture for our downstairs areas have enhanced our community space and attracted more users and additional bookings.

Fundraising events (food, music, coach trips) have increased income and our ability to offer a wider range of community services.

The NHS Vaccination clinic this year introduced Fearon Hall to over 1700 individuals.

### LEARNING

We have learnt that what people want most of all is not necessarily the event/activity but the friendships and company that comes with them.

There is good awareness of what we do at the Hall across our existing marketing channels but there are still many people who don't know who we are or what we do.

Small workshops and outdoor activities have worked in encouraging people to attend the Hall after post pandemic concerns about large group mixing.

### CHALLENGES

It was a challenge reopening after lockdowns expecting people to visit us again, it took months for some individuals to gain the confidence needed to leave their homes.

Many adults and young people have mental health issues and need lots of support from our staff and volunteers. Loneliness and isolation are a big contributor to both physical and mental health. It's an ongoing challenge to meet the needs of everyone and be able to get them the help they need.

Fundraising events can be hard work, but the more we do the more we will learn. Having a team of staff and volunteers to help at these larger events will be very important moving forward to allow us to do more and to do them well.

Balancing the delivery of an activities programme with the time it takes to meet the increasing demands we see for specific one-to-one support.

To find new marketing opportunities beyond our existing channels.





# GOOD FOOD DOING GOOD

Café in the Hall

Fearon Hall is good, great, friendly, peaceful. The food is excellent and the staff are unbelievably friendly. Being here has made a big difference to our lives as everyone talks to us.

Gill & Pearl  
Customers



This year has been a rewarding yet challenging one in the café. After the pandemic a lot of people's lives changed - from dealing with isolation and loneliness and being afraid to come back out into public life. Mental Health has had a huge impact on our community, affecting a vast amount of people which we have seen in our service users and volunteers. However the challenges we have faced have brought us all closer together and made us stronger as a team and community.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

Provided low cost affordable meals and desserts across the community from our "Beat the Winter Blues" lunch club.

Fighting hunger by providing free meals and drinks through food poverty to various families and lone service users.

Hugely reduced social isolation after the pandemic, we have seen an increase in service users particularly in the past six months.

Having a positive environmental impact by sourcing products locally and reducing food wastage with various donations from local supermarkets.

Increased local spending giving back to the community centre.

Training of volunteers - In particular one volunteer who has now passed a recognized qualification which will put him in the right direction of gaining the experience and confidence for the future ahead.

Work placement on track to complete with a local student from Sense college who has various disabilities and has achieved so much in the past nine months with us.

### LEARNING

How to reduce food waste - Learning new cooking skills in making meals from ingredients that would otherwise have been wasted from various supermarkets and sent to landfill which is also helping our environmental impact and decreasing our cost per meal.

To encourage healthy eating - teaching about portion control and nutritional value of meals to service users.

Teaching Volunteers how to cook fresh home cooked meals from various ingredients, and produce.

Volunteers - to train, nourish, and guide them to gain qualifications and life skills.

How to balance running a café that has a wide spectrum of service users and customers with a small budget and high staff costs.

### CHALLENGES

Training Volunteers, training and achieving results with volunteers can be very time consuming depending on the volunteers needs, enough time needs to be allocated whilst also trying to perform your own duties.

Economic Climate, the cost of living is rapidly rising- can people afford to go out? Winter months are expected to be worse with rising fuel costs and food inflation prices, how can we balance this to expect and achieve results.

Target a wider community, to draw in more people from further afield with various events and activities at the hall to increase footfall through the door.

To engage service users in activities planned through the hall- finding a balance so that there is something for everyone to do and have an interest in.



