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ANNUAL REPORT of the Trustees for the year ending 31st March 2022

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.

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 at the last AGM Pat Smith became the latest Trustee, taking the place of Lisa Edge who moved down to a non-Executive post. 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. Currently the CIO has the maximum 12 Trustees on the Committee.

ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT THE OBJECTS

Covid restrictions had an impact on the opening of the Heritage Centre for the second year running. After initially opening on the 19th May this was cut short and deferred until the 4th August. As a result the room bookings were affected and the season of talks suspended. School visits were curtailed to protect the volunteers and new ways of keeping links open had to be explored.

In April with funding from both the Lloyd Trust and Darwen Town Council a photographic copy on board of the Hollins Grove War Memorial mosaic was delivered to the Centre. This has been admired by many visitors to the Centre.

Also in April, the Lease for Holker House was finalised with the Livesey Foundation and the Heritage Centre agreed to take on the cost of insuring the buildings and contents from the next renewal date in March 2022.

The Peel Mill War Memorial was brought to the Centre in May for a long term loan by Kath Cooney; this has since been purchased for the Centre.

In June we further developed our online presence with the development of a dedicated Darwen Heritage Centre Youtube Channel.

August 2021 brought a phone call from Lytham offering a painting of Alderman Bury as a donation. This turned out to be Moses Duxbury and the painting was established as an enlargement of a photo by Timperley, (Postmaster for Darwen and Photographer) then finished by a professional artist. This now hangs in the front room.

In September we received a visit from the Mayor and Mayoress of Blackburn with Darwen and they spent time at the Centre being shown around by the volunteers. Our credibility as an institution worthy of attracting visitors is growing and it is nice to know that Blackburn can acknowledge this fact.

September 2021 also brought a strange offer from Paul Whitehead. 3 Model Boats in need of some renovation. This ended with the donation of

many items relating to the Chadwick family for which we are most grateful. Paul had in fact repaired the Lions on the War Memorial which his Great Grandmother had unveiled 100 years before.

The long awaited audit report from the Lancashire County Council Museum Services – Conservatory Studios was received and with their assistance we have successfully applied to be recognised by the Arts Council to be working towards Independent Museum Status.

September was a very busy month for the Heritage Centre as the report from the Conservators on the Alexander Thomas Eccles painting was received. The Committee agreed to go with the middle figure for restoration and this has since been carried out and the painting hangs in the front room.

October saw the return to Darwen for the spade used by Alexander Carus in 1897 to dig the first sod for Darwen Tower. David Duckworth has donated this to the Centre. In the same month a popular exhibition was set up under the title of a Century of Remembrance to coincide with the Centenary of the opening of the Darwen War Memorial in Bold Venture Park. Material from both the WW1 Roll of Honour completed by our Chairman Tony Foster and the WW2 Roll of Honour completed by the Secretary of the Centre was used in the construction of this display.

At the AGM in October, Lisa Edge took the post of non-Executive Trustee to make way for Pat Smith to join the Committee as a new Trustee. Pat has worked tirelessly since to help fulfil the Objects of the Heritage Centre and is a valuable member of the team.

Hubert Bentley returned with another successful exhibition of his paintings in November and December, with almost all of his paintings being sold to visitors. Hubert made a generous donation of 20% of total sales to the Centre and a further 20% to Cancer Research.

Increasing the number of volunteers has been high on the Agenda for this year and we have been successful in enlisting a number of new volunteers including 3 Post Graduate Students who have made a positive contribution to the Centre and in return we have been able to add to their CV and provide character references. All volunteers were invited to a gathering for Christmas at the Centre on our final opening day and the costs had been kept as low as possible to make this a very inclusive event.

In January a second Exhibition by Adrian Turner supported by Harold Heys proved very popular. Again, the Heritage Centre is grateful to Adrian for the donation he made from the sales of his paintings. Continued

exhibitions by local artists are enjoyed by many of the visitors to the Centre and we hope to continue this type of exhibition in future.

An exhibition of the Darwen Girls Choir attracted the attention through our Facebook page of Betty Baron in March 2022. This prompted Betty to visit the Exhibition as her mother Gertrude Kay had been the choirmaster when they won the Trophies for Junior Choir at The Festival of Britain and also Eisteddfod in 1951. Betty has donated the Eisteddfod Trophy to the Centre. Mildred Riley has loaned the Festival of Britain Trophy.

Also in March, thanks to the Lloyd Trust again, the self-portrait by James Hargreaves Morton was donated to the Centre and will form the centre piece for a Morton Exhibition in collaboration with Hans Lowe of Cavalier Carpets.

Several Displays have been organised throughout the year to attract visitors to the Centre and these include: A Century of Weddings; Darwen Versus Arsenal, 1932; Holden Transport; Bill Hunt, Darwen's strongman; The Development of Green Street, 1929; Houghtons The Saddlers plus others. Further displays are planned to keep the Centre fresh to casual visitors.

The Maintenance Crew have also been very active throughout the year creating storage units for the many paintings which we hold, Organising new shelving in the cupboards, carrying out essential repairs to the building to make sure it remains an impressive part of the central Conservation Area and maintaining the external appearance of the building. The roof has been repaired which makes the building sound from the effects of the weather, and thanks go to all those volunteers who have been engaged in this area.

