

**Bensham Grove Community Centre
Registered Charity No. 1188101**

**Trustees' Report
and
Financial Statement
for the year ended
31 December 2023**

Legal and Administrative Information

Name: **Bensham Grove Community Centre**

Charity no: 1188101

Structure: Unincorporated association governed by a constitution.

Trustees:	<i>Chair</i>	Shirley Brown
	<i>Vice Chair</i>	Vikas Kumar
	<i>Treasurer</i>	Angela Knox
	<i>Secretary</i>	Shirley Allen
	<i>Others</i>	Lorraine Yeats Susan Adamson

Trustees are elected by the membership at each Annual General Meeting.

Address: Sidney Grove
Bensham
Gateshead NE8 2XD

Bankers: Lloyds
15 West Street
Gateshead NE8 1DP

Independent
Examiner: Mark Thompson MAAT
42 Lesbury Road
Newcastle
NE6 5LB

Trustees' Annual Report

Background

The Community Centre was established to provide a community venue for the benefit of people living in Bensham, Gateshead and the wider area. The Centre works with the local partners, voluntary organisations, and other groups to provide opportunities and facilities to help improve the social and personal education, health and welfare, and recreational opportunities of local people. The Centre became a Community Interest Organisation in February 2020 changing its charitable status and governance, although its aims remain similar the concierge of the Grade 2 listed building has been added to its objectives. The Centre held an AGM in June 2023 where the current Board were required to be re-elected to stand, although the Treasurers post at that time remained vacant. (New Treasurer elected in Jan 24) The centre employs a full time caretaker and two part time cleaners, two pottery technicians and a Centre Manager. In addition external funding has seen the Centre and area benefit from the input of two Community Bridgebuilder/ Community Development staff funded by Lankelly Chase. These appointments are viewed by the Board and members as positive steps in the development of the Centre. The Centre also employs consultative staff and sessional tutors when required.

The organisation is managed by a voluntary Board of trustees who are elected in line with the constitution. The Board meets at least six times every year to make decisions about the centre and its facilities, while the day to day running of the Centre is managed by the Centre Manager who meets with trustees regularly to keep them informed of developments and for advice. Gateshead Council are working towards asset transferring the lease of the project to the Board as it develops a less hands on approach to community asset management. The Board have appointed a solicitor Andrew Daverson from '22Law' to ensure the legalities of the procedure.

The project offers a membership scheme where members benefit from paying a reduced weekly subscription to attend and use the facilities on offer. The atmosphere throughout the project is nurtured to be supportive, enabling and welcoming.

During 2023 extensive finance was awarded by the local authority to the project as part of the journey towards self-management to enable the main building and perimeter wall to be correctly pointed. This has resulted in the building being futureproofed and looking extremely smart. The staff and volunteers are keeping on top of general repairs and maintenance, working with the conservation officer, gradually improving the building and its appeal to local people. The community are enthusiastic about the work of the project and plans are maturing to develop a new pottery building and to restore the attic spaces of the main house.

Review of activities and performance

The Centre provides a wide range of activities, with a central focus being adult education and learning. There are a wide variety of classes, groups and activities available at the centre, ranging from Craft groups through to groups for older people, those that support the Minority Ethnic community and Adult education programmes both funded by the ESFSA and some at full cost recovery rates when indicated. The centre has a dedicated and well equipped pottery studio that is unique in the area as a community project. There is high demand for classes and practice sessions. The Centre offers computing and internet facilities as well as Basic Skills and ESOL. Recovery from the pandemic has been slow but many of the Centre programmes have supported the wellbeing of participants and there are excellent social support networks among groups via Social media as well as in person both in and outside of the Centre. The Centre has a very good relationship with Gateshead Council Learning Skills and the WEA in the provision of accommodation and support for Adult learning courses. However the Centre hosts a wide range of community self help groups where those who wish to learn more informally are accommodated.