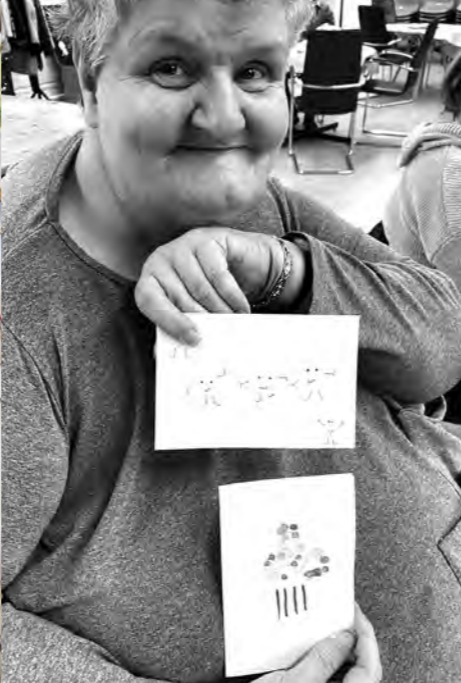


# ART WORKS AT FEARON

Community Arts

I contacted Fearon Hall early in 2021 looking for a venue to volunteer later in the year. I was a textiles student at Loughborough University and was introduced to Jacqui who set me up with a group of service users. I worked with them to create Christmas crafts and helped on the Christmas tree for the 2021 festival.

Kathryn  
Intern



“The arts are able to engage community in imaginative ways that create a space for dialogue on communal issues faced and also expand the horizons of possible solutions.”

### ACHIEVEMENTS

Developed a community arts programme which reached out to the local community.

Christmas Memory Project which recognised the significance of loss amongst service users. Combining working with clay, photographs and memories to help provoke participation and discussion.

Community Christmas bunting project was intended as a fun project making bunting to decorate the main Hall but actually evidenced a profound underlying cohesion within the Fearon Hall community. Visitors to the café also became involved when they saw the activity taking place.

‘All at Sea’ project was part of the ‘Beat the Winter Blues’ sessions held every Wednesday afternoon during the winter months at Fearon Hall. It consisted of a series of workshops which related to a sea theme and encouraged participants to try a variety of artistic techniques, encourage discussion and grow confidence. The outcomes were curated in a display for the Sea Shanty fund raising evening at Fearon Hall, adding lots of visual interest to the event.

### LEARNING

Combining a ‘relational approach’ with a creative approach unique to the arts to foster and nurture trust between the artist and service users. Creating an atmosphere of cooperation, trust, kindness and collaborative learning amongst participants.

Projects need to be customised and delivered in ways which are relevant to the individuals who regularly use Fearon Hall services. Central to the aim of this still-developing arts programme is an ethos of delivering arts projects which empower, facilitate and nurture growth, and impact in a positive way on the quality of life of our service users.

Giving local artists a platform. Allowing them to showcase their work and providing inspiration for others. We have explored this idea with an exhibition by a local artist - the opening evening for the exhibition was hugely successful with well over a 100 people attending. Musicians provided an extra layer to the experience and the artist worked with us to deliver workshops for adults and children.

### CHALLENGES

At the core of the programme are a group of users who regularly frequent Fearon Hall and who rely on the emotional and practical support provided by key people within the organisation.

Art could and should run alongside essential support strategies, eventually becoming woven within the fabric of life at Fearon Hall.

The Fearon Art Club has emerged as a result of engagement with the new art programme at Fearon Hall. The group comprises, at the moment, five Fearon Hall service users. Members have already taken part in visits to art galleries and events. It is an incredible outcome, to have grown so much interest in the arts, particularly with participants whose previous opportunities to do this have been limited. We need to develop meaningful and affordable opportunities and to grow the group membership.

\* Lee, Justin & Lim, Andrew & Liang, Sim & Zainuddin, Shamil & Alhadad, Hansi (2020). The Unique Value of the Arts in Community Development: A Case Study of ArtsWok Collaborative.

# WE'RE LISTENING



Coming to Fearon Hall has dramatically reduced my mental health issues. It has given me a focus. Half of my issues were because I was stuck at home everyday on my own. It has helped with my confidence and I have been coming here for 14 months now. It has been a massive confidence boost and it is nice to be around people.

Linda  
Volunteer



Our aim is to provide an early intervention, guidance and advice service to those who need it and to provide support and signpost wherever possible. However we are mindful of our limitations, specifically where people have clinical/psychiatric diagnosis. We are not here to provide a structured counselling service of planned weekly sessions on a one-to-one basis and there is no contracting or case formulation as would be required for formal counselling.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

We have had contact on either a direct one to one basis or as groups, amounting to 310 sessions.

141 "hours" of people engaged on the wellbeing walks, 16 different individuals that have been or are attending the walks.

