



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	1st	April	2024		31st	March	2025

Section A

Reference and administration details



Other names charity is known by

N/A

Registered charity number (if any) **1178577**

Charity's principal address

Project 229,

227-229 Bedford Road

Kempston, Bedford

Postcode

MK42 8DA

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Lionel Stewart*	Chair of Trustees		
2	Helen Sismey-Durrant*	Deputy Chair		
3	Sharon Griffiths*	Safeguarding	Official ending November 24	
4	Bipinchandra Shah*	General		
5	Frank McMahon	Finance		
	*Founding Trustee			

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Rebecca Campbell-Grieve: Project 229 Manager

Section B Structure, governance, and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (e.g. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution
How the charity is constituted (e.g. trust, association, company)	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
Trustee selection methods (e.g., appointed by, elected by)	Appointed by Project 229 / confirmed by trustees

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees.
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works.
- relationship with any related parties.
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

***Project 229's** building is owned by The Bedfordshire Charitable Trust (formerly The Ibbett Trust) whose founder 'Clifton Ibbett' had a vision to develop high quality, accessible facilities for the local community.*

***Project 229 was officially launched in February 2005** after a 2-3-year period of development, building extension and renovation. Project 229 was originally part of a national charity (Spurgeons) until 31st March 2014 and became care-of The Ibbett Trust from April 2014.*

*Project 229 worked towards **independent charitable status** with support from The Bedfordshire Charitable Trust and The CVS Bedford. The Project was **founded as an independent Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 31st May 2018**.*

Project 229 hosts organisations **running activities and services for the benefit of the local community**. The Project also runs activities and services and is part of several partnership groups itself across the Borough.

Project 229 works with support from the Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) Bedford. It is also part of Bedfordshire Advice Forum (BAF). Project 229 is represented at other meetings and forums with specialist areas of work across the Borough.

Project 229 (CIO) had 5 Trustees (4 of whom were founding Trustees). One of the trustees ended their tenure during this year (November 2024). The board sustained 4 Trustees for the remainder of the year.

In November 24, some of the Project 229 Policies and Procedures were revised and/or reviewed by the Trustees.



www.project229.org

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

1. To **benefit the residents of Kempston and surrounding areas**, by working with local authorities, voluntary and other organisations, and local people to advance education and to **provide facilities** in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure with the **objective of improving the conditions of life for the residents**.
2. To **promote social inclusion** for the public benefit by preventing people from becoming socially excluded (for one or more reasons), supporting people who are socially excluded and **assisting them to integrate into society**.
3. Such **charitable purposes for the public benefit** as are exclusively charitable according to the laws of England and Wales as the trustees may from time to time determine.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)



The Project 229 Charity trustees 'have regard' to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when carrying out activities to which it's relevant.

Project 229: Pro-Active Community Centre:

Project 229 is open as a **pro-active community centre** from Monday to Saturday for activities and services run for the benefit of the local community.

The statistics below and overleaf include the services that have reported back to us. They **do not include** some of the **informal / incidental / additional support services provided during this time** including those who held annual public events. A negligible number of groups did not provide data in time for this report and were based on accurate guestimates from previously provided data.

Face-to-face Provision at 229 (not including café stats or public annual events)	24/25 No.
No. Different Organisations	44
No. of Activity Types	92
No. of subsidised sessions (part cost funded / a cost reduction)	6
No. of fully funded sessions	469
Total No. of face-to-face sessions at 229	1460
Attendances (based on actual and estimated)	13,912

Post COVID-19, some services continue to keep an element of online provision running. This has continued to expand the reach of the project and provide opportunities for those who would otherwise find it difficult to attend, to engage in activities that help to improve their wellbeing.

Off-Site / Alternative Provision (Online etc.)	24/25 No.
No. Different Organisations	4
No. of Activity Types	9
No. of subsidised sessions (part cost funded / a cost reduction)	0
No. of fully funded sessions	202
Total No. of Other Alternative Sessions (e.g., alternative venue / online)	202
Attendances (based on actual and estimated)	982

Total no. of sessions (face-to-face and alternative)	1662
Total attendances (activities and services only)	14,894

Economically and financially, it has been a very challenging year. Some groups have decreased the number of sessions they run in a year; others have changed the way that data is collected which will have an impact on the overall figures we have been able to collect. In 2023, Project 229 had started recording the **interventions through the café** (having received a grant to support the development of the space from Bedford Borough / Compass Wellbeing funding).

We are now able to report on a full financial year. Café stats are always a **'minimum' number** as it can be easy to miss people when it gets busy. We are looking to try and find new and more effective ways to collect useful data as the project develops.

Community Café at Project 229	Feb-Mar 23	2023/2024	2024/2025
No. Sessions (Open Days)	42	227	216
Hub Club Café Attendances	1431	9229	10822
Soup Service Attendances		1503	1767
Total Hub Club Café Attendances		10732	12,589

The development and incorporation of the space as part of our charitable provision has continued to exceed our expectations on every level.

Interventions / Attendances	23/24	24/25
Attendances at Project 229 (Face to Face)	15085	13912
Attendances at Alternative Venues / Online	1152	982
Attendances at Café	9229	10822
Soup Service Attendances	1503	1767
Total	26969	27,483

"It's nice volunteering because you get to meet new people and feel like you are helping the community. It's good experience and helps you develop new skills if looking for a job.

It's good for your mental and social health. It gives you a sense of being useful. You can have a chat and a laugh. If you are feeling low here is always someone to chat to."

Hub Club Café Volunteer

'You & the other volunteers are such a support to me - I love coming here because it keeps my brain active'

Volunteer

Support for New Projects and Groups

Project 229 continues to **support the start-up of New Groups** and activities with advice on safe set-up, sustainability and provides knowledge of the local area. The Project also provides advertising / design support for new activities that have a responsibility to publicly advertise their community services. (There are some groups who may not advertise due to the sensitive nature of the group). Support may also extend to working in partnership and applying for **joint funding bids** or providing support to those fundraising for their start-up costs.

Spotlight on services directly supported / managed by Project 229:

The Art Well (Open Arts for Positive Mental Health)

The Art Well (Launched in September 2019): An Arts for Health group for adults with **mental health** or **social isolation needs** is run by Art Psychotherapist Marion Major. The service was developed in response to the need for more Mental Health provision as services had either ceased to exist operating or had lengthy waiting lists. The Art Well provides an **accessible service improving mental health** through creativity. www.project229.org/artwell

The Art Well runs a referral group, peer support group and an online group, thanks to the **Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation** and **The National Lottery Community Fund**.

The Art Well provides **three groups** across the course of a week, **for 39 weeks** of the year, plus additional pilot Eco Art Therapy groups in 2023/24.

Art Well Data Type	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
Face to Face Art Well Sessions	110	100	104	117
Face to Face Attendances	541	645	959	1114
Online / Alternative Art Well Sessions	42	40	40	39
Online / Alternative Attendances	336	220	152	312
Total Sessions	152	140	14	156
Total Attendances	877	865	1111	1426

It has been so encouraging to see the growth of this project over several years.

Changes from the previous year:

There was a **30% increase in referrals** over the year.

Art Well Groups

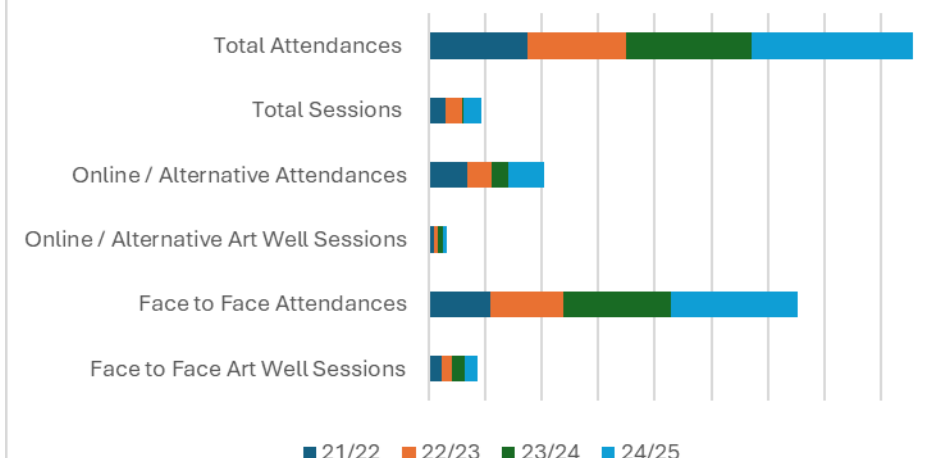
Tuesday - An online group (for new referrals and continuing support): facilitated by the lead art therapist, a trainee art therapist, and a volunteer.