The Main House of Centre which reopened in September 2013 following a very successful Heritage Lottery Project is continuing to flourish and further develop. In 2021 The Centre completed the conversion of additional rooms on the first floor of the building as accessible artists studios, space for small businesses and the Football club federation. These studios help with the sustainability of the project. The addition of new ceramics installations as decorative finishes and some important 18th Century stained glass restoration (completed with the assistance of Sunderland University students and staff) have added to the popularity of these studios and the aesthetics of the project overall. In 2023 with funding from the Queens Golden Jubilee fund two new stained glass windows were completed by a local artist who had developed her skills at Bensham Grove over many years along with local women, to great acclaim. The windows depict older and south Asian women, familiar sights at the Centre but rarely seen depicted in Heritage Crafts. These works are stunning and a great example of what community groups can achieve when they are determined and supported. All works within the centre are of exceptional standard and continue to be a highlight to visitors.

During this year we have been pleased to see the numbers of people involved with the centre grow. In particular the benefits of having Community Development workers on site, signposting local people to appropriate support and developing new groups such as more adult learning courses led by local volunteers, research groups from the University concerned with Diabetes treatment, Hoarding and Grief, social prescribing by local GPs working with people with exercise, dementia, menopause and weight issues has been really excellent and we can see how a holistic approach is working really well. Digital methods of keeping in touch with everyone during lockdown and distancing protocols can continue to be useful as people keep in touch daily with both other participants and their support workers; this applies to people from a range of different backgrounds and cultures, forming friendships and sharing customs. The wonderful garden at the Centre has been a great source of comfort for many local people who have little or no outside space. A successful volunteer project has developed a particular site for garden pollinators and a series of raised beds for members and local people to use. There is a growing interest in growing herbs for culinary and medicinal use led by a local professor which is extremely popular. These initiatives have brought new interest and volunteers to the project keeping it a very important community hub valued by those near and far.

The Community Centre is used seven days a week from early morning till 9pm. There are a wide range of groups, classes and courses using the facilities. The project, continues to be used by a diverse range of people reflective of both the multi-cultural nature of the local community and also by people with learning disabilities who enjoy being part of an open and inclusive community. There are also people from the LGBTQ community who find a warm welcome at the Centre and more recently hearing impaired members of staff who add to the knowledge and awareness of all of the members who embrace difference and enjoy learning about different life points of view.

Risks, reserves and investments

Staff carry out risk assessments on all our projects, and these are reviewed on a regular basis. This has been particularly important in terms of general safety. All funds not immediately required are held in interest-bearing accounts. The Centre has updated its financial procedures, safeguarding, Equality and Diversity and H&S documents over the last year and is working to update its current business plan.

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

Charity Law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which comply with the regulations set out in the Charities Act 1993. The Trustees have elected to take advantage of the provisions that apply to small charities and have prepared a Receipts and Payments Account and Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

Signed: S Brown Chair, on behalf of the Trustees, date: 1/7/24

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Report to the
trustees of

Bensham Grove Community Centre

On accounts for
the year ended

31 December 2023

Charity no **1188101**

**Respective
responsibilities of
trustees and
examiner**

The trustees of the organisation are responsible for the preparation of accounts; they consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 and that an Independent Examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts (under section 145 of the 2011 Act),
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act), and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of
independent
examiner's
statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

**Independent
examiner's
statement**

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:

- proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 130 of the Act); and
- accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Date: 4 June 2024

Name:

Mark Thompson MAAT

Address:

**42 Lesbury Road
Newcastle
NE6 5LB**

Bensham Grove Community Centre
Receipts and payments account for the period
1 January to 31 December 2023

