

## **Denholme Community Centre : Annual Review 2023-24**

### **Overview of the Year**

This year has seen a marked shift in the range of activities on offer at the centre. Our regular groups and activities continue and thrive for the most part, but we have been able to add several new opportunities. With the closure of other social facilities such as the Conservative Club and a local pub, the availability of community meeting and leisure space at the heart of our community is even more vital.

The centre was fully up and running following the Covid outbreak by March 2023, which is when we introduced the first of our regular weekend events, a Farmers' Market.

The community centre continues to provide accommodation for a community-run library offering a valued service to families in our village. We also have a thriving Book Club meeting monthly, and a writers' group meeting weekly. Each year the writers' group publishes collections of poetry and prose which are for sale on Amazon.

The year has seen some staff changes. We were forced to let the centre coordinator go as we simply could not sustain a full-time post after the Lottery funding ended, but the role is now fulfilled by a local volunteer/trustee, and the centre has thrived under this 'new management'.

There have been some changes at trustee level. Two long-standing trustees were forced to step down for health reasons and we were sorry to lose their experience and expertise, though we wish them well in their retirement. We were able to recruit three new trustees who bring new perspectives and energy to the centre, as well as invaluable expertise in fundraising and event management. Under their guidance, we have massively extended our events programme, starting with the fundamental basics such as achieving a five-star food hygiene rating enabling us to offer food and drinks to support our activities. We have become licenced for alcohol, making our social events even more popular. We have also appointed a qualified accountant to act as financial adviser to lead our budgeting and financial planning. As a result, we have been able to exercise detailed oversight and control of our finances on a daily basis.

Another cost-control measure has been the introduction of sensor-controlled lighting in communal areas. We continue to fund raise for a replacement boiler.

Our regular upstairs tenant gave notice just before Christmas 2023 and vacated the premises in January. We were able to identify a new tenant very quickly, an established local children's dance school, who moved in in March, so the loss of revenue was minimised. This change offered an opportunity to improve the facilities upstairs by installing a separate toilet. We were also able to negotiate a fair rent with an itemised contribution to utilities costs to take account of real and known costs.

Despite our increased control of our financial situation, challenges remain, especially in terms of revenue from room hire, but the centre remains committed to offering a high level

of service and opportunity to local people. We recognise our crucial role in reducing loneliness and enhancing social contact between residents.

## **Community Involvement and Communication**

Many activities taking place within the community centre are community led and rely on the resources of local volunteers. We pride ourselves on our communication with, and support for, these volunteers and, where possible, we act promptly on the feedback that they give us.

Over the last year, we have continued to build links we have with other groups in the village. We have provided facilities, free of charge, to the Neighbourhood Watch group, who operate a contact point where people can report police and council issues, and to the local church, who host a weekly coffee morning providing low-level secular support and befriending to some of the most vulnerable members of the community who may be reluctant to participate in a more structured activity. We have also worked with the Children's Gala committee, and we participated in the 2023 Gala where we held a fundraising tombola.

We have also maintained links with local businesses; the Coop, the pharmacy and the post office as well as the local restaurant who provide the meals for our Lunch Club.

Followers to our dedicated Facebook page rose from 400 to 1000 in the course of the year. Along with our contributions to other local social media channels, this enables us to keep the local community informed of our activities. We post regular promotional material advertising our programme of activities (usually a dozen or more posts a week) and welcome comments, suggestions and feedback through these channels. For older people who may be less comfortable using the internet, we have a computer drop-in session to assist them to get online safely. And for those who prefer more traditional methods, we have leaflets, noticeboards and an open door where they can come and share their thoughts with us.

## **Making A Difference**

Denholme has one of the highest proportions of elderly residents within the whole of the Bradford MDC area and thus a large number of our regular activities and groups have evolved to support older people. The Lunch Club offers what can be a rare opportunity to meet and socialise with others. In response to requests from users we have sought to open during bank holidays to help people feel less isolated from their peers.

Opening as a "Warm Space" as part of the government backed scheme also enabled us to reach out to isolated individuals and families. We worked with the church in the village to ensure that the provision we were both offering did not overlap. Offering free hot drinks and snacks, wifi and charging facilities meant that users could make the most of our space and keep their own heating costs down.

We also offer a weekly Friday coffee morning with free toast and a hot drink, and a Rural Crafters session

Although our services to the elderly are vital, during the course of the year we have made a conscious and concerted effort to reach out to other demographic groups. In part this is in response to the need to diversify our income, but we also want to ensure we attract new user groups to the centre. Our Zumba class, Slimming World and yoga have proved popular and have attracted users to the Centre who may not previously have participated.

## **New Activities**

We offered a lively Christmas event in 2023 where we were, for the first time, able to sell alcohol as well as other refreshments such as hot chocolate, mince pies, mulled wine and other festive food.

We opened the centre to the community on Remembrance Day 2023 with pie and peas and hot drinks for sale.

We ran an Easter Egg hunt around the village for local children

Since Christmas 2023 we have been planning a lively programme of social events, mainly to take place at weekends when the centre still tends to be underused. The first of these took place on 15 March 2023. 70 people attended and takings were £1900, a massive and welcome boost to our income in the year. We aim to build on this early success by ensuring the farmers' markets and indoor car boot sales become established as regular monthly events, hopefully attracting input from local businesses.