NEW Tuesday Café Group – a relaxed small group session in Hub Club Café, providing support for those eligible for the 12-week group but unable to start, as well as those who would struggle to access the group setting.

Wednesday - A 12-week face to face group for new referrals: This group has been **accepting up to 12 attendees** during each cycle. The lead art therapist and two volunteers facilitate it.

Thursday - A face to face managed peer support group which is offered based on the needs and circumstances of those who have completed the initial 12-week group and have benefited from engaging with the arts in the initial referral group. Members support each other and bring creative ideas. This group is managed by the lead art therapist, assisted by two volunteers.

The Art Well: 21/22 to 24/25



There were 118 referrals:
62 to the 12- week group
32 to the Eco Art group
11 to the online group
13 to the cafe group

The service moved to a **39-week academic year** rather than a 40 week.

Eco Art sessions **increased from 6 sessions to 8 sessions**, four times a year (**32 sessions in the year**)

The Art Well **trialled new fortnightly café sessions** from Jan - July to manage the increased referral rates. A **new sessional staff** member was recruited to support new developments and ongoing programme.

The following data is taken from the Art Well funder report **Sept 24 to Aug 25**.

GROUP DATA

From September 2024 to August 2025 we have supported **83** individual people.

- The age range across the groups are **19** to **75** years.

- We have received **85** new referral forms during the above 12 month period in addition to the **15** referrals who were waiting to start in September 2024. This funding year has supported:

11 attendees in the Online Group

38 attendees in the 12 week Group

27 attendees in Peer Group

22 attendees in the Eco Art Therapy Groups

- We currently have **16** referrals assessed and ready to start the 12 Week Group and an additional **9** due to start Eco Art Therapy in September 2025.

- At the time of writing this report we have **8** recent referrals awaiting assessment.

- **6** further referrals were assessed but did not progress through to group attendance. We always have a small percentage of referrals who are referred by professionals but do not respond.

The Art Well uses a nationally recognised **health and wellbeing outcome measure** (WEMWBS) as well as feedback forms and 1:1 assessments. Where possible, they complete **WEMWBS (Warwick and Edinburgh Wellbeing Scale)** outcome measure data and qualitative feedback from the online group.

The WEMWBS data from the 12-week group:

The data shows that **74.2% attendees** (compared to 67% of attendees in 23/24) recorded show a **meaningful positive change in wellbeing**.

12 Week Group

Over the year we have had **38** people complete the 12 week group.

The following table shows the group changes by comparing the before and after intervention scores for **32** participants. We were unable to collect full data for a further six participants due to a number of factors: returning to employment before the end of the 12 weeks; family and health situations preventing them from completing the 12 weeks.

	Before	After
Low wellbeing	91%	45%
Moderate wellbeing	9%	52%
High wellbeing	0%	3%
Mean WEMWEBS score	35.0	44.3



Meaningful change for WEMWBS is a change of 8+

Number of people with a meaningful positive	23	74.2%
Number of people with a meaningful negative	4	12.9%

The biggest areas of change were:

feeling good about myself;
have energy to spare;
feeling closer to other people;

feeling confident;
feeling relaxed;
feeling cheerful

Managed Peer Support Group: Peer Group supports those who would benefit from a longer-term intervention after the 12-week group.

Feedback from the Peer Group

Things I liked

"The social aspect - meeting with others that are or have been through difficult situations. I feel in a safe environment which is important. I enjoy the making of art and learning about artists and a bit of the history. The routine of having a weekly group gives me something to look forward to."

"The group has a supportive congenial atmosphere. It is important for me to socialise with others and I find that being a member of this particular group fulfils both the ability to learn more about the benefits of creativity and improve my social skills. As the other members have various difficulties and I have a long term pain condition I feel more at peace in this setting. I enjoy all the art themes suggested as it gives a specific direction and focus each week."

How do you feel Peer Group has impacted your mental health & wellbeing?

"It helps me to relate to people. As a general rule it is my main point of contact other than with family and consequently helps me to develop further social skills which is encouraging."

"100% it has changed the way I feel. It has given me an outlet to express how I feel without words. It has enabled my brain to think in a different way and although that part is difficult for me, I enjoy the challenge and I know it is good for me."

Eco Art Therapy sessions (previously piloted in 23/24 in The Green Man Community Garden) are now a regular part of the Art Well Programme.

Sessions continue to run in the local park space at The Green Man Community Garden and offer a different type of therapeutic intervention outdoors. Sessions use **natural and traditional art materials** reflect on **nature and the cycle of the seasons** as inspiration.

IN THE GREEN MAN GARDEN
**ADDISON PARK
KEMPSTON**

**ECO ART
THERAPY**

IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING THROUGH CREATIVITY

The Art Well, at Project 229, offers therapeutic arts based workshops throughout the year.

Reflecting on nature and the cycle of the seasons, eco art therapy uses both natural and traditional art materials.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

SCAN FOR REFERRAL FORM

Email: theartwell.kempston@gmail.com
Call: 01234 982441

FUNDED BY THE NATIONAL LOTTERY COMMUNITY FUND

Eco Art Group Images



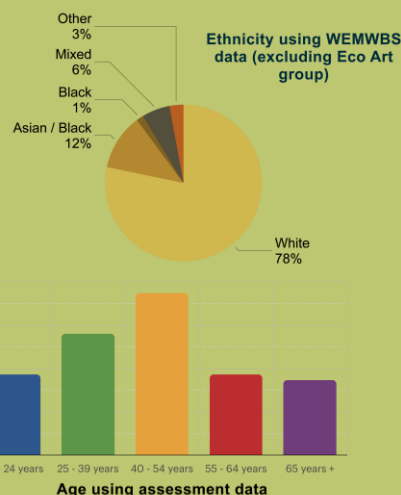
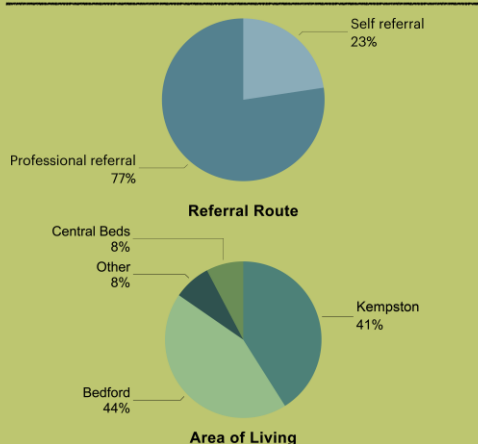
This year we were proud to be able to invite people to come and look at some of the amazing work produced by the Art Well Groups at a **special exhibition**, hosted and run by participants and staff.

THE ART WELL EXHIBITION

On the 25th and 26th of October 2024, The Art Well hosted an exhibition featuring the work of 40 participants from across all The Art Well groups. The show included a range of works including paintings, drawings, prints, eco art and 3D art. Several participants were actively involved in mounting, displaying, and setting up the artwork, collaborating with each other and working together to help create the exhibition space. Many also attended the private viewing, which welcomed trustees from Project 229 and funders, along with family members and friends. Over the two days, the Art Well participants took an active role in welcoming and interacting with more than 150 visitors.



GROUP DATA



The Art Well continues to be a very **important and effective provision** supporting the development of **positive mental health**.

It is a well-respected service locally, with **good referral pathways**. The service is integrated well within Project 229 and provides **effective support** for those wanting to experience other parts of the Project 229 offer.

The SPACE Project



space is for young people who have experienced one adult hurting another adult in their home (often called domestic abuse). To access the service, the young people must be aged 9-16 and living or going to school in Bedford Borough.

We want to give young people who attend SPACE...