	Notes	2023 Unrestricted	2023 Restricted	2023 Total	2022 Total
Income					
Grants	2		109681	109681	88874
Rent and Room Hire		68177		68177	68663
Donations		583		583	1860
Classes Fees		2080		2080	36
Subscriptions		12970		12970	9024
Sales		4193		4193	1688
Fundraising		0		0	2184
Reimbursements		860		860	7398
Membership		1016		1016	999
Bank Interest		861		861	399
Studio Hire		15900		15900	12225
Womens Group (Ballinger)		2000		2000	0
Contribution to Pottery Tech		3034		3034	2195
Pottery Fundraising		1329		1329	3000
Pottery Resources		1289		1289	0
Total Receipts		114292	109681	223973	198525
Expenditure					
Activities and Events					
Events		4186		4186	3093
Payments from Grants			74239	74239	8115
Dawn Brown Fund Grants			986	986	1739
BG Womens Group		703		703	
Pottery Project		1191		1191	6878
Pottery Expenditure		9584		9584	
Equipment, Materials and Maintenance		14906	1567	16473	9934
Buildings refurbishment				0	9952
Transport/Volunteers Expenses		1348		1348	713
Performing Rights Licence		231		231	210
Staff Wages	3	51414		51414	76487
Refreshment Sales		450		450	267
Management and Administration					
Gateshead Council (Running Costs)		0		0	572
Insurance		5582		5582	1532
Accountancy	4	765		765	675
Printing, Post & Stationery		125		125	94
Fees repaid to GMBC		286		286	0
Utilities		44715		44715	29510
Reimbursements		1218		1218	1471
General Administration		168		168	125
Total Payments		136872	76792	213664	151367
Surplus for the period		-22580	32889	10309	47158
Transfers between Funds		6500	-6500		
Balance at 1 January 2023		170649	43748	214397	167239
Balance at 31 December 2023		154569	70137	224706	214397

**Bensham Grove Community Centre
Balance Sheet
at 31 December 2023**

	Notes	2023	2022
Current Assets Assets			
Business instant access		274	271
Treasurer's account		71533	60067
Virgin Deposit		152892	152035
Cash in Hand		7	
Debtor			2024
Total Current Assets		224706	214397
Current Liabilities			
Net Assets at 31 December 2022		224706	214397
Represented by:	5		
Restricted Funds		68137	43748
Designated Funds		94927	93000
Unrestricted Funds		61642	77649
Total		224706	214397

The financial statements were approved by the following members of the Management Committee :

Signed S. Brown Position Chair
 Signed [Signature] Position Treasurer
 Date 1/7/24

Bensham Grove Community Centre
Notes to the accounts, 2023

1. Accounting Policies

- a The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) – Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006

Bensham Grove Community Centre meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

- b Grants received are accounted for on a received basis and credited to income.
- c Voluntary income is received by way of donations and gifts and is included in full in the Receipts and Payments Account when received.

2. Grants receivable

Ballinger Trust	18729
Lankelly Chase	90952
Total Grants	109681

3. Trustees, staff and related party transactions

The organisation employed 8 members of staff during the period of the accounts. No payments were made to trustees.

4. Costs of financial services

During the year £700 was paid for the independent examination of the 2022 accounts. No other amounts were paid for financial services.

5. Analysis of Funds:

Restricted Funds	Open Bal	Income	Expend	Transfers	End Bal
Dawn Brown Fund	1487		986		501
Ballinger Trust		18729	14117		4612
Lankelly Chase	40695	88952	60122	-6500	63025
Unique Bensham Womens Fund (Lankelly Chase)		2000			2000
Community Foundation (Arts)	1567		1567		0
Total	43749	109681	76792	-6500	70138
Designated Funds					
1. Legal Liability Fund		35000			
(Funds set aside should the organisation wind-up, to pay for Redundancy & other contractual obligations).					
2. Buildings & Maintenance Fund		58000			
(Funds for replacement and upkeep of the building)					
3. Womens Group					
Income (from Ballinger Trust)	2000				
Expenditure	-703	1297			
Total Designated Funds		94297			
Total Funds:					
Restricted Funds		70138			
Designated Funds		94297			

General Funds

60271

224706

The Charity aims to keep six months running costs in General Funds, as recommended by The Charity Commission.