We aim to develop plans to greatly extend the range of activities offered. Much of this will be experimental, but early signs are good. The ideas under consideration include:

- Seasonal events such as Easter and Christmas, Halloween, Christmas wreath-making
- Music, e.g. Northern Soul, themed discos, Reggae Night
- Events linked to the wider community activity, e.g. summer party at the Gala, social event on Remembrance Day, Christmas lights switch on in collaboration with Denholme Town Council
- Celebrate national events, e.g. World Cup Final
- Psychic Night
- Cocktail Night
- Private hires for birthday parties, weddings, even funerals

## **The Challenges**

In common with all our users and other public sector providers, the centre has been affected by rising running costs, in particular the cost of heating and lighting. Our energy bills have been better controlled this year due to a much more detailed understanding of our ongoing costs and negotiating better tariffs with suppliers. Even so, we have an old building and maintenance costs are inevitably high.

Securing sufficient revenue will always be a challenge, but we have plans to diversify our earned income and be less reliant of grants, though we will continue to explore potential sources of external funding to help offset one-off costs. We hope to bring in at least an additional £1000 a month from events during the course of the coming year. We will also review the price of alcohol served in the centre to remain competitive but maximise our earning potential.

## **Conclusion and Future Plans**

### **Financial Controls**

- a) We will further boost income by increasing the range of activities on offer at the centre. Weekly events will be introduced to open the centre at weekends, including those outlined above.
- b) We will continue to seek to attract new trustees to join our team to enhance our existing skill set, with a particular emphasis on fundraising
- c) One of our main priorities remains to pressing need to identify funding for a new boiler, without which the Centre will struggle to operate in the long term.
- d) We have reduced our staffing budget already, but we will look to save on cleaning and caretaking costs by paying a local person or a trustee to perform these duties.

### **Understanding Our Community**

We will continue to welcome suggestions from residents regarding the sorts of new activities they would welcome in the Centre. Specifically, we will further improve the attractiveness of our centre as a venue for hire as well as enhancing our own events, as well as security, by installing a proper bar from which to serve alcohol

We aim to conduct a biennial survey to ensure that we keep up to date with what residents want. We also want to conduct a communications audit to ensure that we are reaching all residents. As part of this, we will be starting a Centre Users Group to formalise the feedback from our users and particularly our volunteers.

Our financial situation remains precarious, but we are confident that the measures we have already put in place and our plans for the coming year will enable us to successfully navigate our way through the challenges. Times are hard, but the community centre is needed now as never before, and we are determined to ensure the centre remains viable and sustainable for future generations. We cannot insulate ourselves from the impacts of external cost increases, but we have developed a track record of reacting appropriately and in a timely manner to maintain a solid foundation for the future.

**DMI Community Centre - Year End Accounts**  
**1st April 2023 - 31st March 2024**  
**Profit & Loss Account**

**2023/24 Total Income**

	2023/24	2022/23
Commercial Rents	£ 13,451	£ 12,195
Community Rents	£ 17,940	£ 11,762
Casual Rents	£ 2,328	£ 212
Grants & Support	£ 44,629	£ 12,100
Big Lottery	£ 22,000	£ 10,850
Coop Pot		
Wind Farm		
Bradford Council		£ 1,250
Business/DTC Grant	£ 20,000	
Other	£ 2,629	
Miscellaneous	£ 5,864	£ 2,929
<b><u>Total Income</u></b>	<b><u>£ 84,212</u></b>	<b><u>£ 39,198</u></b>

**2023/24 Total Expenditure**

Professional Fees & Licences	£ 2,273	£ 1,564
Building Insurance		
Registration/Membership		
Fees	£ 2,273	£ 1,564
Consultancy		
Staff Costs (funded primarily from Lottery Grant)	£ 12,158	£ 11,970
Building Expenses	£ 57,609	£ 28,934
Utilities		£ (3,502)
Cleaning	£ 4,043	£ 6,446
Other Services	£ 2,143	£ 4,005
Consumables	£ 7,560	£ 180
Maintenance	£ 5,808	£ 6,900
Security	£ 420	£ 960
Electric	£ 9,895	£ 6,353
Gas	£ 26,408	£ 6,268
Water	£ 943	£ 937
Internet	£ 389	£ 389
Donations	£ -	£ -
<b><u>Total Expenditure</u></b>	<b><u>£ 72,040</u></b>	<b><u>£ 42,468</u></b>

**Profit/Loss in the Year** **£ 12,172** -£ 3,270

**DMI Community Centre - Year End Accounts**  
**1st April 2023 - 31st March 2024**  
**Balance Sheet**

	2023/24	2022/23
Opening Balance	£ 32,390	£ 35,660
Total Income	£ 84,212	£ 39,198
Total Expenditure	£ (72,040)	£ (42,468)
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b><u>£ 44,562</u></b>	<b><u>£ 32,390</u></b>

# Independent examiner's report on the accounts

## Section A

## Independent Examiner's Report

### Report to the trustees

DMI Community Centre

### On accounts for the year ended

31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

Charity no  
(if any)

1176755

### Set out on pages

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2024.

### Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

### Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below \*) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

*\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

*C Green*

Date:

27/01/2025

Name:

Christopher Green

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

MICB

Address:

Lawnlands Bungalow, Station Road, Denholme, Bradford, BD13 4BS.



## Section B

## Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

Address:	Lawlands Bungalow, Station Road, Denholme, Bradford, BD13 4BS
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	MICB