



Darwen Heritage Centre, Railway Road, Darwen, Lancs, BB3 2RG. Tel: 01254 433140
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ANNUAL REPORT of the Trustees for the year ending 31st March 2023

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

The Business Plan was updated in August 2022 with one main Objective – to work towards attaining Independent Museum Status. To this end a revision to the powers of the Charity was agreed at an Extraordinary Meeting in May 2022 and this had been accepted by the Charities Commission in July 2022, namely to:

operate a museum and hold a collection for the public benefit;

acquire artefacts to expand and improve the collection;

Since the adoption of the latest Business Plan much work has been completed in fulfilling our requirement to produce and operate within policy documents and this work is ongoing.

The cataloguing of items and donations which we receive has now been revised to reflect the museum standard categories and our thanks go to those volunteers who have had an impact on this, in particular Ann McNally. There is still much work to be done in this area including the organisation of the storage and retrieval of items we hold.

The Heritage Centre has received funding from the Covid Recovery Fund and the National Lottery to provide a range of IT equipment to be used in fulfilling our Objectives. In April 2022 two Family History Courses were run at the Centre which attracted interest from the public and this was repeated in February 2023. The latest development is the arrival of the Touchscreen which is proving very useful in allowing visitors to reminisce whilst scrolling through the images we have uploaded. Thanks for this go to Sue Gavagan and Lesley Leah for making the bid in the first place and then uploading the galleries of images and liaising with the manufacturers.

The Centre's 5th Birthday Celebrations took place in September 2022 and a very successful party was held at the Centre to which we were pleased to welcome the Mayor of Blackburn with Darwen. Also in September the

opening times of the Centre were rationalised to avoid confusion amongst the public and since then we have been open from 10am to 3pm each day of opening.

Thanks go to Matt Donnelly who created the 2023 Calendar for the Heritage Centre after obtaining a £300 sponsorship from Gibsons of Darwen. The Calendar proved very popular and raised welcome funds for the Centre as all copies were sold.

The Major Exhibition for 2022 was the Music Exhibition organised and produced by Ian Gillibrand. This proved very successful in bringing many new visitors to the Centre and the digital files are available for uploading on the touchscreen. With assistance from Terry Walsh the music archive is now held at the Darwen Heritage Centre.

A number of volunteers have used the blue display boards to create their own displays throughout the year and these can be seen around the Centre. Thanks for these go to Joyce Hudson, Pat Smith, Anne Holden, Michel Bauer and Mick Kelly.

The Heritage Centre has been publicised on both Radio and Television during the year. Tony Foster and Pat Smith were interviewed at the Centre by Radio Lancashire whilst Albert Gavagan and Anne Holden went to the Tower with Owain Wyn Evans.

With all of the developments and the hard work of the Trustees and volunteers in promoting the Centre we grew our visitor attendance for the year to over 3,000, an increase of more than 600 on the previous year. Once again the visitor book reveals that many of our visitors are coming from the length and breadth of the UK plus a significant number of visitors from across the world.

The maintenance crew have been very busy throughout the year making sure that the building remains in a good state of repair and bringing their particular skills to the fore. They have also used their contacts to bring in outside companies when required. Projects include replacing the toilets upstairs, completing roof repairs and the painting of down pipes, fitting a new back door all in August 2022. Fitting roof insulation in the whole of the back room and the kitchen area in September. In February 2023 one of the upstairs windows required urgent repairs and in March a new door lock was fitted to the front room North. The projector was fitted to the ceiling to make it easier for using with the talks plus many other painting and electrical works which allow for an enhanced visitor experience. Thanks for

these go to John Marsden, George Swanton, Gordon Smith, Alan Southworth and Steve Hargreaves.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & SUPPORT

Darwen Heritage Centre was registered as a warm space where people of Darwen could come along to get a warm drink for free and spend time in warm surroundings to help those who may be finding it difficult to cope with the increasing energy costs.

A number of Darwen Schools have accessed the resources at the Darwen Heritage Centre this year including:

- St Barnabas April 2022 1 class
- Sudell Road June 2022 3 classes
- Ashleigh July 2022 1 class
- DACA October 2022 the whole of year 7
- Sudell Road November 2022 1 class on history walk
- St James January 2023 1 class
- St Barnabas March 2023 1 class
- Longshaw Infants talk to whole assembly

The Central URC Fellowship came to the Centre in March 2023 for a talk on Darwen Tower.