- a sense of **belonging**
- awesome** new experiences
- the **skills** to **express** their **emotions** safely
- chances to **make decisions, alone** and **with others**
- knowledgeable** and **useful** adults
- opportunity** to **tell their story**

By...

- creating groups of **6 to 8** young people
- providing **expert tutors** and **exciting activities**
- putting the **young people in charge** of their group
- training** and **supporting** our staff
- involving **therapeutic** professionals

Project 229 has continued to manage the **SPACE Project**, to support **young people aged 9-18 (school year 5 and up) in Bedford Borough who have been impacted by Domestic Abuse**.
www.project229.org/space

In 24/25 SPACE's main funder was **The National Lottery Community Fund**. Additional grant funding support included the **Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation**.

Planets: Planets are mini youth clubs that run fortnightly during term time, the members of each planet make decisions **collaboratively** about what they will do during their sessions.

One to One Support:
Individual support offered to young people and provided by the play therapists, counsellors and staff.

Youth Advisory Board:

Every year, each small group (planet) **collectively agree** on a method for **nominating a representative** to join the advisory board. This group of young people help to **shape the service**, keeping in mind the views and opinions of their own groups. They help to **plan activities and events**, decide on how best to spend locally fundraised income and **feed back to management**. We aim for this group to meet once a month but sometimes they are also involved in **recruitment campaigns including interviews** for new staff and volunteers.

Activity Providers and Tutors

We work with many different **local tutors, activity providers, creatives** and **artists** who help to provide amazing opportunities for the young people at SPACE. Each term, the planets have access to updated **choices booklets** which provide them with ideas and suggestions (based on their interests as well as challenging them to try new things) to collectively agree on their term's activities. These included **a local potter, illustrators and artists, musician, poet** and **book enthusiast, sports leaders, science tutor, DJ, outdoor activities specialist, exotic animal enthusiast** and much more!

Play Therapists

We work with **Play and Clay Therapists** and some **talking therapy providers** to offer opportunities for some of our young people who need **additional support with managing their emotions**. We have also been able to work with therapists who have requested work placement opportunities. Some of these have been managed because of the link with **The Art Well** (arts for positive mental health service) at Project 229. The Art Well are often contacted for placement opportunities and those who are looking for opportunities to work with young people have been referred to SPACE.

Transport:

- **This enables young people** who would otherwise have been unable attend (due to lack of access to a vehicle or family pressures) to come to SPACE.

Staff:

The consultation period with staff evidenced that we needed a different approach and so we didn't rush to recruit for the same staff role that had ended in 23/24. We were thankful for the conversations with funders and particularly the encouragement to be creative and flexible in our approach. We started to **recruit for sessional staff** who could **boost the ongoing sessions** and provide the **potential to expand** and unlock our waiting list. Our **youth advisory board** were a big part of our recruitment, and we were delighted to gain some **new staff and volunteers**.

- During this year we recruited for **an Admin Role** – we kept the advert open and flexible to allow people to come forward and tell us what they could bring to the team. This has also been very successful. We had lots of applicants, and **successfully recruited** a new team member, who is a real asset and after a few months decided that they wanted to increase the role and take on more hours.
- The step-by-step approach to our recruitment has really **allowed people to develop into their roles** and come forward with some of their hopes for the future.
- The admin role development (now full-time) in mid-January 2025, included work placement / work experience and developmental work. The role is now titled **Lead Admin and Youth Support Coordinator**.
- The introduction of our **Solution Focused Clinical Supervision** has been highly valued by staff. It's an approach that really suits the team and the way we work and has the potential to develop into a core strength as we **consider training opportunities** to develop the use of the approach with young people. We have also undertaken some **group training** which includes time to **eat together and bond** pre-training.

CAFADA: (Children and Families Affected by Domestic Abuse Project)

SPACE has been working with the **CAFADA (Stirling University Partnership)** research team since 2020. The team have been carrying out **qualitative research** with young people who attend SPACE. The project aimed to ascertain from the results the ways in which SPACE is **effective in meeting the needs** of young people who have experienced domestic abuse and **identify any areas for improvement**.

A **Podcast project** was launched to capture the views and opinions of some of the young people with support from **CAFADA, The School of Social and Political Science** (The University of Edinburgh) and an **Audio Producer**.

We are awaiting the full report from the 'Children And Families Affected by Domestic Abuse' research team. Podcast clips of some young people talking about their experience of SPACE are available to listen to at:

www.tinyurl.com/cafadaspac

Parent Support:

SPACE worked with a local PT organisation (Transition Coaching) who have piloted a new programme called **HerMove** for females who **have experienced domestic abuse** – Focusing on taking back control, building self-worth, reducing anxiety, improving sleep, creating a sense of positivity and empowerment.

Parent / Carers from SPACE were offered access to the new programme starting in January 2025. **Four parents from SPACE attended** as part of a wider referral group. The programme finished in April/May with a special follow up session in July.



The poster for HerMove Fitness Empowerment is purple and white. At the top, it says 'HerMove Fitness Empowerment' with a logo of two silhouettes. Below that, it says 'A 12 week programme using movement and exercise to restore wellbeing.' There are three callout boxes: 'The focus will be on taking back control, building self-worth, reducing anxiety, improving sleep, creating a sense of positivity and empowerment.', 'We'll be meeting together in a safe space with a class specifically created for your needs.', and '10 places available offered on a referral basis. Places are free and including transport costs if required. All fitness levels welcome. No experience needed. Contact Joanna at Project229 for more information.' The bottom section says 'STARTING 16 JANUARY 2025', 'THURSDAYS 9.30AM-10.30AM', '@ GOLDINGTON READING ROOMS, BARKERS LANE', and 'A COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP PROJECT'. It also features logos for 'RECOVERY CODE', 'Transition Coaching', and 'FACES'.

The Nest: A new Therapy Space

We have been developing a new room at Project 229 for **one-to-one support services**. This includes **Art, Play, Clay and Talking Therapies** including **Solution Focussed Therapy**.

sponsored silence...

Our project manager is aiming to not talk for one working week to raise money for the development of a new therapy space: The Nest at Project 229



Monday to Friday
from
27/01/25
to
31/01/2025*

shhhhhhhh...



Project 229 works with Art, Clay & Play Therapists in the community who offer one-to-one support for young people and adults.

The arts can be safe, enabling forms of communication when words are not enough or someone just can't find the words at all.

ways you can donate...

- cash donation** into our box on the counter in Hub Club cafe @229
- card payment donation** to 'the nest' via Hub Club cafe
- bank transfer** to our charity account using reference: **'The Nest'**

* subject to volunteer support and availability!

Project 229 (charity no. 1178577)
Account Number: 65859047
Sort Code: 08 92 99

The Project Manager undertook a sponsored **silence for 24 hrs a day for 5 days**.



Developing links with new and existing providers at Project 229 and across Bedford will **strengthen our holistic project offer** and enable us to **better support** the young people and some of their parents / carers.

The Nest was piloted by a few different therapists and launched in Spring-Summer 2025



The following info is taken from the SPACE **6-month funder report**:

groups and activities (1st September 2024 to 28th February 2025)

Funding the existing, core provision for up to 50 young people per year (6-10 yp per planet) will enable SPACE to bring together those with similar lived experiences to help them:

- facilitate supportive adult-child relationships
- build a sense of self-efficacy and perceived control
- provide opportunities to strengthen adaptive skills and self-regulatory capacities
- mobilize sources of faith, hope, and cultural traditions.

These are in-line with the common set of factors **identified by Harvard University** that predispose children to positive outcomes in the face of significant adversity.

what we aimed to do...

HALF YEAR Planets:

- 5 small groups operating
- 9 sessions per group
- 1 holiday activity per group

what we did...

- 5 small groups operating
- Up to 10 young people per small group (planet)
- 50 planet sessions (10 sessions per group)
- 333 attendances (32 young people)
- 1 Christmas Party (for 30 young people).
- **17** attendances of our monthly youth advisory group.
- **Special activities** included trips to D Gelato, Geek Retreat, Putt-Putt Social, Fire Nest Candles (with 30 attendances)
- **55** journeys to and from SPACE were provided (this enabled **26** young people to access SPACE who would otherwise not be able to get there.

what we aimed to do...

