



Darwen Heritage Centre, Railway Road, Darwen, Lancs, BB3 2RG. Tel: 01254 443310
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ANNUAL REPORT of the Trustees for the year ending 31st March 2021

Darwen Heritage Centre is a CIO Association, Registered No. 1183239, established on the 2nd May 2019.

Our aim is to provide a service to the people with an interest in the town and its Heritage which will satisfy the Objects of the Charity.

CHARITABLE OBJECTS

THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF DARWEN AND SURROUNDING DISTRICTS AND THE UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF THE ARTS BY THE PROVISION AND MAINTENANCE OF AN EDUCATIONAL HERITAGE AND EXHIBITION CENTRE. NOTHING IN THIS CONSTITUTION SHALL AUTHORISE AN APPLICATION OF THE PROPERTY OF THE CIO FOR THE PURPOSES WHICH ARE NOT CHARITABLE IN ACCORDANCE WITH [SECTION 7 OF THE CHARITIES AND TRUSTEE INVESTMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2005] AND [SECTION 2 OF THE CHARITIES ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2008]

In all of the activities arranged throughout the year the Trustees have had the Charity Commission's Guidance on Public Benefit in mind.

The charity continues to invest a lot of time in gathering, archiving and storing items which demonstrate the town's heritage.

The items collected are then used to present exhibitions of the Town's Heritage in its many guises and this requires materials used specifically for public exhibition. We have free wifi access which is necessary for some of the illustrated talks on offer, and assists when visitors require access to research facilities on-line.

GOVERNANCE

The CIO is governed by its Constitution which allows for a Committee of Trustees (No less than 3 and no more than 12) elected by the Membership at the Annual General Meeting to carry out the day to day running and decision making during the year. In accordance with that Constitution one third of Trustees will stand down at the next AGM to allow for prospective new Trustees to apply for those positions. All Members have the same voting rights. If there are no new applications for the position of Trustee then the Constitution allows for the re-instatement of the retiring Trustees with the acceptance of the Membership.

Four of the Trustees hold specific responsibilities, those being Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Office Manager. All Trustees whether holding office or not have the same responsibility to work collaboratively towards the Objects of the CIO.

All of the Trustees and Members are volunteers and no-one can benefit financially from their association with the Charity. In running the Charity we have a number of volunteers who may not necessarily become Members, though they have the opportunity, who carry out a wide range of substantial activities to help in the smooth operation of the Darwen Heritage Centre. Where possible volunteers can make use of their skills and knowledge in carrying out their duties and volunteers have produced the Newsletter, Arranged displays, Greeted Visitors, Run the website, controlled the cataloguing of artefacts as well as assisting in the care and maintenance of the building and exhibition rooms.

ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT THE OBJECTS

Firstly, we operate in a period property in the middle of a conservation area in the centre of town. The public benefits from the maintenance of both buildings and grounds for which we use some of the funds we raise. They also benefit by having the facility to enter this period property, free of charge and where required they can hire the rooms for specific uses. Some of the volunteers have taken on the responsibility of maintaining and developing the fabric of the building and bring their specialist skills to the task.

Secondly, we gather items which are important in demonstrating the Heritage of the town and repair, maintain and preserve these items for use in displays and other activities which the public have free access to. Most of the items we hold have been donated. The most notable donation this

year has been the Silver Gilt Casket awarded to James Cocker with the scroll conferring Freedom of the Borough for which we are most grateful to Gwen Cocker.

This year has been difficult with the restrictions placed upon us by Covid and the normal practice of producing displays on local topics for the public has had to be put on hold. The Centre has been closed for most of the year with only short openings in between the spikes of the virus. Whilst we have been disappointed to close our doors to the public the time has been used well to thoroughly clean the Centre internally and complete the upgrading of the cellar to provide storage facilities and workshop rooms. In preparation for re-opening safely we purchased materials necessary for the compliance with Government guidance and regulations e.g. hand sanitiser units, masks, signage etc. The rooms within the Centre were reorganised extensively to create a one way system to allow for social distancing between visitors once re-opened. As a result of the changed working practices we bought in new display boards which not only helped with the one way system by providing barriers but also allowed us to put more evidence of the Heritage of Darwen on display without the necessity of visitors being able to handle folders, maps etc. as would normally be the case.

The Century of Weddings Exhibition which was put on hold at the start of the year was retained as the opening exhibition once the restrictions were lifted and this will remain in place for at least 3 months after the re-opening. This will give the people of Darwen the opportunity to see how their contributions to the display have been used for the benefit of all.

Our links with the local schools have also been halted in terms of pupil visits to the Centre and Volunteers going into schools, and the series of talks given at the Centre in the evenings has been halted.

To compensate for the lack of interaction on a face to face basis we have concentrated on developing our online presence and the website has been extensively developed by one of our Trustees. There is now a wide variety of material which has been digitised and put on the website so that whilst visitors cannot benefit by visiting the Centre in person, they have had an increasing access to the many photos and sources of information which we hold on their behalf. Our Facebook page has been growing in popularity

and the engagement between visitors to our page and the posts which they find there has been most rewarding.

