

Scope

This report covers the activities of Bampton LARC and does not include the Library, run by Libraries Unlimited, who are reporting later in the meeting.

Visitor numbers and volunteers

Since April 2022, the LARC has been open for general use about 3 days a week. We rely on volunteers for day to day running and organisation, and specifically to enable the premises to be open for public use and to answer questions and help visitors with a friendly welcome.

Our volunteers deserve huge thanks for their efforts and commitment; sometimes it seems a lonely task when visitor numbers are low, but LARC does need volunteers to keep open outside Library hours.

Volunteer numbers did go down after Covid and have stayed down. We could open for more hours if we had more volunteers, so we are always keen to hear of anyone who would like to offer a couple of hours a week or fortnight.

In addition to Bampton LARC general opening times, volunteers have been key to running two outside fund-raising events. Firstly, at the Charter Fair last year; we were unbelievably lucky with the weather and ran a very successful book stall. Secondly, in Spring this year, the Plant Swap and Sale was really well supported and another success. These events importantly raise money to help keep LARC running, but also attract a large number of local residents and help the community spirit.

Challenges for LARC Management

It is worth re-iterating the charitable aims of Bampton LARC:

To advance the education and improve the well-being of all residents by establishing and managing a community centre to support the Library and provide leisure and social activities.

I think we are still achieving those aims, with some important caveats.

The LARC management team have had some hard decisions to make this year because visitor numbers to our open sessions have not recovered since Covid, and costs have risen.

Pre-Covid we had a reasonable number of regular visitors to LARC each session, to use the printing and computing facilities, and to have personal help on technology, or simply drop in for a chat.

Consequently, our income from ad-hoc donations from LARC visitors has generally declined, although we did receive some very generous individual donations this year, including one from Oakford Moorland Club which was greatly appreciated.

A key concern for the team is the continuing uncertain financial situation.

We all appreciate that the cost of living crisis has hit many charities, and Bampton LARC is no exception; the enormous increase in electricity charges and increased general running costs, and reduced donations make it hard to balance the books.

We have made a loss this year of approximately **£1350**, as you will hear later from the financial report. This is less than last year despite rising costs, but still means we are gradually using up our reserves for day to day running costs and repairs and renewals. The cost of heating and keeping LARC as a warm welcoming space has increased a lot.

To put this into context, our electricity bill was over £100 a week during the winter.

Our electricity contract is up for renewal early in 2024 and nearer the time we will have a better feel for future costs and can plan accordingly.

Our greatest challenge is one we have had since Covid; in addition to the hosting the Library, **“what is LARC best used for?”**.

Clearly, we exist to facilitate the Library in Bampton, but we also want to be a community hub and be financially viable with income from a range of sources.

This year, as general visitor numbers have been low, we've actively encouraged individuals and groups to use LARC for clubs and private sessions outside the normal opening hours.

This has been quite successful and a wide range of new LARC bookings are helping keep LARC going. We are pleased to be the Bampton community hub used by:

Creative writing group, book club, toddler's group, well-being activities including the walking group, Bampton Town Council, Yoga, Bampton Ladies, chess club, music evenings, several Church groups, Bampton Open Gardens, Bampton Heritage and Visitor Centre displays over winter, numerous groups and committee meetings, and a selection of one-off gatherings.

In order to support LARC users, in June 2022 we retained and improved the broadband service providing free Wi-Fi for all visitors and negotiated a slightly better deal. We thought long and hard about keeping the broadband, but we felt that many LARC users do want this service.

We have retired all but one of the LARC PCs as they were rarely used and taking up space, but we retained the Wi-Fi printer and copier so visitors can print from their own devices.

There are still quiet, unused times, at LARC so we are always looking for more users or ideas to run events and activities at LARC.

Personnel Changes

The LARC Trustees have seen some changes in the past year. Kelvin Holdom resigned as Chair and fortunately for us has remained as a Trustee, his knowledge of "everything LARC" is invaluable.

I've taken over as Chair of Trustees and will try and keep up the high standards set by Kelvin!

We were pleased to welcome David Graham who joined the Trustees this year and has been managing the weekly rota, and huge thanks go to David Botsford who is stepping down as Trustee after 6 years and to Les

Hartley who was here at the start of LARC and is leaving the management team. We will really miss their knowledge and experience.

So, we are currently back to 3 Trustees, the minimum allowed by our constitution, and looking for more has been a high priority. New Trustees and new volunteers are very scarce, but essential to keep LARC viable.

Thank You

The LARC relies on a huge range of people for its existence and to keep it running. Just to mention a few:

We are extremely grateful to Stan and Sarah Vincent, who allow us to use the building at a minimum cost, for the benefit of the community in Bampton. We are all grateful for their generosity.

Thank you to **Libraries Unlimited** for continuing to provide the library in Bampton which is why LARC was created.

Our thanks go to our wonderful Librarian, Pam. We couldn't manage without her help.

Thanks to Geoff Girdlestone for keeping our accounts in order and producing the financial statements.

Thanks also to all the Trustees, the management team and all volunteers.

Finally, thanks to anyone accidentally omitted from this report and to the whole community for your support as users, helpers, customers at our sales. It is greatly appreciated!

Bampton LARC
Year to 31 March 2023

Receipts & Payments 2022/23

	Total	2021/22 Total
Donations	765.45	195.12
Grants	144.00	0.00
Fund raising	297.50	290.10
Lettings & events	2041.65	1327.70
Licence fee LU	2000.00	2000.00
Electricity LU	589.71	586.87
Computer usage	7.80	8.20
Printing & Photocopying	110.95	63.20
Calenders & Books	0.00	8.10
Youth Club	0.00	0.00
Wellbeing Group	0.00	0.00
Bank interest	65.52	64.71
Cash differences	0.00	0.00
Total Receipts	6022.58	4544.00

Payments

Fundraising costs	0.00	0.00
Event costs	0.00	0.00
Rent	1000.00	1000.00
Business rates	0.00	0.00
Insurance	620.76	579.39
Heat, light & power	3509.94	2697.40
Water	185.22	159.32
Cleaning/Covid supplies	459.00	555.37
Repairs and renewals	475.50	993.96
Holiday Club	206.00	0.00
Telephone & Internet	724.17	788.65
Printing & stationery	58.94	41.00
Wellbeing Group	0.00	0.00
Youth group	0.00	0.00
Miscellaneous	139.51	101.50
Total Payments	7379.04	6916.59
Larcs net receipts	-1356.46	-2372.59

Statement of Funds at 31/03/2023

Nat West bank balance	1134	599
treasurer	163	121
float	15	15
Cash at bank and in hand	1312	734

Investments

Bampton LARC
Year to 31 March 2023

United Trust Bank	5307	5242
Fidelity Funds Network see below *	5000	7000
(Artemis strategic Bond Fund)		
Total Investments	10307	12242
Total funds	11620	12976

* value at 31/03/21 was £7697
value at 31/03/22 was £7472
£2000 sold on 6 Jan 2023.
value at 31/03/23 was £4985