HALF YEAR Therapeutic Interventions:

- 30-50 young people supported
- 1.5 small group therapeutic interventions
- 54 Play therapy sessions
- Minimum of 7 young people

what we did...

- 49 young people supported in Planets
- 20 Play / Clay Therapy sessions provided
- Parent support provided
- Work Experience / Placements: 2 young people started placements and so far, have completed **6 sessions / 18.5hrs**

what we aimed to do...

Professional Development

- Clinical supervision
- NYA training
- Specialist training
- Continued CPD

what we did...

- Continued **Solution Focused Clinical supervision**
- iHasco training offer, **increased courses** incl. **soft skills**
- **NYA** training available
- Specialist training available – incl. **local safeguarding board** training

Solution Focussed Therapy One-To-One Sessions

As part of the services provided through Project 229, **Solution Focused Therapy (SFT)** is a brief intervention enabling clients to identify their **preferred pathway and 'best hopes' for the future**. It looks towards problem solving rather than past difficulties.

The qualified practitioner is a volunteer, so the only costs are for clinical supervision and room hire. Working in a collaborative project ensures that where SFT is not the most appropriate support, clients can be referred on to counselling or other appropriate services. For clients who are wanting to find a way forward, but who are feeling 'stuck', it is an **effective and helpful way to create sustainable change**.

These sessions have been invaluable to Project 229 clients, many of whom are **referred to SFT through other service providers**.

In 2024/2025, **39 individuals have been supported** (compared to 22 in the previous year). On average an individual was seen three times – **an average total of 117 interventions**.

Some clients were **referred to other services** and programmes including:

- Open Doors
- Volunteering opportunities
- Well Woman Workshop
- The Art Well / Art Therapy
- Adult Careers Service,
- Domestic Abuse Services
- Pathway to Recovery (P2R)

Feeling stuck?
Want to change something?
Not sure how to move forward?
Solution Focused One-to-One
supporting people to discover a brighter future

Meet a practitioner who will concentrate on helping you move towards your best hopes rather than focusing on the problem. It's hopeful, and may help you to create sustainable change...

contact us: www.tinyurl.com/besthope



The following (anonymised) **case study** is from 2024/2025:

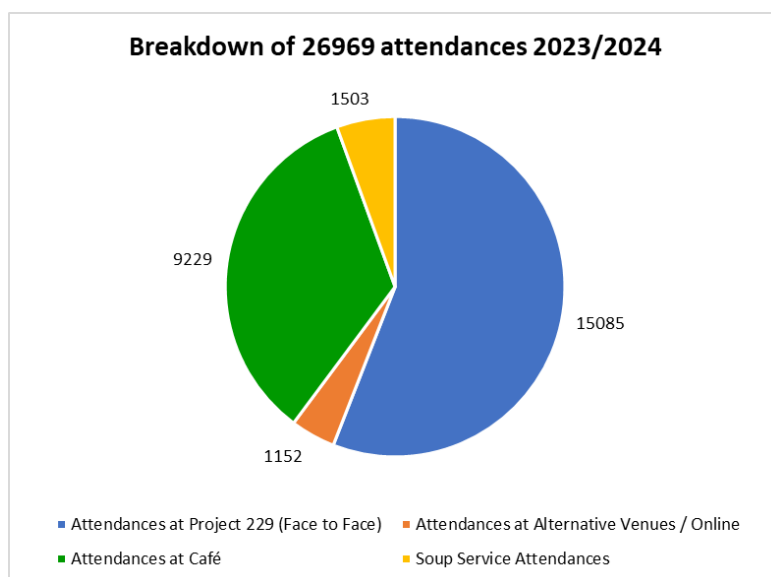
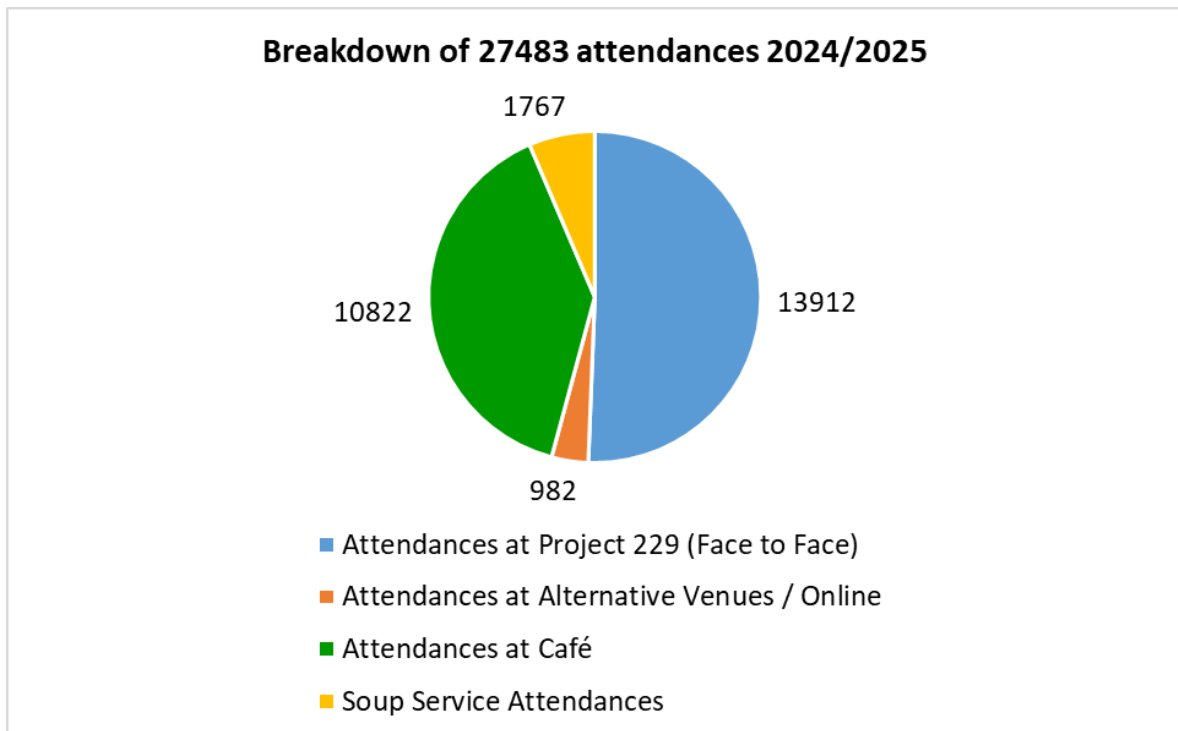
'Milly' self-referred to SFT from searching online. She was trying to come to terms with career disappointments, a relationship breakdown and a big decision regarding staying in the UK or returning home to Europe after many years here. The practitioner met with her five times, and she was able to work towards her preferred future and make the decisions that empowered her to move on. The practitioner was able to do a follow up zoom session after three months and life was much improved. The client was enjoying renewed childhood friendships, a new job and a new home.

'Milly' wrote:

I've started working 1:1 at Project 229 at a very difficult time of my life. I was fighting depression whilst faced with tough life circumstances, each of them alone having the potential to bring anyone down. The Solution Focussed sessions provided a safe container for me to be heard and seen. The Practitioner was empathetic, kind and highly professional. Also, truly skilled in asking the right questions and picking the right cues, she listened without judgement. I cannot thank you enough for this service. I am in such a different place one year on.

The Solution Focused services is **highly valued and an integral** part of the work of Project 229 in enabling people to **move forwards** and not stay 'stuck'. It has effective referral pathways that also help support other projects and services within the wider hub and local community.

Project 229 Interventions and Attendances:



Overall attendances have increased **by 2% percent** from 25,466 in 2023/2024 to **27483 in 2024/2025**.

Despite small decreases in activity numbers due to the economic and financial challenges faced by many groups and organisations from the voluntary sector, it is **encouraging to see overall growth**.

The café space has **increased referrals** and is **an integral part** of the function of the charity and its services.

Other Project 229 Activities / Services

Project 229 continues to offer a **bursary scheme** encouraging groups to provide free of charge places for individuals who would otherwise struggle to access their services. This is on a **professional referral** basis only via Project 229.

