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ANNUAL REPORT 1st APRIL 2024 – 31st MARCH 2025

This has been another busy and successful year for Worcester Community Action (WCA). Whilst there have been some financial successes, much to the relief of the Trustees, it has been a difficult year for our Chief Officer who has been unable to access our Angel Centre office. This has meant that we have started to look for alternative accommodation. Hopefully we will achieve success during 2025, which as the Angel Centre is up for sale, may turn out to be a benefit after all.

Because of these access issues, Trustees have held their regular meetings at the home of one of our members – our 'Thanks' for their hospitality. Trustees have held regular meetings, receiving reports from both the Chief Officer and the Treasurer. In addition, discussions have included a broad range of topics including: membership, business plans, funding, corporate sponsorship, the future of the Angel Centre and succession planning. I would like to thank all the Trustees for their continued involvement and support – we are only a small group, but we work well together, as we all believe that Worcester city needs a local infrastructure organisation. However, we would welcome new members to the Board and hope that we are able to recruit new members during 2025.

As the only Worcestershire local infrastructure organisation not funded by their District Council, we initiated discussions with the Council Managing Director, which enabled us to successfully apply for some specific core funding – the Trustees extend their 'Thanks' to David Blake for his support and encouragement. We would also like to 'Thank' those city and county councillors who donated some of their divisional funds to WCA. We also continued to submit funding applications to a range of grant givers, with our best success is being granted core funding from the Severn Trent Community Fund. This was a very significant success, as core funding is very difficult to obtain, and few funders offer this funding so this funding will be important throughout 2025, and we are very grateful to Severn Trent for their support.

Our two core activities have continued during the year, although we have had to adapt how these are delivered in certain circumstances. Our infrastructure support to the sector and our volunteering marketing and brokerage, continue to be important to a number of organisations across the city. During the year we have provided advice and information on topics such as policy development, trustee and volunteer recruitment, funding support, DBS and banking support, governance and volunteer management. This support is important for smaller organisations and community groups who often don't have significant resources at their disposal, so will turn to their local infrastructure organisation.

During the year, apart from regular newsletters to everyone on our database, we have provided specific support to a number of organisations including: Read Easy, Open Door Café, Aspie, a local Muslim madrassa, the local LTA promoting community tennis, Dines Green Playgroup and a local arts group. We have also continued to provide the secretariat for the Warndon and Tolly Forum, where local residents are able to talk directly to local service providers e.g the Police, the NHS, Housing services, schools and council officers, as well as local Councillors. In addition, we

continue to provide a DBS service for approximately 30 organisations, an important service for the sector, whilst also bringing in much needed unrestricted income for WCA.

Our other core service is promoting and marketing the many benefits of volunteering, along with recruiting volunteers and offering a brokerage service to the sector. We have had to undertake our 'chats' with new volunteers via zoom or in different locations in the city centre. Thankfully, all the new volunteers met this way have been very supportive and helping them to find placements which they feel are worthwhile, and 'FUN', is an important aspect of this activity. Our weekly 'Lend a Hand' column continues to be printed in Worcester's Berrow's Journal and is an important vehicle for recruitment as well as helping to show the variety of volunteer opportunities in the city. Our 'Thanks' to the Editor for his continued support, especially as the column is also circulated to local colleges, the university, the NHS as well as uploaded to our website and social media outlets. We have many organisations asking us to promote their opportunities in this column including: Sensory Matters, YSS, Behind the Smile, Shopmobility, Age UK Wyvern, Read Easy, Worcester City Welcomes Refugees, Access to Education and Worcester Wheels – evidence of the need for this service.

We have continued to organise VOW (Voluntary Organisations of Worcester) network meetings with three being held during the year in a range of different venues which has been useful with attendees learning about the host organisations. As in the past, these meetings have been well attended and have led to the development of partnerships and collaborative working, which benefits both the services offered and the community. We have also continued to collaborate with the other infrastructure organisations across both the county and the region, which helps to ensure we keep up to date with changes and issues affecting the sector. We have also continued to work with the County Council and other volunteer leaders across the statutory and voluntary sector. This has included activity around the development of a Volunteer Portal for Worcestershire with the aim of trying to encourage more people to get involved in volunteering.

We again organised our Annual Volunteer Expo at The Guildhall in Worcester. 45 organisations attended, promoting their volunteering opportunities as well as networking with other attendees. Over 200 people attended with Worcester Male Voice Choir providing much appreciated entertainment. Our Thanks to the City Council, especially Kara Roberts, for their continued help and support. Evaluation of the event was very positive with a strong desire for an event in 2025.