The Centre hosted the Blackburn Library Community History Volunteers in July 2022.

In September 2022 the Centre provided a stall at the Rotary Fun day in the Market Square. This gave the volunteers the opportunity to hand out leaflets, Membership Forms and the like to the Fun Day visitors.

In the Best of Blackburn Most Loved Charity we received a nomination from Lisa Edge and our supporters voted us the Best. Thanks to all our supporters for visiting the Centre, making donations, becoming Members, joining the 100 Club, writing positive comments in the visitor book and making many donations of artefacts over the year.

Tony Foster arranged the series of Autumn and Spring talks which are open to the public. These were well attended and provided an enjoyable evening's entertainment for all.

Our online presence has been growing with Lesley Leah looking after the Heritage Centre website and Facebook being maintained by Albert Gavagan. This has proved useful in reaching our supporters and keeping them informed on developments right across the world. We have also been receiving positive mentions on the Facebook pages of other organisations based in Darwen.

THE WAY AHEAD

In January 2023 Phil Riley, leader of Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council visited the Centre along with Andrea Sturgess and David Livesey. At that time Phil Riley's attention was drawn to the fact that there are a number of items which were removed from Darwen to Blackburn in 1974 and they are not available for viewing on an open basis for the people of Darwen. There is a degree of animosity in some circles in Darwen as a result of the loss of the Borough in 1974 and these items only provide fuel to keep that animosity going. It was suggested that a spirit of co-operation demonstrated by the return of those items for display at the Heritage centre may go a long way to dampen the flames.

Since then we have been in discussion with Phil and Andrea with a view to bringing the first three identified items back to the Heritage Centre to be put on display for local people to view.

In order to proceed with this project it has been necessary to increase the security of the building and provide a lockable museum quality display case for the project. With the help of a £10,000 grant from the Lloyd Trust this has now been ordered and we hope to move towards bringing the first three items back during this financial year. The three identified items include the Darwen Mace, Timothy Lightbown's Silver Gilt Casket and Scroll and a silver challenge cup provided by S J Fish.

This will go a long way in helping the Centre to achieve its main objective for the future which is to gain Independent Museum Status and increase its credibility as a Museum capable of engaging with Blackburn Museum for the return of Darwen items held under their roof.

Reciepts and Payments for the Year to 31 March 2023

31 March 2022 bank Balance

£ 57,746.67

31 March 2022 cash Balance

£ 13.02

£ 57,759.69

Income

Rent	£ 6,590.52
Room Hire	£ 3,641.00
Donations	£ 3,211.00
Talks/Events	£ 372.00
Sales	£ 3,097.55
Membership	£ 755.00
Grants	£ 10,575.00
100 Club	£ 1,817.00
Rebate- HMRC Gift Aid	£ 1,524.94

Total

£ 31,584.01

£ 31,584.01

£ 89,343.70

Expenditure

Rates	£ -
Electric	£ 1,971.18
Gas	£ 4,462.90
Water	£ 591.93
Phone/Broadband	£ 582.86
Insurance	£ 2,306.12
TV & Music Licence	£ 159.60
Website	£ 155.79
Security	£ -
Exhibitions	£ 1,102.37
Building	£ 4,248.49
Storage	£ 307.28
Purchases	£ 5,269.14
Admin	£ 627.02
100 Club	£ 660.00
Subscriptions	£ 192.98
Petty Cash	£51.38

Total

£ 22,689.04

£ 22,689.04

£ 66,654.66

Balance per Bank Statement

31/03/2023

£ 66,643.02

Petty Cash Balance

31/03/2023

£ 11.64

£ 66,654.66

I have examined the books & records & found everything to be correct & in order.
D Walsh 1/6/23



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Darwen Heritage Centre

On accounts for the year
ended

31 March 2023

Charity no
(if any)

1183239

Set out on pages

Preparer: to include the page number 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:

Diane Walsh

Date:

1/6/23

Name:

DIANE WALSH

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

Address:

10 Bosley Close, Darwen