A number of those seeking support have gone on to engage in volunteering activity at the Hall.

Providing ad-hoc support to drop-in users of the Hall throughout the year and also telephone support outside of standard hours including weekends and evenings.

Engagement with social prescribers to signpost wellbeing activities within the Hall.

### LEARNING

The importance of the connection people are making and the potential benefit that can be gained through ongoing support and other engagement opportunities provided at the Hall.

Whilst there is an element of visibility to some of the users of this service, we will stay within the ethical boundaries of confidentiality regards names and the specifics of issues presented.

We have individuals presenting with anxiety caused by lock down (isolation, fear of infection/becoming ill and post lockdown anxiety about how to safely re-integrate with work and social activities).

Alcohol and substance misuse are regular presenting issues and we have groups reaching out to us to support their members. Whilst being a positive for the Hall community it does create an element of scope creep for the services offered.

The impact of loss and bereavement on service users has led to the idea of a grief café or similar to support those dealing with loss.

### CHALLENGES

The "counselling" support is limited in terms of resource and although we have already expanded this in terms of flexibility with regard to hours/days provided there is real potential to develop this further.

Reliance on other local agencies to "vet" in terms of suitability for referral, we have explained our aim to offer some coping strategies and then to let these people engage in the activities we offer in order to provide connection, companionship and interaction with others. We have had to be firm to enforce that we are not a counselling service in terms of ongoing sessions of one-to-one therapy.

The setting up of a grief café, allowing local people to gain help/advice and support with the potential to form peer support connections.

We have offered support to staff and volunteers alike and whilst uptake has been limited, we believe this is something that could be of benefit to both.

Should we offer support to other groups using the Hall as a "Fearon" chargeable add-on?

8 FUNDRAISING EVENTS

311 ACTIVITIES DELIVERED BY THE ASSOCIATION

1211 BOOKINGS IN LAST 12 MONTHS

1268 HOURS OF SUPPORT FOR LONLINESS AND ISOLATION

1531 HOURS OF SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

2161 HOURS FOR OPPORTUNITIES THAT BUILD CONFIDENCE AND SELF-ESTEEM

2598 HOURS OF VOLUNTEERS' TIME GIVEN

# ARE WE REALLY DELIVERING?

Monitoring

The purpose of a monitoring function is to inform planning and assess the effectiveness of service delivery relative to the strategic aims of the organisation.

### OUR STRATEGIC AIMS INCLUDE:

Development of our community café to include community meals, healthy eating and cooking skills, and integration with food waste reduction schemes.

Access to information, support and events to address:

- Support for families
- Loneliness and isolation
- Health and mental health needs
- Physical exercise
- Confidence

These align with our commitment as a Charnwood Borough Council strategic partner and recipient of National Lottery funding.

In normal circumstances, it would be expected that there would be a baseline against which to compare performance. However, the pandemic has meant that during the last two years, normal operation at the Hall has not been possible. The government lifted legal restrictions with the publication of the 'Living with Covid-19' plan in February 2022.

The figures presented in this annual report can therefore be taken as the baseline against which future years will be assessed.

### HALL USAGE

Signing in sheets have been in operation at the Hall since November 2021. Five months data reveal that on average the monthly footfall at the Hall was 486.

There was a peak in footfall in December (671) which corresponded with seasonal activities. The figure in March (the first month after the lifting of all Covid restrictions) was 505.

Footfall will continue to be monitored through the signing in sheets.

### VOLUNTEERING

Fearon Hall operates with a very small number of paid employees. There is heavy reliance on volunteers, and we acknowledge the large part they play in enabling the functioning of the Hall and the range of activities that can be offered.

Volunteers support all aspects of the operation of the hall including:

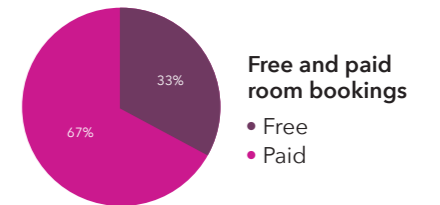
- working in the café and garden,
- providing reception duties,
- befriending new service users,
- helping to set up the hall for large events, and
- running specific activities.