Project 229 **works with a network of partners to improve referral pathways** and understands that many people who require support have multiple and complex needs. When organisations and projects are willing to work together, people are more likely to gain improved support and access to services.

Project 229 has continued working with services to **develop online referral forms** for groups that could be used for self / professional referrals. See 'Projects' menu at www.project229.org

Project 229 continues to produce **newsletters, advertising, social media content and press releases** to promote the services and activities that run at or are supported by the centre.

www.project229.org/whatsonnow

Hub Club Café: A 'not for profit' warm space

Since being piloted as a **community hub, meeting place** and **co-working space**, **Hub Club Café has developed into** a not-for-profit café, providing opportunities for triage work leading to faster referrals and better connectivity with the local community. It is an integral part of the work of Project 229 in connecting people with services and support. It's hard to imagine the project without it.

The café has **far exceeded expectations** in terms of **reach, impact and growth**. This was challenging to manage with such a small team, but the project has **grown its volunteer workforce** by providing volunteering opportunities ranging from short-term to long-term placements.

- Potential **volunteers are referred from services within the project** such as The Art Well, Well Woman Workshop and Solution Focused one-to-ones. This means we already **understand something of the journey** someone is taking and things they may need additional support with.
- In turn, we have developed an empathetic team of people with **lived experience** who know what it's like to walk in somewhere for the first time. This provides **a warm welcome for those who are lonely and isolated**.
- Customers and clients often comment on **the 'feeling', 'atmosphere' and 'experience'** of being in the café space as well as the **skills** within the volunteering team.
- Projects and services use the space to meet new clients.
- There has been an **increase in drop-in services, clubs and activities** that provide light-touch **mental health support** and a reason for someone to come in who might be on their own.

SOUP FRIDAY 

with Chef Ian from Marmite Fine Dining...

From 12 noon on Fridays*

Our delicious and nutritious handmade soups are all vegan and low allergen, making them suitable for as many people as possible!

Anyone can come in for soup and a roll!

Minimum donation £2*

***FREE of charge for CAP and foodbank clients**

MARMITE FINE DINING CATERING

(*subject to change and while stocks lasts! The cafe closes at 3.30pm on Fridays)

Staff and volunteers continue to **signpost and support people towards accessing the help that they need**.

Project 229's services are supporting clients with complex, long-term and life limiting conditions. **Adults with learning disabilities** continue to regularly access the café as **a safe place to socialise** with/ without staff from support agencies.

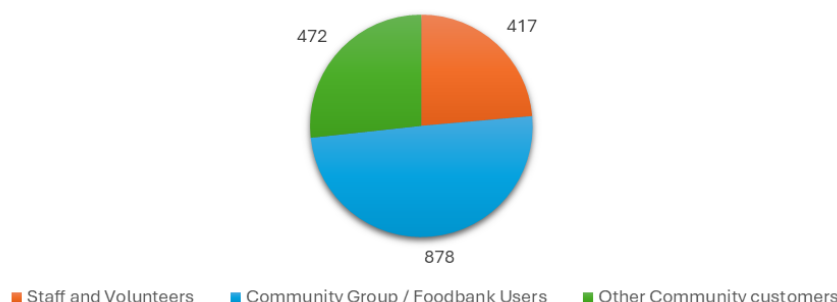
Project 229 has continued working with **Marmite Fine Dining Catering Ltd** to provide nutritious, low allergen soups for FREE (or for a donation). This runs at the same time as the foodbank distribution centre while stocks last. Chef Ian has faithfully continued to support the venture throughout 24/25.

Ian Marvell: Marmite Fine Dining Catering Ltd

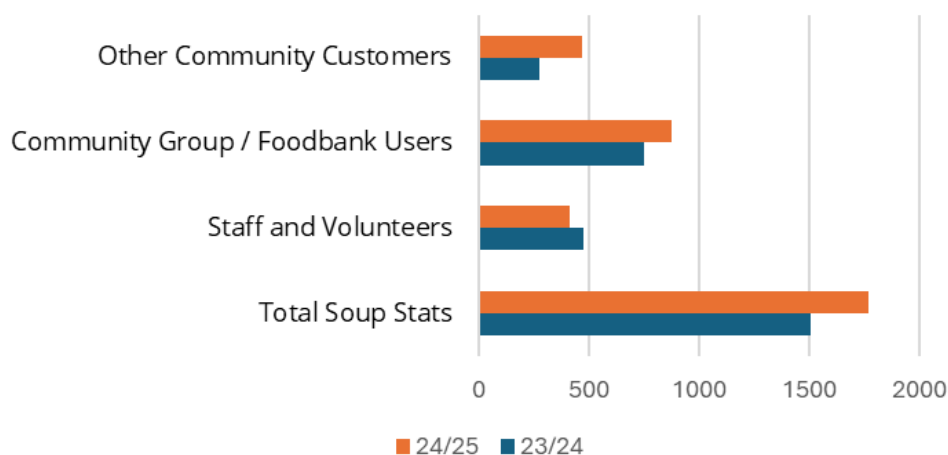
It's the most rewarding thing I do – even though I do all the fine dining and private chef work. For a small effort, it makes a vast amount of difference to people!

During **2024 / 2025**, the **average** was approximately **44 portions** per service (compared to 37 in 23/24). We aim to continue the service and will apply for continuation funding if needed.

Soup Stats: Total 1767
April 2024 to March 2025



Soup Stats 23/24 and 24/25



There has been a **17.6% increase** in take-up for Soup in 2024/2025:

The Kempston Advice Hub is well established with organisations committing to come in to **provide free drop-in support and advice** to those who need support each week.



Fridays from 1-3pm
in *Hub Club* at 229
drop-in **advice & support**

We have a regular team of professionals providing **free access to support** at the same time Foodbank is open

*The Team includes**

Citizens Advice We offer free, independent and impartial advice. Everything you share with us is held in strictest confidentiality. We offer: Money, Benefits, Energy Advice / General enquiries / Homelessness prevention

DWP Employment and Benefits*

Advice & Support with a Supporting Families Employment Adviser: benefits / job searches employment skills / next steps / challenges. To make an appointment for a Friday at 229 email: angela.watts@dpw.gov.uk

Community Wellbeing Champion Social Prescribing Team (BRCC)

Our role is to link you to services that can offer the right support, practical advice or social connection for your needs.

SOUP FRIDAY...

FREE fresh Soup and a roll served between 12noon and 3pm (while stocks last!)

@Hub Club

CAP Debt Advice

FREE Debt counselling service by an award winning charity - no debt too small or large - Money Management courses also regularly available

Get Online @229

Meet a volunteer who can assist you with using a smart phone or tablet. Build confidence to use technology to help with your every-day tasks
email: getonline@project229.org
t: 07356 097230



*please note: not all professionals attend every session

Hub Club continues to:

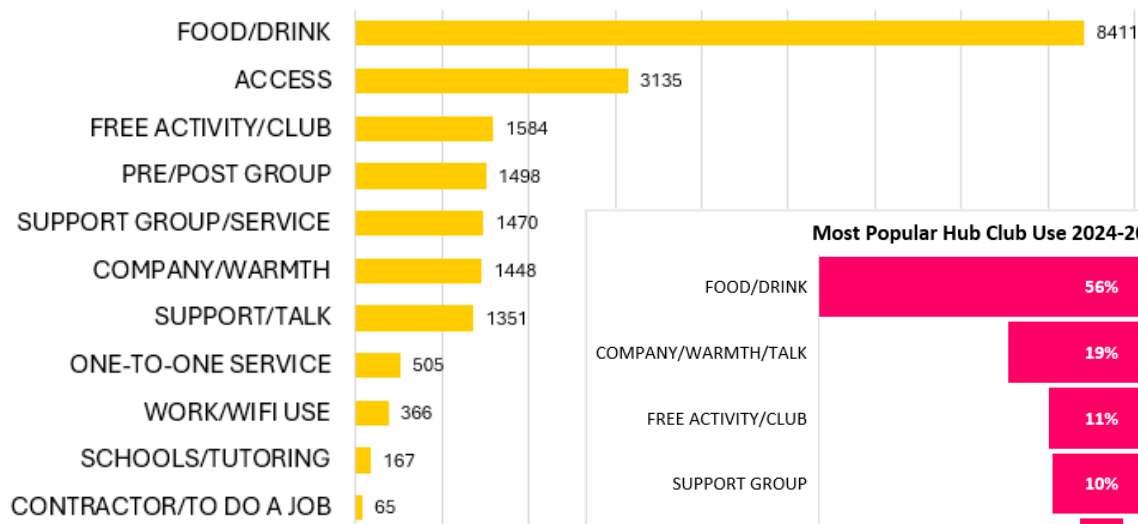
- Offer FREE services running in the café
- Log data about use of the café and its benefits
- Have staff and volunteers accessible to support people
- Have increased referral rates for services
- Provide placements for volunteers, enabling them to gain skills and confidence

The chart (below) shows some of the **recorded reasons for visiting Hub Club Café**.