Trustees have met regularly on Zoom meetings to keep abreast of the latest developments and we have been following the Covid Guidance, Data and Regulations through the Gov.uk website in order to ensure that any decisions we took were in the best interests of both our volunteers and visitors. Members have been kept informed of developments through regular Newsletters which have been sent out as emails where possible and by post for those who do not have access to the internet.

FINANCES

The main source of funds is the sub-letting of the upper floor rooms which usually generates enough income to cover our annual fixed expenses. However, we have responded to the needs of the business in these unusual times and with lockdown we halved the rent for the upper floor. This has meant that we have been able to retain our tenant. We currently receive a grant of £3,500 per annum from the local town Council. We have a Membership Scheme which raises extra funds and also a 100 Club which is run by a volunteer. The room hire has not been a source of income this year and we are grateful to Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council for considering the needs of the Centre in distributing the Covid National Restrictions Support Grants. This year we have received a rebate of business rates from Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council which has increased our income above the normal annual level. All other monies raised for use in the Centre come from donations.

At the end of the financial period of the return the Charity's finances were in a reasonably healthy state and the next phase of our growth can be embarked upon with confidence. At the start of the financial year the balance held was £30,765.72. The income for the year was £41,710.79 and our expenditure was £22,864.76 which has resulted in an increase of the balance held at the end of the year to £49,611.75 and this will be used to purchase the necessary display and storage furniture to allow us to develop the Centre's facilities and capacity to enhance the visitor experience.

Two grants were sought from the Livesey Foundation and the Lloyd Trust amounting to £10,200 to replace the three boilers used for heating the Centre with remote heating controls to provide comfortable surroundings

for visitors to the building and constant temperatures for the storage of artefacts.

£2,000 was invested in a new security and fire protection contract to upgrade the current facilities and a further £2,300 was spent on damp proofing the cellars to improve storage and workshop facilities.

The new Treasurer has set a budget plan for the Charity setting aside funds for Building Maintenance, Administration costs and Exhibitions. A reserve fund has also been set at £20,000.

At this moment in time there is no uncertainty about the future of the Heritage Centre. The principal risks come from the maintenance of the building and attracting sufficient volunteers to continue running the Centre. With a maintenance programme in hand under the guidance of one of our Trustees the risk of sudden expenditure requirement for repairs is minimised. The enhanced presence on social media has been generating more interest in volunteering and as people realise the range of opportunities available this is increasing our support in this area.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & SUPPORT

Covid interrupted our Community involvement in order to protect our Volunteers.

Attempts were made together with Darwen Town Council and the Lloyd Trust to preserve the WW1 War Memorial at Hollins Grove Congregational Church. The Memorial which is a glass mosaic fixed directly to the wall in the church (now closed) was surveyed using the Mosaic Restoration Company at a cost of £630. The result of this survey was disappointing as the cost of removal and safe restoration at the Heritage Centre was prohibitive at approximately £250,000. With further assistance from both DTC and the Lloyd Trust a professional photograph on board was created for the Centre by Norwyn Photography and this now hangs in the Centre.

Plans are still in hand to commence Family History Sessions at the Centre. The necessary equipment has been purchased with help from the Lottery Covid Mental Health Recovery fund and sessions will commence as soon as is practicable.

Darwen Heritage Centre

Reciepts and Payments for the Year to 31 March 2021

31 March 2020 bank Balance	£	30,747.18
31 March 2020 cash Balance	£	18.54
	£	<u>30,765.72</u>

Income

Rent	£	4,749.96	
Room Hire	£	-	
Donations	£	870.62	
Talks/Events	£	25.00	
Sales	£	-	
Membership	£	320.00	
Grants	£	24,269.21	
100 Club	£	1,476.00	
Rate Rebate	£	10,000.00	£ 41,710.79
		<u>£ 41,710.79</u>	<u>£ 72,476.51</u>
Total			

Expenditure

Rates	£	-	
Electric	£	768.19	
Gas	£	2,325.11	
Water	£	359.48	
Phone/Broadband	£	518.19	
Insurance	£	522.37	
TV & Music Licence	£	236.64	
Website	£	67.54	
Security	£	3,795.21	
Building	£	10,730.90	
Purchases	£	2,220.41	
Admin	£	756.24	
Exhibitions	£	77.48	
100 Club	£	425.00	
Subscriptions	£	62.00	£ 22,864.76
		<u>£ 22,864.76</u>	<u>£ 49,611.75</u>
Total			

Balance per Bank Statement	31/03/2021	£	49,593.21
Petty Cash Balance	31/03/2021	£	18.54

I have examined the books & records for the above year and found everything to be correct & in order. Diane Walsh. 17/5/21.



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

DARWEN HERITAGE CENTRE

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31/03/2021

**Charity no
(if any)**

1183239

Set out on pages

(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 31/03/2021.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 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 (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn 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:

D. Walsh

Date:

17/05/21

Name:

DIANE WALSH

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

Address:

*10 BOSLEY CLOSE, DARWEN
LANCASHIRE BB3 3LF*