In the ten months May 2021 to February 2022, a total of 2,598 hours of volunteers' time were given. Giving a monthly average of 260 hours.

Increasing the number of volunteers and diversity of their backgrounds and skills has been identified as a priority which the Fearon Community Association Stakeholder Group will investigate in the coming year.

### ROOM BOOKINGS AND USAGE

A major source of non-grant income for the Hall is room bookings. In the last 12 months 1211 bookings were made. 33% of bookings were offered free to help new community groups to get established. The 67% of paid bookings generated £50,800 of income.



All areas of the Hall are receiving bookings, with bookings of the new Chatterbox room, garden and kitchen reflecting the value of the investment in these areas. The newly opened 'Preston Room' will offer further opportunity for income in the coming year.

36% of bookings are for the main hall, 26% for the Pitts room which are located on the ground floor. 22% of bookings are for the ballroom which is located on the first floor. Improving access to the first floor continue to be a priority for the hall and is expected to help drive up bookings for the upstairs space.

Virtual bookings continue to play a small but important role for some hall users where distance or health issues may prevent physical attendance.

## Monitoring

Our established Hall users continue to make regular, repeat use of the Hall. However, their use is dwarfed by new groups and Fearon Hall's own activities. 26% of room bookings were to support activities designed and delivered by Fearon Hall. 50% of activities were attributable to new groups. This reflects the huge value to the Hall that the Activity Co-ordinator brings in terms of promoting the Hall and building relationships with new groups.

Breaking down the bookings by alignment to our strategic aims shows that there is good provision in each category. The graph shows the hours of provision provided. Some activities cover multiple strategic aims, therefore it is not possible to provide percentage provision against the strategic aims.

Provision for physical exercise is lower than might be expected, however Covid restrictions impacted these activities significantly especially during the colder months when we could not make as much use of our outdoor space, and indoor mixing was restricted. We did not analyse the hours of provision for mental and physical health.

Hours of provision are not felt to be a robust indicator for baseline purposes as they are an output measure rather than an outcome measure. We trialled the use of the Happiness Pulse tool which was developed by the Centre for Thriving Places and the New Economics Foundation. This measures mental, behavioural and social wellbeing. We aim to take a baseline measure during the coming year.

## FUNDRAISING

The funding landscape has changed dramatically over the last 5 years. This combined with the effect of Brexit, the pandemic and the current cost-of-living crisis means that as well as income from room bookings, novel and effective approaches to fundraising are of increasing importance.

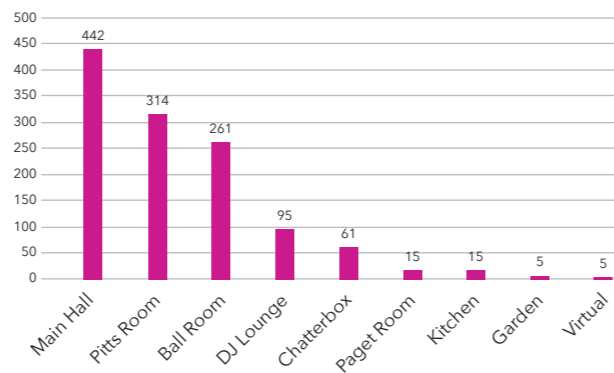
During the last 12 months several highly successful fundraising events have been held including:

- Curry & Quiz Fundraising Night
- Italian Fundraising night
- Shanty Folk Fundraising Night
- Victorian Christmas Market
- Artist Led Workshops
- Weekly Bingo
- Day trip to Skegness
- Day trip to Stratford

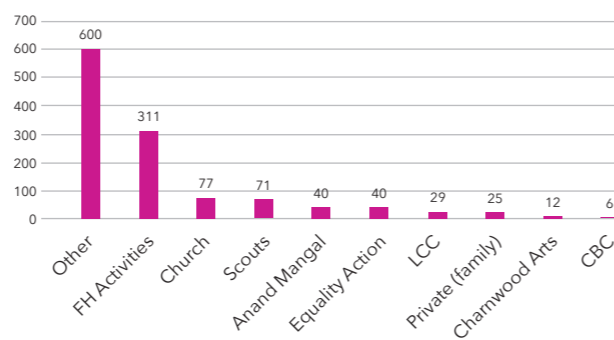
These events serve a double purpose: raising funds directly for the hall and, through effective on-line promotion, drawing in new people to the Hall who go on to make more general use of the services and facilities.