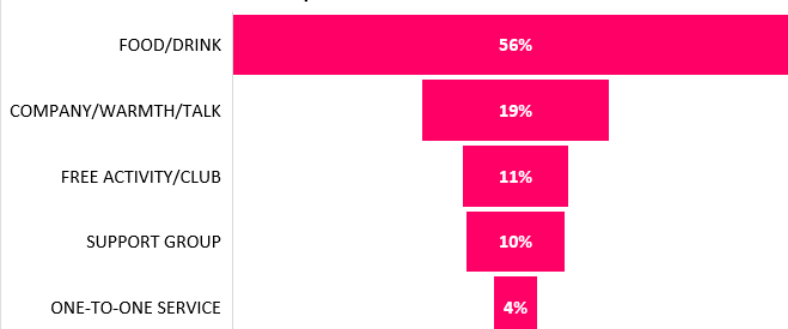
It is positive to see that beyond coming for drinks and snacks, the highest numbers included:

- To **be supported / to talk** to someone
- To have **company and warmth**
- To attend a **free drop-in activity**
- To attend a **support group / service**

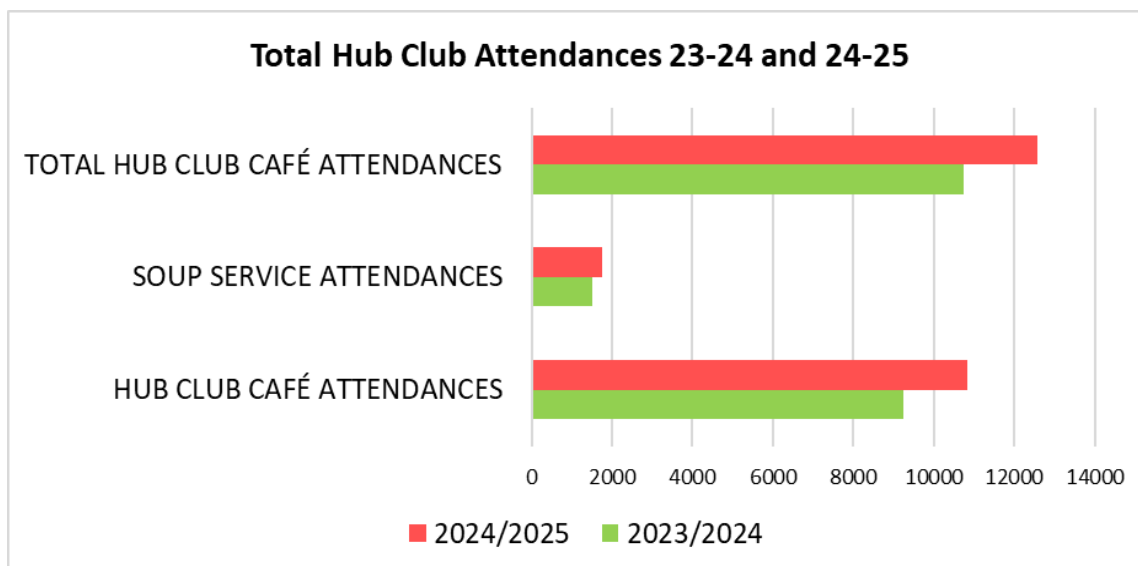
Reasons for Hub Club Visits 2024 - 2025



Most Popular Hub Club Use 2024-2025

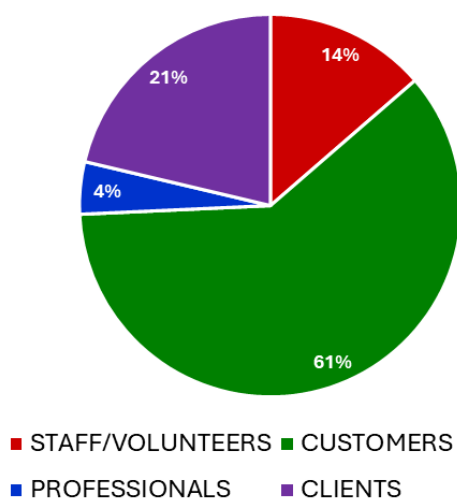


Use of the café in 24/25 has increased by **17% compared to 23/24.**



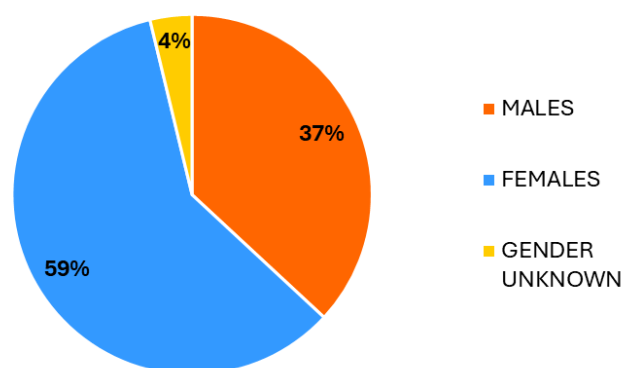
The chart (below) shows the breakdown of **Hub Club Café users by type** (where known).

Hub Club Users 2024 - 2025



Hub Club

Hub Club Attendees 2024-2025



Physical Wellbeing
 Careers Advice
 Department of Work Pensions
 Warm Spaces/Community Support
 Solution Focussed Therapy
 Well Woman Workshop
 Men in Sheds
 Multiply (Adult Education)
 Volunteering The Net
 CAP Money and Debt Advice
 Foodbank
 Social Skills
 The Artwell

The café continues to be an **effective referral pathway** for services at Project 229 and the wider community.

The type of referral is not always captured but the graphic (left) shows the **variety of services** that people have been **signposted** to in 2024/2025.

Being **mindful of the needs of people** who come through the door continues to be a big part of the café function. Staff and volunteers take the time to chat to people, **share information** about up-and-coming workshops and **undertake referrals** to services. Training opportunities are available for volunteers including soft skills courses as well as food hygiene training and workplace specific courses.

The benefit of the café being low cost / **not for profit enables people to feel comfortable to stay if they want to** with no pressure to 'leave a table' or buy more drinks. Mindful colouring, books and games are always available.

The **little library and swap station** developed with support from Bedford's 'Men In Sheds' continues to be very well used and supports the project's environmental policy. It also provides a connection with the community at times when the café is closed.

FREE HELP & REPAIRS FROM LOCAL VOLUNTEERS



ELECTRICALS · CLOTHES · DIY
BIKES · GARDENING · TOYS

NO BOOKING REQUIRED- TURN UP & QUEUE



WHO ARE BEDFORD REPAIR CAFE?

We are a group of volunteers who care about repair. Our Fixers are skilled in their areas and are giving up their time for free to help fellow Bedfordians - for many, this isn't their job, simply a way to connect with the community.

IS IT REALLY FREE?

