

TRUSTEES REPORT GRINDON CHURCH COMMUNITY PROJECT CIO 2023

Introduction

This report on the activities and achievements of Grindon Church Community Project covers its operations during 2023.

In 2020 Grindon Church Community Project was recognised and registered by the Charities Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), operating in accordance with Christian principles at and from the former Grindon United Reformed Church in Sunderland. We continue to carry out and develop the work of the GCCP URC Mission Project at this location. Charity registration has allowed us to access new income streams and other forms of practical support which were unavailable to the previous operating model.

Discussions are taking place with the URC Northern Synod to consolidate the work of GCCP CIO with the needs and requirements of the community in west Sunderland and surrounding areas, and our user groups at present and into the future. Initial discussions are encouraging and we hope to reach a favourable resolution in 2024.

Practical and emotional support for our community

In partnership with United Reformed Church Northern Synod we have been able to draw on the support of Alison Dalton, Church Related Community Worker at

Stockton Road URC, who has agreed to contribute to providing spiritual leadership as she has during 2022. Rev Dr David Whiting, a retired minister and previous trustee of GCCP has agreed to provide spiritual oversight.

In a new initiative we were pleased to welcome Phil Gibbs, an experienced and fully qualified mental health counsellor who helps people within GCCP and the wider community on a voluntary basis.

During the recent public health and economic problems faced by the whole country we have provided Warm Spaces for local people, we run a Crisis Food Bank, which also provides non-food items including domestic and personal hygiene products to those in acute need.

Building and Facilities Improvements

Our premises are provided rent-free by the United Reformed Church Northern Synod Trust. Work to update and improve the building and grounds has continued during 2023. Work to improve the external structure and appearance of the building has been carried out, and welcomed by our neighbours. Replacement of floor coverings and lighting systems has been completed, and improvements to other rooms continue. Future projects include the updating of the main kitchen to modern standards, installation of improved heating systems in the main rooms and a fire alarm system, for which price quotations have been sought, and applications have been for grant finance to cover the capital costs.

Improvements to our IT systems continue, with the aim of improving business efficiency, and provision of training and resources for those without internet access and/or expertise.

User Groups

Footfall continues to improve with the formation of new groups and increases in attendance of existing ones. We are developing partnerships with arts and performance organisations throughout the region, and we enjoy the creative opportunities we can share and expand.

Following the success of our Marras Drama Group it has relocated to the Theatrespace collective in Sunderland where more space and resources are available; we retain a close link with Marras and contribute to some of their activities.

Amongst other groups based at GCCP the Grindon Painters Art Group has mounted exhibitions of their work, the Pantastic Community Steel Band performs across the region, as does the Sunderland Jubilate! Choir. We continue to support groups like these in any way we can, including preferential room rates, publicity and equipment storage spaces.

Our Parents & Toddlers Group continues to flourish, attracting families from well outside the Grindon area in addition to local members.

New groups started during 2023 included a Craft & Natter Group and a Men's Group, each aimed at reducing social isolation in the local area. Referrals to these have been made by NHS Social Prescribing and mental health groups, in addition to recommendations arising from our outreach into our community.

Our gardens remain an attractive feature of GCCP, and we plan to enter Britain in Bloom again in the near future, a competition in which we were successful some years ago. We need to increase the number of volunteers working in the gardens this year, and are seeking grant funding to support the garden developments.

Funding

The greater part of our funding is from grant applications, which continue to be made. We receive a three-year grant of £19,000 from the National Lottery Community Fund, towards core costs, administrative costs, the provision of a caretaker and utility bills. Other activities are being developed with funding help from the same source and other grant-givers at national and local levels.

Much of the user group activity is funded by grants, and we help groups to apply for funding. Some of this income to the groups is transmitted to GCCP in the form of room rental fees, which contribute to the costs of maintaining our services to the community. We have managed to hold our room rental rates without increase for another year, which is an added attraction to new groups and the retention of existing ones.

Safeguarding

Many of our users are from vulnerable groups, ranging from young children (some with learning difficulties) to adults with physical, mental health or social problems.

Everything we do is centred around protecting our users, volunteers and staff. All staff and appropriate volunteers are DBS cleared, and records kept of renewal dates.

Safeguarding is a standard agenda item at all trustee meetings; all appropriate people undergo safeguarding training which is carried out by an outside specialist provider, who also conducts audits and inspections of our procedures and practices.

Challenges

During the Covid-19 restrictions we lost a number of volunteers who have been difficult to replace and, on a positive note, one young volunteer has moved into well-paid full-time employment following a period at GCCP where we helped her to develop her self confidence. The volunteers we have, largely from our trustee group, have an average

age of the trustees is over 60, and some are less able to carry out practical jobs than previously. We link up with local employers to provide a venue for employees to take part in team-building days, and in the past we have benefited from their efforts, largely in the gardens, but the availability of this type of volunteer is falling due to the current economic climate.

We continue to offer a welcoming experience to everyone who contacts us, and make it possible for them to connect with spiritual as well as practical help, if that is their wish. Some of our volunteers lack the training and experience to deal with all aspects of the problems people present: goodwill and common-sense go a long way but self-confidence in handling difficult situations can be a problem which can cloud the mind of volunteers, demonstrating a need for some training.

We are fortunate to have grant funding for many of our core costs, but this is time-limited and our field of potential grant providers offering core funding is limited. We have been reasonably successful up to now, and the challenge to repeat these successes is constantly in the minds of our trustees.

John Whiteoak,

Chairman, Trustees, Grindon Church

Community Project CIO



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Grindon Church Community Project

No. 1189916

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

Period start date
01 January 2023

To

Period end date
31 December 2023

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants	7,717	16,023	-	23,740	18,972
NLCF Grant	-	29,147	-	29,147	9,650
Donations	2,545	-	-	2,545	6,037
Fundraising	3,832	-	-	3,832	1,690
Hall Hire	5,988	-	-	5,988	3,780
Investment Income	45	-	-	45	3
Legacies	-	-	-	-	5,000
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	20,127	45,170	-	65,297	45,132
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	20,127	45,170	-	65,297	45,132
A3 Payments					
Charitable Activities	2,523	15,476	-	17,999	9,951
Utilities & Insurance	2,667	7,530	-	10,197	4,761
Repairs & Maintenance	2,775	22,140	-	24,915	9,674
Administration	6,378	9,185	-	15,563	12,428
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	14,343	54,331	-	68,674	36,814
A4 Asset and investment purchases. (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	14,343	54,331	-	68,674	36,814
Net of receipts/(payments)	5,784	- 9,161	-	- 3,377	8,318
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	26,748	14,296	-	41,044	32,726
Cash funds this year end	32,532	5,135	-	37,667	41,044

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	Treasurer's Account	32,502	-	-
	Reserve Account	30	5,135	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	32,532	5,135	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Grindon Church Community Project
Charity No. 1189916

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Grindon Church Community Project (the Charity) for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity 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 Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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 in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Signed:



Name: Jeff Ledger

Qualification: Chartered Certified Accountant

Address: 56 Belle Vue Park West, Sunderland, SR2 7SB

Date: October 2024