

2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT

FCA
Fearon
Community
Association



wendy
Evans

CHAIR'S BIT

A SOCIALLY
RESPONSIBLE
BUSINESS WITH
COMMUNITY
AT ITS HEART

At last years AGM the Lone Ones Collective led a communal conversation asking “what does community mean?” Responses included: joy, love, food, connecting with people, chances to learn, communication, friendship, talking, people, caring, values and help.

Looking back over our activities of the last year, I truly believe that these attributes that embody community are reflected in the amazing variety of activities and support that our team of staff and volunteers have been able to provide.

Particular highlights include our expanding community arts programme. The arts have the potential to bridge our worlds, harness and explore the wisdom of our different views, engage our imagination to explore new ways of thinking and create experiences that can be shared by all people in our community.

Other shared experiences include the developments with food at Fearon Hall. Our wonderful Café in the Hall is seeing more footfall and the highly popular vegan bistros have been a real hit, providing people the opportunity to connect over a regular monthly meal.

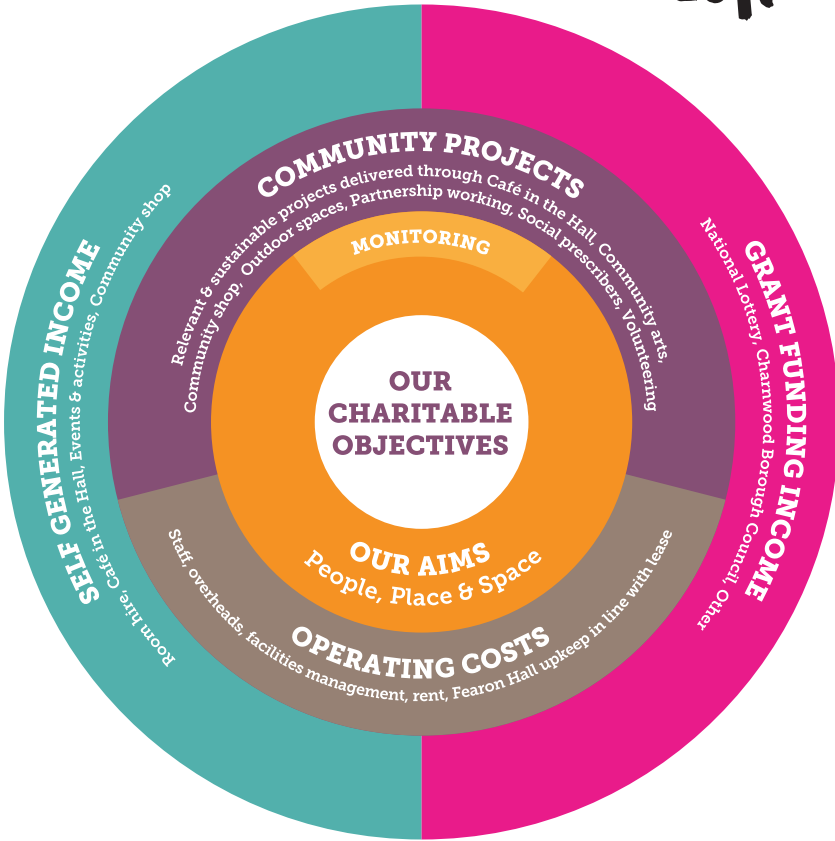
DELIVERING OUR VISION

We have developed projects that support the very real issues of food poverty and the impact that waste food has on our environment through our Good Food Doing Good Pop Up Store and our relationship with Incredible Edible Loughborough.

Whilst there is much to celebrate, we, like the wider community haven't escaped the rise in the cost of living. We have been hit by the increasing cost of energy, the rise in minimum wage has impacted greatly on our staffing costs and the increase in food prices and availability is being felt by the Café. To date we have managed to absorb these increased costs in order to minimise the impact on our users. However we do have a legal responsibility to balance these financial commitments whilst still delivering on our charitable objectives.

As I hand over the baton of Chair I am confident that with the ongoing dedication of trustees, staff and volunteers, the organisation is well placed to continue to meet these challenges.

Andy Rhodes, *Chair*



“As usual though, I would stress that the focus should always be on generating new income.”

