

The Net Community Hub Trustees Annual Report 2024/25

The Net Community Hub has been designed to meet the intergenerational needs of the community, providing the basis for positive cohesion sought after by residents and which is considered a safe space with sound examples of good work practice.

Our main focus is to alleviate social isolation in the large number of vulnerable, elderly and isolated residents in the area.

The Net offers activities and opportunities modelled to meet the specific needs of individuals and/or groups, providing stepping stones to improving confidence and expanding the aspirations of the community.

The Hub provides opportunities for:

- Residents to develop as volunteers
- Communication and information
- Residents to develop friendships and understanding
- Specialist groups to meet and expand their knowledge, skills and expertise
- Surgeries to take place e.g. Hi Kent Deaf Aid
- Space for activities and services (eg, hairdresser, podiatrist)
- A base for community interest groups to work from

With the loss of some income generating hire groups, a new approach was instigated, with a move away from reliance on private hire to offering funded sessions where groups make a donation for the use of the facilities, which is proving to be a successful approach through which the Hub can continue to operate.

PROJECT FUNDING 2024/25

We applied for the Kent Community Fund Known Applicant route again and received £2674 in March 2025.

The £1 per person per session model has stayed consistent and we have continued with it.

There were a number of small donations from various individuals and organisations.

FINANCES

We increased the hourly rate for activity coordinators and cleaner to £12 in line with the national living wage, having budgeted for this in the lottery funding, along with volunteer expenses and a travel bursary for people who need it.

We've been extremely gratified that the travel bursary has seen seven people making regular use of it. The lottery funding also covered a social media admin for one year, who has been very productive for us.

We procured a debit card so our website, shopping and google accounts could all update immediately to the bank account, instead of an individual having to pay and then be reimbursed.

We saved money by switching to a business account with our broadband provider, as well as reducing our energy bill.

ACTIVITIES

We're now back to full strength in all our activities, consolidating the regular weekly sessions and introducing some new ones. Our programme now means the space is open for at least a morning or afternoon every day except Sunday, with Wednesdays including the Warm Spaces initiative at lunchtime, with 'Soup and a Roll' moving from 'Winter Warmer' to 'Summer Snack' Other sessions take place monthly, along with many one off drop in services, workshops and celebration events.

We were a venue for a new festival, Medway Women's History Month, and hosted Funny Women's Comedy in the Community, showing us that our plans to run similar events is workable. We also hosted a three month long Vax Clinic and a baby massage workshop.

Our community regularly feeds back to us how valuable they find the hub, with one stating:

"It changed my life. I used to be shut up but I've got a new family. I used to go drinking to find company but now I've found friends at the hub and I've not had an alcoholic drink in 4 months because I don't need it, because I'm not on my own and lonely. Since coming here I know it is important for us to have this place to come to and stop isolation like mine. It has made me feel like a real person rather than when I was in deep depression and had too much time on my hands to think."

STAFFING and VOLUNTEERS

We took on an Assistant Manager for six months, who oversaw a realignment of administration. With that stint finished, we are, at the time of writing, now looking to employ a social media/admin assistant, with special responsibility for being a keyholder.

Our Project Manager was a finalist in the inaugural MVA VCSEF Leaders Awards, in the Micro CEO category.

A volunteer won the Pride in Medway Volunteer of the Year award.

GENERAL

We had one Trustee leave us due to caring responsibilities, while another became “official” after standing in for some time.

Our Landlord, MHS Homes, is amenable to any premises improvements we make.

The group who worked out of the hub sadly closed down, and we took the opportunity to tidy up the space, donating some old furniture to Streetangels, and toys to Salvation Army.

A defibrillator was installed outside the hub.

The project manager was mentored through employing the assistant manager by CKM mentoring group, which proved invaluable.

BALANCE SHEET (Detailed)

2024-25

Balance Brought Forward from 31 March 2024 £43,605.01

Income	Room	£2,679.25
	Boardband & Phone	£0.00
	Coffee shop	£1,887.00
	Donations	£288.02
	Funding	£3,124.00

Total	£7,978.27
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Expenditure

Utilities	3,604.78
Boardband/Phone	607.03
Managers Salary	8,422.45
Cleaning	2,032.50
General	1,612.92
Administration	2,065.80
Stationary	159.50
Insurances	665.36
Bank	78.48
Chairrobics	502.00
Brainstormz	1,119.20
Time 2 Talk	1,475.46
Travel Fund	1,741.12
Sunday Lunch	0.00

£0.00

Total	£51,583.28	24,086.60
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Profit/Loss	-£16,108.33
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Grand total	£27,496.68
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Current Accounts	£27,496.68
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Nett Balance	-£16,108.33
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Notes