Despite mobility problems, our Chief Officer continued to maintain an involvement with a number of local initiatives. These included the County Loneliness Board, the Worcestershire VCSE Alliance, Worcester city Towns Deal board, and the Worcester District Collaborative. Being involved in these initiatives helps to ensure that the voice, and concerns, of the voluntary and community sector continued to be heard. Where necessary / appropriate, we have been able to report back to the VOW network about any decisions which might have an impact, or be important, to the sector. In addition, we have attended several NAVCA workshops looking at 'Vision for Volunteering', the impact of the General Election and funding!

Future Plans for 2025 – 2026

- a) Continue to develop the Strategic Plan for WCA (with our Thanks to Malcolm Mitchell for his assistance so far) as well as an updated business plan and fundraising strategy.
- b) Consider the implementation of a Membership scheme, whilst also looking at developing links to local businesses.
- c) Further develop our infrastructure support services as well as continuing to offer our DBS service.

d) Continue to submit funding applications, particularly to cover core costs and the recruitment of a Volunteer Recruitment Co-ordinator.

e) Search for new, accessible office accommodation, preferably within the city centre.

f) Work with the City Council to plan and deliver the 2025 Volunteer Expo

f) Aim to enhance the VOW network, so that we can show involvement from local voluntary and community groups throughout the city. Ensure that the network continues to offer organisations the opportunity to share information, concerns and issues as well as to develop partnerships and collaborative working.

Finally, as Chair, and on behalf of all Trustees, I would like to express our sincere thanks to our Chief Officer, Sally Ellison, who has continued to maintain her excellent commitment to WCA, despite this being a slightly difficult year! We would also want to thank our volunteers, Jan and Annette, for their continued commitment and hard work in supporting WCA – both have contributed greatly to WCA's continued success.

Signed:

Chair of Trustees

Date

Worcester Community Action – Charity 1172121

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March

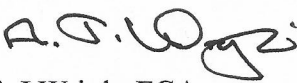
			2025	2024
	Restricted	Unrestricted		
INCOME				
Donations – Severn Trent		8,424	8,424	0
Worcester City Council		5,000	5,000	0
County Councillors		1,250	1,250	3,250
City Councillors		300	300	550
Worcester Lottery		396	396	468
2024 donations not repeated in 2025		0	0	4,922
Good Neighbourhood Network		0	0	4,683
Groundwork UK	1,875	-	1,875	0
Open Door Café	1,840	-	1,840	0
D.B.S Fees (net of costs)		2,310	2,310	2,916
Volunteer Event		635	635	645
Easy Fundraising		60	60	0
Admin Fees		6	6	27
Fees for Meeting Attendance		0	0	750
Miscellaneous		0	0	82
	<u>3,715</u>	<u>18,381</u>	<u>22,096</u>	<u>18,293</u>
EXPENDITURE				
Project Officer's Salary	-	11,362	11,362	11,137
Room Rental	-	1,354	1,354	1,272
Office Costs	-	1,036	1,036	762
Telephone /Broadband	-	534	534	494
Heating and Lighting	-	59	59	268
Printing, advertising and Publicity	-	0	0	36
Bank Charges	-	60	60	62
NAVCA Membership	-	63	63	0
PAT Testing	-	27	27	0
Open Door Café	4,987	-	4,987	-
Transfer – Groundwork Costs	1,875	(1,875)	-	-
Good Neighbourhood Network Payments	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5,190</u>
	<u>6,862</u>	<u>12,620</u>	<u>19,482</u>	<u>19,221</u>
EXCESS OF:				
INCOME (EXPENDITURE)	(3,147)	5,761	<u>2,614</u>	(928)

Worcester Community Action – Charity 1172121

Balance Sheet at 31st March

		2025	2024
ASSETS			
Cash at Bank		27,742	25,356
Less Creditor	0		228
Held for Open Door Café	<u>5,406</u>	<u>8,553</u>	
		<u>5,406</u>	<u>8,781</u>
		<u>22,336</u>	<u>16,575</u>
Reflected in:			
Restricted Funds		0	0
Unrestricted Funds			
Balance at 1 st April 2024	16,575		16,105
Excess of Income for year	<u>5,761</u>		<u>470</u>
		<u>22,336</u>	<u>16,575</u>
		<u>22,336</u>	<u>16,575</u>

I have examined the accounts of Worcester Community Action shown on the Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st March 2025 and checked them against the books and records produced to me, together with explanations given and I am satisfied they show a true and fair view of the position of the charity at 31st March 2025 and of its results for the year ended on that date


A J Wright FCA

16th July 2025