FINANCIAL REVIEW

INCOME: £286,940
EXPENDITURE: £269,273

BALANCE SHEET

As at 31 March 2023

I am pleased to report a 30% increase in income for the financial year. This can be mainly attributed to the Café in the Hall more than doubling its income from £19,920 in 2022 to £44,322 this year along with an increase in grant funding of £26,035. There was also a modest improvement in room rental of £4,213. However, café expenses and staff wages also increased by £25,933 which was due to the impact of changes in the minimum wage and the sharp rises in inflation.

Room rental has still not recovered to pre-pandemic levels. A key focus area for further income generation should be improving occupancy.

Until now the organisation has made the decision to absorb as much as possible the increases in energy, food and general maintenance costs so as to minimise impact on Hall users. Room rental costs were frozen for 2023 and the café has not put up its prices. However this will need to be reviewed in the next financial year.

Michael Welbourne, *Treasurer*

		2023		2022	
FIXED ASSETS		42472		4887	
CURRENT ASSETS	Debtors	10800		4871	
	Cash	287		2099	
	Bank	51797		70616	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
		62884		77586	
CREDITORS	Due within 1 period	24086	38798	17391	60195
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
TOTAL NET ASSETS		81270		65082	
PROVISIONS FOR LIABILITIES & CHARGES		2603		4082	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		78667		61000	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	Accumulated Fund	78667		61000	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	

Full accounts are available on request.

We are proud to continue to offer a wide range of activities from Fearon Hall. These reflect not only community need but follow the respected principles of '5 Ways to Wellbeing*'. This involves building a series of actions into our day-to-day lives to improve and strengthen wellbeing.

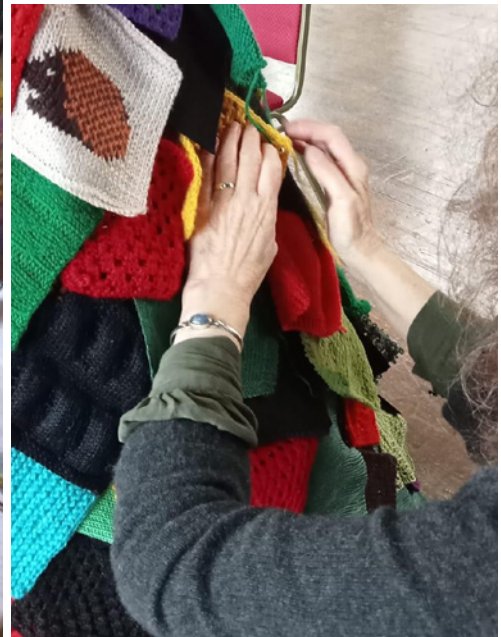
5 Ways to Wellbeing

- Connecting with others
- Being active
- Taking notice, being aware of the world around you and what you are feeling
- Keeping learning, trying something new or rediscovering an old hobby
- Giving, whether it's a smile to a stranger, joining a community group or volunteering your time

“As someone with mental health issues, having somewhere to go and meet people and talk to others while doing fun things has made my life more positive. The group are very welcoming and staff are helpful.”

ACTIVITIES AT THE HALL





1659

**SOCIAL ACTIVITY
ATTENDEES**

“So many of the people we see are still isolated within their homes. It’s fabulous to have such a range of activities in a welcoming and safe space for me and my team to confidently refer our clients to. You make everyone feel so welcome. Keep up the good work.”

There is no coincidence that the activities and opportunities all enable our wellbeing to flourish and grow. Knit & Natter, Bingo, Crafts, The Neurodiverse Gaming Group, Counselling, and Wellness Walks are all well attended.

Counselling has evolved over the course of the year. We are moving away from purely one-to-one sessions to a wider group approach. This includes a weekly Wellness Walk followed by tea and a chat in the café, support for groups that use the Hall and help where necessary for staff and volunteers.

ARTS

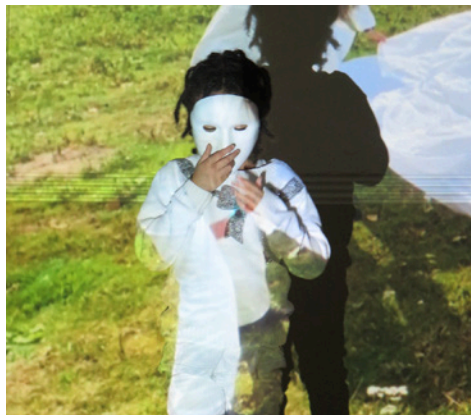
AT THE HALL

“Since joining the Fearon Hall Art Club I have found my love of painting again along with learning how to draw and express myself through my work.”