FINANCES

The main source of funds remains the sub-letting of the upper floor rooms which usually generates enough income to cover our annual fixed expenses.

A sum equal to half that rent has been raised by Room Hire charges for groups making use of the Centre. This is a crucial part of raising extra funds to cover the costs incurred with rising inflation and in particular energy bills. For this effort we have to thank all those key holders who are prepared to open the Centre at times when we are closed to the public, in particular Les Calvey.

At the end of the financial period of the return the Charity's finances remain 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 £49,611.75. The income for the year was £32,195.27 and our expenditure was £24,047.33 which has resulted in an increase of the balance held at the end of the year to £57,759.69. The increase in balance has been brought about by the successful Lottery Bids, Covid Recovery Grants and a donation of £2,500 by Terry Walsh in January 2022 to create the Music Archive for Darwen.

The 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

In April 2021 Blackburn College came to us with a suggestion for a partnership to introduce Adult Learning classes back into Darwen. They were furnished with keys and had the Main Room booked for sessions. Only one full course ran as they found it difficult to enlist enough people to fill the courses.

Shortly after re-opening we were approached by several schools who wanted to either visit the Heritage Centre with students or for a member of the volunteer staff to go into school to talk with pupils. As Covid was still a problem at that time we directed two of the schools to our website where they could find all the information they required. For Sudell Primary and St Peter's Primary we provided a powerpoint with notes together with artefacts on loan.

In November three of our volunteers took part in a History Walk with students from Sudell Primary looking at the locations of the cotton and paper making mills along the River Darwen from Hardman Way to Cross Street. A second trip has been booked for this year.

January 2022 saw two book launches to raise money for charity held at the Centre. In total £11,600 was raised for the East Lancashire Hospice with the aid of the Lloyd Trust. The books by Harold Heys and Matt Donnelly were both sold out.

In February 2022 the much delayed Family History Courses took place and were well received. Further requests have been received to run the courses again.

February 2022 brought an event which was held at the Darwen Cemetery to mark the placing of CWGC headstones on the last resting places of two Darwen men who had finally received recognition after exhaustive research by volunteers at the Darwen Heritage Centre. Gordon Smith, one of our Trustees, attended in uniform to pipe the men home.

In March 2022 Blackburn Artists visited the Centre to use our artefacts and images as inspiration for their art work. A repeat booking has since been received.

Also in March 2022 the Centre hosted Great Harwood U3A and all the visitors appreciated the hard work done by the volunteers at the Centre in gathering the evidence of Darwen's past and creating informative and interesting displays.

THE WAY AHEAD

Following the audit report from the Lancashire Museum Service and the successful application for 'Working Towards Status' the next Business Plan has only one Objective – working towards Independent Museum Status within the next three years. This will involve a lot of hard work at the same time as we aim to maintain the current level of success with the Centre. Last year we had for the twelve months after re-opening 2,431 visitors to the Centre. The Centre is attracting visitors into the Centre of Darwen and this can only be good for the local economy. So far this year, for the same corresponding periods we have almost tripled the number of visitors to the Centre. The Visitors Book has been signed by so many people both from Darwen and out of town with comments full of praise for the experience they get when visiting the Centre. There is clear support for the continuation of the Darwen Heritage Centre and long may this last.

Reciepts and Payments for the Year to 31 March 2022

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 31 March 2021 bank Balance | £ 49,593.21 |
| 31 March 2021 cash Balance | £ 18.54 |
| | £ 49,611.75 |

Income

| | | |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Rent | £ 4,749.96 | |
| Room Hire | £ 2,531.00 | |
| Donations | £ 4,319.93 | |
| Talks/Events | £ - | |
| Sales | £ 1,332.70 | |
| Membership | £ 814.00 | |
| Grants | £ 16,667.00 | |
| 100 Club | £ 1,531.00 | |
| Rate Rebate | £ 22.16 | |
| Rebate | £ 227.52 | |
| Total | £ 32,195.27 | £ 32,195.27 |
| | | £ 81,807.02 |

Expenditure

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Rates | £ 22.16 | |
| Electric | £ 1,551.22 | |
| Gas | £ 2,193.18 | |
| Water | £ 658.48 | |
| Phone/Broadband | £ 300.40 | |
| Insurance | £ 2,037.50 | |
| TV & Music Licence | £ 238.99 | |
| Website | £ 159.34 | |
| Security | £ 945.30 | |
| Building | £ 1,316.63 | |
| Purchases | £ 12,298.13 | |
| Admin | £ 1,435.48 | |
| 100 Club | £ 770.00 | |
| Subscriptions | £ 65.00 | |
| Petty Cash | £ 55.52 | |
| Total | £ 24,047.33 | £ 24,047.33 |
| | | £ 57,759.69 |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Balance per Bank Statement | 31/03/2022 | £ 57,746.67 |
| Petty Cash Balance | 31/03/2022 | £ 13.02 |
| | | £ 57,759.69 |

I have examined the records for the above year and found everything to be correct and in order
Diane Walsh 27/6/22



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Darwen Heritage Centre

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 March 2022

**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 31/03/2022.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with 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 (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect,:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 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:

D Walsh

Date:

27/6/22

Name:

DIANE WALSH

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

Address:

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