Yes- we are volunteering to help you save money, the environment and learn something new. We ask for you to buy spare parts if required. We welcome cash donations to help us run more events, or donate at: paypal.me/bedfordrepair

SELECTED SATURDAYS
THROUGHOUT THE YEAR
@bedfordrepaircafe

'I chose to meet here (for a difficult meeting) because this is my safe space and I am known here.' **Service User**

'You do wonderful things – great place here' **Professional**

Bedford Repair Café

are now using Project 229 as their base to run events, enabling

people to repair items rather than throw them away. These events are always well attended with **significant percentages of items being saved from landfill.**

Quotes from service users: 24/25

*This place is just so lovely – my husband and I were talking about the Coronation Street Café where everyone talks to each other – he said, "You don't get that in real life" – I said - You do at Project 229!' **Foodbank Volunteer***

In the darkest skies, the stars shine the brightest - that's how I see the staff at 229.' **Customer**

'I suffered from agoraphobia – this café has helped me – I've done more in the last two weeks – coming to the café helps me to get out.' **Customer**

'First time here, given a 'what's On' and asked about working and vacancies – was told about careers advice – I didn't know it was a community run café.' **New Customer**

'Just in case you don't hear how rewarding it is, what you do – it really is! It helps so many people!' **Customer**

'It's really cosy in here' **Foodbank Client**





Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment; contribution made by volunteers.

Volunteers are the beating heart of our organisation. So many of the **activities and services** at Project 229 would **not be able to run without the dedicated support of volunteers** from the community. Volunteers support Project 229 with administrative work associated with running the project including general administration, invoicing, and other finance support as well as practical support with handy-work and gardening. **Hub Club** is now well established and has a regular team of faithful volunteers helping to run the not-for-profit café each day. **Volunteering placements** are available for some people who have come through one or more Project 229 service(s) - building confidence, training and gaining new skills in customer service.

Work experience placements for students at local schools and colleges run on a rolling programme. Placements range from **short to long-term opportunities**. **We are proud to support young people** who are part of our specialist youth provision (**SPACE**) as well as those from local schools and education providers **supporting young people** and young adults **with SEND**. Some services (such as the Art Well) provide opportunities for those **training as therapists** to gain experience and the client hours required to meet their learning objectives.

Some volunteers have **continued working remotely** to support Project 229's admin function. This includes **finance support and invoice creation**. We are also thankful for the support of volunteers who help specific services such as **The Art Well** and many of our other support services. Another volunteer (trained by BRIEF) provides Project 229's **Solution Focussed Therapy** service which continues to unlock pathways of support and hope for the future for many clients.

We want to also thank **supporters from some of our donor / fundraising groups** who not only raise funds but provide **practical support** at our community centre, including sweeping up the leaves outside and continuing to keep on top of our seasonal planting!

Project 229 is also indebted to **groups, organisations and individuals** who have raised funds to support the work of the project throughout 2024 / 2025.

Project 229 is a tiny organisation compared to many others – and it is testament to the fact that **small things can still have a huge impact**. We celebrate the tiny each and every day and as a team, try to help each other remember that something as small as a smile, a hello, an acknowledgement that people matter can make the **biggest difference** to someone.

The road ahead looks tough! It continues to become **harder to source long-term funding** to cover the less glamorous aspects of charity function including **core-costs**. The project will continue to be affected by changes made by groups and organisations, reduction in services and the economic and financial climate. **We cannot always expect to 'grow'** but we can **be proud of the incredible number of interventions achieved** with such a **small team, made stronger** by our **lived experience, diversity and empathy**.

Section D

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

Statement from Trustees. Lionel Stewart Chairman

I have been involved in Project 229 since the idea was first floated many years ago. The idea then was that Kempston needed a community project that served the residents from birth to their twilight years. This report proves that not only was it needed but I am pleased to say that we have the people and dedication to fulfil a mountain of individual projects that together make Project 229 a flagship for the community.

The commitment and professionalism of our project manager Beccy, supported by equally committed staff and volunteers, speaks volumes for the whole of Kempston.

The Hub (cafe) has developed into one of the friendliest safe places in Kempston and Bedford. Visitors are welcome and supported according to their needs and the number that are then referred to other agencies has increased.

The atmosphere is welcoming and warm especially for many that are struggling to overcome anxiety issues. A hot drink and a chat is a good way of opening up a conversation. Many of our volunteers have enjoyed the experience and some have moved on to employment roles.

Section D

Achievements and performance

There is much to do in the coming years. The challenges, especially in respect of funding, are met head on and we work closely with local CVS to address the issue. I am grateful to all those who put time and effort into the running of Project 229 and know that their dedication will take us further in years to come.

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The Trustees had set aside some money gifted to Project 229 to put into reserves. Some of these funds will have to be used over the next financial year if additional funds cannot be secured to support the core costs of the organisation. The Trustees continue to consider additional funds to include in the charity's reserves. This will be made separate from the charity's general reserves.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Some restricted funding streams run in arrears. This is not a material deficit.

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
 - how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

Local Fundraising and Donations including:

- **'Not the WI' Tuesday Group:** Donation for a presentation / talk
- **Anonymous Donor:** Funding to support a 'staff support fund'
- **Little LEGGS Golf Society:** Donations for equipment needed in café
- **Spring Road Sunflower Project:** Local Residents Fundraising for Project 229
- **Art Well Exhibition:** Donations from attendees
- **Peregrine Recorder Orchestra:** Donation to the SPACE project for a presentation / talk
- **CAFAFA (Stirling University):** Donation from Research Project (SPACE)
- **Bedfordshire Police:** Donation for a workshop run by The Art Well
- **Bedford Park Rotary:** Donation from a RCBP Walk And Breakfast
- **Kempston Rugby Club:** Various project donations from fundraising events
- **Local Residents:** Sponsorship for a fundraising sponsored silence to develop a therapy space
- **Bedford Messiah Choir:** Donation to Project 229 – Concert Proceeds
- **Bedford Beefeaters Club:** Donation to Project 229
- **Hub Club Community Café:** Not-for Profit Café and Warm Space at 229 / residents' donations

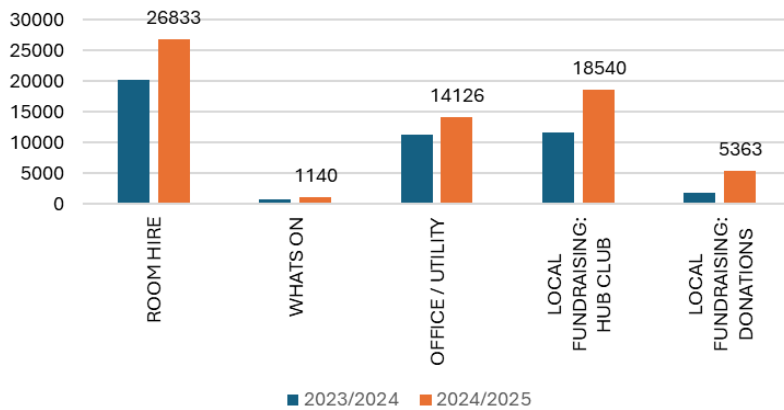
Grants including:

- **The National Lottery Community Fund:** for The Art Well
- **The National Lottery Community Fund:** for SPACE
- **Bedfordshire Luton Community Foundation (BLCF):** Sustainability Grant for SPACE

The chart (overleaf) shows the different **income types recorded in 24/25** and does not include brought forward income from 23/24. This is broken down into **RESTRICTED** and **UNRESTRICTED** income:

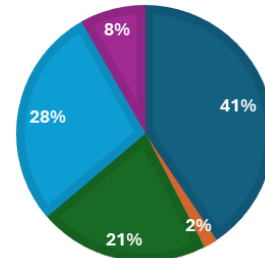
There was a **44% increase** in income overall in 24/25

UNRESTRICTED INCOME: PROJECT 229



UNRESTRICTED INCOME

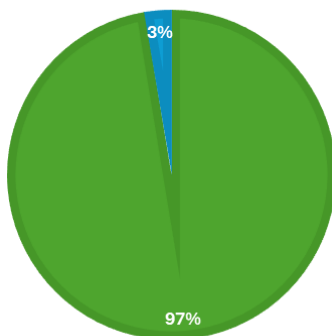
ROOM HIRE
WHATS ON
OFFICE / UTILITY
LOCAL FUNDRAISING: HUB CLUB
LOCAL FUNDRAISING: DONATIONS



There was a percentage increase in **non-grant funded income** but overall, **restricted income made up 68%** of the project's overall income. **97%** of the **restricted income** came from Grants. Restricted income is for specific projects or agreed and funded purchases.