Research shows that art gives meaning to our lives. It allows us a voice, an opportunity to have a deeper understanding of our emotions. It increases our self-awareness, enables expression and allows us to be open to new ideas and experiences. Just short bursts of creativity every day can enhance our sense of wellbeing. We believe that art programmes which enable freedom of expression enable participants to find new ways of interpreting how they see the world, discovering their own unique voice in our busy and noisy society when sometimes we can feel a bit powerless. By experiencing the process of self-exploration, participants often re-engage with a skill from the past or indeed discover something new which they thought they could never achieve.

Over the past 12 months, this has been evidenced on an almost daily basis as members of our community come and take part in the various art activities on offer.





160

SESSIONS FOR ARTS AT THE HALL

“It’s wonderful to learn new skills and to come away with a beautiful piece of art that I’ve created. No matter what is going on in my life those few hours let me get lost and I forget everything else. It’s affordable and a real treat. My friends and I love these sessions.”

Loughborough has a thriving arts scene and Fearon Hall is excited to be playing a part in this by delivering high quality workshops and projects to our local community. Including an exhibition of paintings by local artist, Paul Dexter; Fly to Fearon Hall, a wonderful exhibition of art works created by visiting Taiwanese art students who were our resident artists for five weeks; Expressions, a community project which culminated in an exhibition of paintings and monoprints; and a fabulous Christmas tree made from hundreds of knitted squares created by our Big Knit and Knit and Natter groups who meet regularly at the Hall. The tree was exhibited as part of the Christmas Tree Festival at All Saints Parish Church.

Room hire still forms a significant portion of non-grant income and there was a modest increase on 2021-22 - up from £57,677 to £61,890 in 2022-23. The Main Hall remains well occupied but there is room for improvement in our other spaces with only 20-45% occupancy on what we consider to be achievable.

Hourly rates for room hire were frozen for 2023 but with constantly increasing overheads, holding prices will not be sustainable moving forward. With all rooms having been upgraded over the last four years, culminating in the refurbishment of the Ballroom in 2023, there is opportunity for a carefully considered increase in rates and a campaign to improve occupancy.



**ROOM
HIRE** AT THE HALL

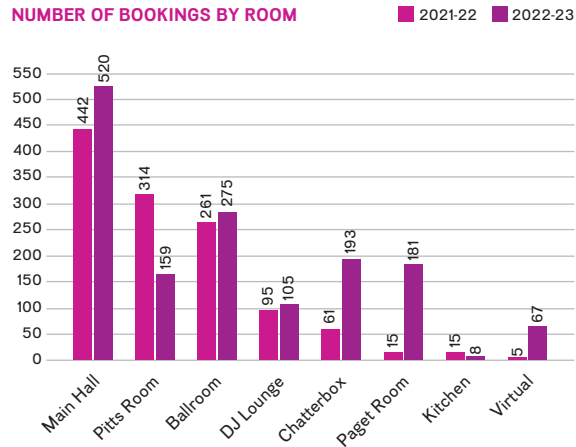




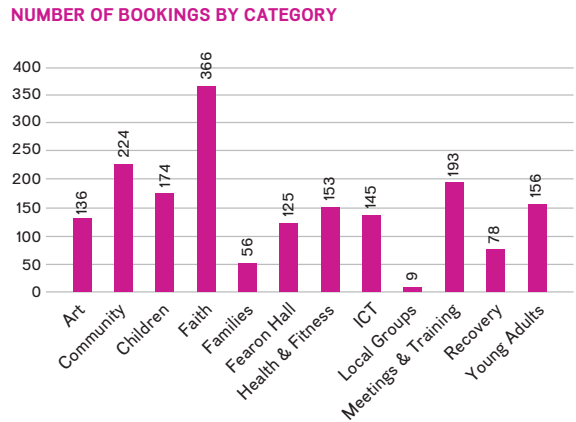
1815

COMMUNITY
EVENTS,
MEETINGS
AND LIFE
CELEBRATIONS

NUMBER OF BOOKINGS BY ROOM



NUMBER OF BOOKINGS BY CATEGORY



FOOD

AT THE HALL

Our welcoming and friendly community Café in the Hall is the heartbeat of Fearon Hall and a central focus for visitors. Open four days a week for breakfast, lunch, yummy homemade treats and hot and cold drinks, to eat in or takeaway. It's good food, doing good. Everything is cooked fresh in our kitchen and all diets catered for. And of course, every customer penny spent is reinvested back into providing our community activities.