In the coming year we plan to conduct research with attendees to identify and quantify the non-financial impacts of the events.

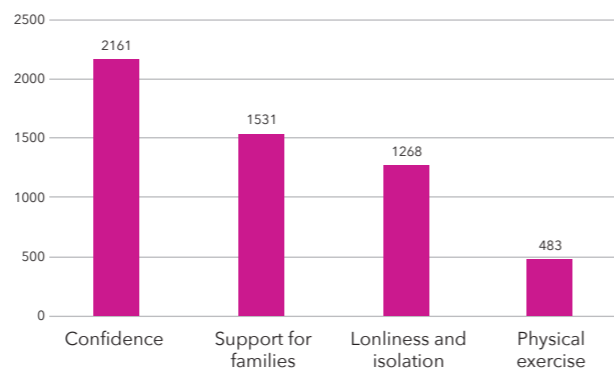
NUMBER OF BOOKINGS BY AREA OF THE HALL



NUMBER OF HALL BOOKINGS BY TYPE OF GROUP



HOURS OF PROVISION FOR EACH STRATEGIC AIM



SUMMARY OF BASELINE FIGURES WHICH WILL BE USED IN FUTURE REPORTING

Performance area	2021-2022 Baseline level
Monthly footfall	486
Monthly volunteer hours	260
Percentage of free room bookings	33%
Percentage of paid room bookings	67%
Number of Fearon Hall activities	311
% of total bookings for Ball Room	22%
Wellbeing score	n/a
Number of fundraising events	8

# WHAT NEXT?

Priorities for 2022-23

TO MAINTAIN A SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS WITH COMMUNITY AT ITS HEART

## ONE

Trustees continue developing the skills and strategic capacity of the board to ensure that FCA fulfils its charitable objectives.

## TWO

The business plan, the estates plan and the strategic delivery plan to be reviewed in line with our charitable responsibilities.

## THREE

Consult with local people to enable us to focus our resources on providing targeted support.

## FOUR

Using the recent review of staffing to ensure we continue to support staff, avoid scope creep and maintain a positive, healthy, environment in which to work.

## FIVE

Respond to the current societal issues which are of increasing concern to our users - cost of living crisis, food poverty and social and mental wellbeing.

## SIX

Build our profile and strengthen links among other groups and service providers locally, cementing our role as a community hub.



# THE URBAN VILLAGE HALL IN THE HEART OF LOUGHBOROUGH

**FCA**  
Fearon  
Community  
Association

**Fearon Hall**  
Community Centre



## **Fearon Hall**

Rectory Road  
Loughborough  
LE11 1PL  
T: 01509 230629  
E: office@fearonhall.org.uk  
www.fearonhall.org.uk

## **Legal Status**

Charitable Company  
Limited by Guarantee

## **Governing Document**

Memorandum and Articles  
of Association

## **Charity Number**

1130457

## **Company Number**

6852232

## **Directors**

Andy Rhodes  
Georgia Thompson  
Michael Charlesworth  
Michael Welbourne  
Rosanna Cant  
Richard Thorpe  
Shilpa Modi

## **Management Team**

Meg Bezzano-Griffiths  
*Centre Manager*  
Dawn Page  
*Activities & Bookings Manager*  
Carly Wellings  
*Café in the Hall Manager*

## **Café in the Hall**

Ash Bott  
Hannah Farrant-Santos

## **Arts Coordinator & Curator**

Jacqui Gallon

## **Counselling & Therapeutic Support**

Mark Moore

## **Bookkeeping**

Ian Verity

## **Housekeeping**

Lorraine Dickinson  
Fatbardha Koci

## **Social Impact Reporting**

Nichole Browne, DVSA

## **IT Support & Development**

Lightning Bolt

## **Volunteers**

Agron  
Catherine  
David  
Denise  
Jordan  
Kathryn  
Linda  
Penny  
Peter  
Tracey

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THE NATIONAL LOTTERY  
COMMUNITY FUND