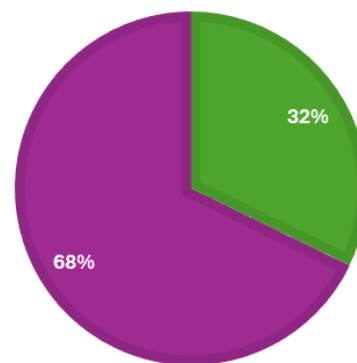
RESTRICTED INCOME

FUNDED / COMMISSIONED PROJECTS
OTHER COMMUNITY PROJECTS
LOCAL FUNDRAISING: DONATIONS



INCOME SUMMARY

UNRESTRICTED INCOME
RESTRICTED INCOME



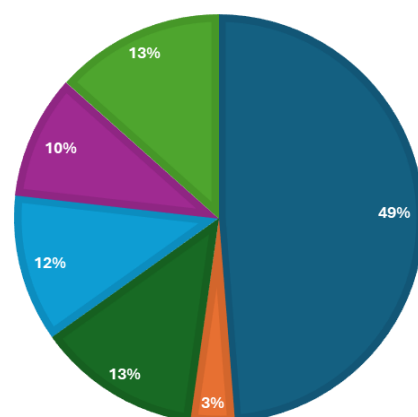
Cost increases have meant that although the project's income has increased this year, as so **much of the income is restricted** and a limited amount is able to contribute to the running costs of the Project.

All areas of expenditure increased in 24/25. The **greatest percentage increase in unrestricted costs** in 24/25 included:

- Salary / Staff and Volunteer Costs
- Rates
- Building / Office Costs (including rent)

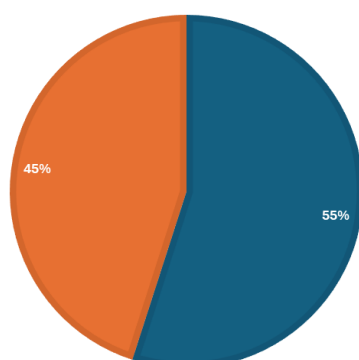
UNRESTRICTED EXPENDITURE

SALARY COSTS
RATES / BUILDING
CONTRACTS / CLEANING / SUPPLIES
OTHER STAFF / VOLUNTEER COSTS
BUILDING / OFFICE GENERAL COSTS
PROJECT ACTIVITIES



RESTRICTED EXPENDITURE

SALARY COSTS
RESTRICTED PROJECT COSTS



The **greatest percentage increase in restricted costs** in 24/25 was for Salary / Staff Costs.

Overall expenditure percentages were very similar to last year. **59%** of Project 229 expenditure **was restricted** compared to 61% in 23/24.

Unrestricted expenditure rose from 39% in 23/24 to **41%** in 24/25.

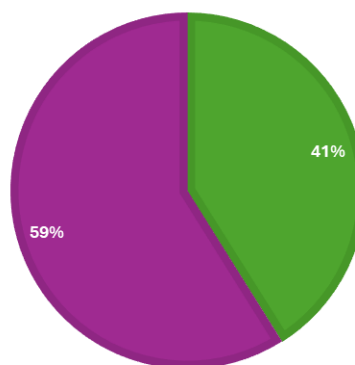
In **24/25** some **expenditure costs increased**. Rates such as utilities costs continue to be high.

Project 229 continued to pay a building lease fee. These costs are on an **increasing annual rate** over a long period. This forms part of a lease set up with the **Bedfordshire Charitable Trust** for the ongoing long-term use of Project 229 for providing community services.

Staffing and **Project Activity costs** continue to be Project 229's greatest expenditure. Project 229 has recruited a **part-time admin role** to support the increase in demand and complexity and to support the Project Manager. This role is currently two days a week.

EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

■ UNRESTRICTED EXPENDITURE ■ RESTRICTED EXPENDITURE

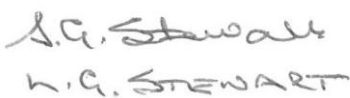
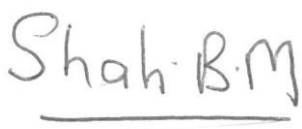
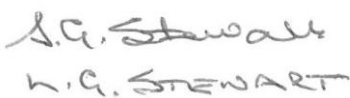
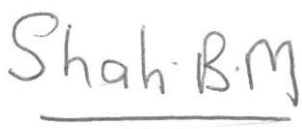


Section F Other optional information

Section G Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
		
Full name(s)	Lionel Stewart	Bipinchandra Shah
Position (e.g., Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair of Trustees	Trustee
Date	30/01/2026	



Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from

01 April 2024

To

31-Mar-25

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £		Restricted funds nearest £	Total funds nearest £	Last year nearest £
A1 Receipts					
DONATIONS / LOCAL FUNDRAISING	5,363	-	3614	8,976	1,857
LOCAL INCOME (HUB CLUB)	18,540		0	18,540	11,659
GROUP ROOM HIRE	26,833	-	0	26,833	20,224
LEASE HIRE / UTILITY INCOME	14,126	-	0	14,126	11,309
OTHER- SPECIFIC PROJECT INCOME	-	-	0	-	-
ADVERTISING INCOME	1,140	-	0	1,140	806
GRANT INCOME SPACE PROJECT	-	-	90157	90,157	112,633
GRANT INCOME ART WELL PROJECT			45290	45,290	17,228
GRANT INCOME ART WELL ECO ART			0	-	4,114
GRANT INCOME OTHER COMMUNITY			0	-	7,652
LOCAL FUNDRAISING DONATIONS			0	-	497
<i>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</i>	66,001	-	139061	205,062	187,980
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Sub total</i>	-	-	0	-	-
<i>Total receipts</i>	66,001	-	139061	205,062	187,980

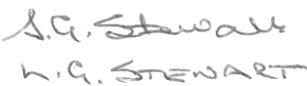
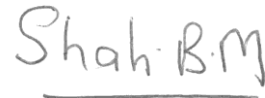
A3 Payments

SALARY PROJECT 229	45,456	-	4099	49,555	34,432
SALARY SPACE PROJECT	-		38712	38,712	25,923
SALARY ART WELL PROJECT	-		29229	29,229	10,479
SALARY ECO ART PROJECT	-		1500	1,500	1,500
VOL / STAFF TRAINING / EXPENSES	3,223		0	3,223	961
BUILDING / OFFICE EXPENSES	10,857	-	0	10,857	5,876
CONTRACT CLEANING /SUPPLIERS	9,125	-	0	9,125	8,004
RATES COUNCIL	624	-	0	624	640
RATES ELECTRICITY	5,979		0	5,979	3,742
RATES WATER	1,421		0	1,421	919
RATES SECURITY /FIRE SERVICES	3,517		0	3,517	2,119
RATES INSURANCE	503		0	503	822
PROJECT ACTIVITY (HUB CLUB/OTHER)	12,479	-	0	12,479	11,822
PROJECT SPACE			44951	44,951	32,500
PROJECT ART WELL			10199	10,199	4,075
PROJECT ECO ART			499	499	541
PROJECT ART PSYCHOTHERAPY		-	0	-	2,295
PROJECT 229 OTHER PROJECTS		-	4618	4,618	13,251
<i>Sub total</i>	93,184	-	133807	226,990	159,900

A4 Asset and investment purchases,					
	-	-	0	-	
Sub total	-	-	0	-	-
Total payments	93,184	-	133807	226,990	159,900
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 27,182	-	5254	-21928	28,080
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	0	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	0	156,023	127,943
Cash funds this year end	- 27,182	-	5254	134,095	156,023

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds		0	-	-
	Total cash funds	0	-	-
(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		Error	OK	Error
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		0	-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
		Lionel Stewart	30/01/2026
		Bipinchandra Shah	30/01/2026



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name

PROJECT 229

On accounts for the year
ended

31.3.2025

Charity no
(if any)

1178577

Set out on pages

1 AND 2

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

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

[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]]. Delete [] if not applicable.

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:

Stephen Simpson

Date:

30/01/2026

Name:

STEPHEN SIMPSON

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body

FCCA

(if any):

Address:

61 HARPUR STREET
BEDFORD
MK40 2SS

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.