The Café offers two subsidised meals. 'Good Grub Social Club' on Wednesdays - A nutritionally balanced hot meal, which some of our services users find difficult to provide for themselves at home. Serving on average thirty people per week which equates to 1444 meals over the year. On Friday there is the 'Good Grub Breakfast Club' - A smaller version of the regular Full English breakfast has just been introduced.

Our customers tell us that they feel safe and welcomed and that we are a big part of their lives, providing customers with well balanced and nutritious meal choices and a safe space for them which they feel is a home from home.

Café in the Hall

SYSTEM





1444

LOW COST, FRESH MEALS

“Thank you for making this store safe and non judgemental, when I don't feel good about myself it's lovely to be treated normally. You don't know what it means being able to shop here and put food on the table.”

The Good Food Doing Good Pop Up Store (initially Your Store) is open every Tuesday and Friday. Stocking groceries close to their 'best before' date and offering great value at £3 per shopping bag. We have served 1659 customers across 56 dates - providing access to more affordable food whilst reducing food waste.

Working in partnership with Adult Learning we delivered our Fun & Food for Families programme during the school spring term. An 8 week initiative targeting vulnerable local families focussing on fun activities and healthy food.

The amazing Anand Mangal Ladies continue to run a delicious Asian Café once a month. Gifting their time and profits to the Hall.

Our Vegan Pop Up Bistro is a popular evening event that showcases a different themed menu each month. Developed by our resident vegan chef it is usually sold out in advance and offers a different dining experience.



4668 VOLUNTEERING HOURS

Volunteers play an important part in the life of the Hall. From providing a welcoming and friendly face on reception duties, answering the phones and fielding the numerous enquiries, helping to maintain our historic building and the high standards of our facilities or running our Good Food Doing Good Pop Up Store. We are also immensely grateful for the contribution that our incredible band of kitchen volunteers provide in helping to run the Café in the Hall and those who sort the clothes for our Preloved Community Shop.

Not all volunteers attend when the Hall is open. We have a wonderful secret gardener who has transformed our back garden into a place of tranquillity and an oasis of calm.

In return for the generous time so freely offered by these volunteers they benefit from food hygiene and first aid training, a return to work or social engagement, counselling support and of course friendship. Volunteers provided a total of 4668 hours this year. An increase of 44% on 2021-22.

WHAT NEXT? PRIORITIES FOR 2023-24

Governance

The board of trustees will be reviewing and updating Governance in line with the most recent Charity Commission guidance and to reflect changes to Charnwood Borough Council Wards. This work will also include a skills audit and the potential recruitment of new board members to strengthen any identified gaps. Work will also be undertaken to refine FCA Membership to ensure our stakeholder panel is operating effectively in providing consultation and guidance on our key aims and objectives.

Partnership Working

Increasing our capacity to deliver on the identified needs within our community by working with new and existing partners.

Income Generation

Generating more income has to be a priority. We have a good mix of rooms that have been extensively refurbished and increasing room hire is a key area for development.

“Community is at the heart of everything we do. As a board we are confident that these measures will help us to continue to be a positive and sustainable resource for our community.”

FCA

Fearon
Community
Association

Fearon Hall

Community Centre

fearonhall.org.uk    @fearonhall

The urban
village hall
in the heart
of Loughborough

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
Daryl Gough
Georgia Thompson
Michael Charlesworth
Michael Welbourne
Paul Goodman
Rosanna Cant
Richard Thorpe
Shilpa Modi

Management Team

Meg Bezzano-Griffiths
Dawn Page

Café in the Hall

Ash Bott
Carly Wellings
Hannah Farrant-Santos

Arts Coordinator and Curator

Jacqui Gallon

Counselling and Therapeutic Support

Mark Moore

Bookkeeping

Annette Moore
Ian Verity

Housekeeping

Lorraine Dickinson
Fatbardha Koci

IT Support and Development

Lightning Bolt

Volunteers

Agron
Angela
Bechir
Catherine
David
Jack
Jordan
Linda
Michael
Peter
Saleh
Simon
Sue
Tracey
Val
Will
Yvonne

IN
LOVING
MEMORY



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