

Just Social Alnwick

England & Wales · Charity number 1197210

Details

Other names	ALNWICK COMMUNITY TRUST
Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2021-12-20
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	20B St. Michaels Lane Alnwick Northumberland NE66 1TW
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Activities

Objects: 1.TO PROMOTE SOCIAL INCLUSION FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT IN ALNWICK BY PREVENTING PEOPLE FROM BECOMING SOCIALLY EXCLUDED, RELIEVING THE NEEDS OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO ARE SOCIALLY EXCLUDED AND ASSISTING THEM TO INTEGRATE INTO SOCIETY.FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS CLAUSE 'SOCIALLY EXCLUDED' MEANS BEING EXCLUDED FROM SOCIETY, OR PART OF SOCIETY, ON THE GROUNDS OF ECONOMIC OR SOCIAL DISADVANTAGE.2.FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT IN ALNWICK TO PROVIDE OR ASSIST IN THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES IN THE INTERESTS OF SOCIAL WELFARE FOR RECREATION OR OTHER LEISURE TIME OCCUPATION OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE NEED OF SUCH FACILITIES BY REASON OF THEIR YOUTH, AGE, INFIRMITY OR DISABILITY, FINANCIAL HARDSHIP OR SOCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WITH THE OBJECT OF IMPROVING THEIR CONDITIONS OF LIFE.

Activities: We operate for the well-being of the community and for the public benefit in the area of Alnwick, by promoting social inclusion and preventing people from feeling socially excluded. We assist them to integrate into society through recreation and other leisure time activities.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Northumberland

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-12-31	£1,445	£1,483	-	-
2024-12-31	£9,608	£3,699	-	-
2023-12-31	£21,715	£15,304	-	-
2022-12-31	£21,683	£14,488	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Beverly Straughan	Chair	2024-08-19
Annette Playle		2024-08-19
Joanne Smailes		2024-08-19

Just Social Alnwick

England & Wales - Charity number 1197210

Accounts



INTRODUCTION

Alnwick Community Trust has experienced a tricky year. There have been a number of unfortunate personal circumstances which have impacted both on the trustees and the volunteers in general. This does perhaps reflect the age group which the Alnwick Community Trust mostly serves.

This report sets out the purpose, goals, opportunities, challenges, and achievements of Alnwick Community Trusts

This report provides a framework to illustrate the projects undertaken by Alnwick Community Trust, during its fourth year as a Registered Charity. This includes changes that have occurred and summarizes plans for new or potential projects in the next twelve months.

BACKGROUND

Alnwick Community Trust is a registered Charity No. 1197210 formed following a mutual development of purpose between two groups: Loving Alnwick and Investing in Alnwick.

Loving Alnwick started in 2018 as a small community group with a handful of volunteers working on various environmental and social community projects. Through, connecting with additional private and public organisations, for example, Town and County Councils, the Alnwick Garden, Northumberland Estates, and the Chamber of Trade. It was agreed by the Board of Directors, in 2019, for 'Loving Alnwick' to become 'Investing in Alnwick' a not-for-profit company. Further development transpired which indicated that a Charity would encapsulate the aims and objectives of the group. Hence, the current Alnwick Community Trust was registered with the Charity Commission in December 2021.

The current and past trustees are all volunteers, who give an inordinate amount of time to improve the town and support vulnerable people through a range of projects. Our funding principally comes from fees related to the activities the trust undertakes.

PURPOSE OF ALNWICK COMMUNITY TRUST

- To promote social inclusion for the public benefit in Alnwick by preventing people from becoming socially excluded, relieving the needs of those people who are
- socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society.

For the purpose of this clause 'socially excluded' means being excluded from society, or part of society, on the grounds of economic or social disadvantage.

- For the public benefit in Alnwick to provide or assist in the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disability, financial hardship or social circumstances with the object of improving their conditions of life.



KEY TRUSTEE ROLES

CHAIR	Joanne Smailes
VICE CHAIR	David Taylor
TREASURER	Julia Munford
VICE TREASURER	Annette Playle
SECRETARY	Claire Mitchell

CURRENT PROJECTS

JUST SING ALNWICK is a singing group formed in 2023. Singing is known to benefit our health and well-being and increasing studies suggest that this can enhance your mood, immune system, blood pressure, reduce feelings of chronic pain and is increasingly promoted as a positive activity for dementia sufferers.

The group meet every Thursday between 12.30 and 2.30 at St James Church located in the heart of Alnwick town centre. The location is fully accessible and supported by a kitchen area. This enables the group to socialise before the singing commences. The group supports members with dementia, autism, stroke, tinnitus, social anxiety, and depression. Perhaps as a reflection of group composition there has been a steady decline in attendance over the year. A number of strategies have been employed to increase membership which have been partially successful. Session fees during 2025 increased from £2 to £3. However, this includes weekly refreshments and members are provided with all the materials e.g. folders and song sheets as well as a complimentary t-shirt that they are asked to wear at any formal performances. The first two sessions are attended without cost and if any members require a carer they can also attend for free. The group also make donations to outside charities, generally on a quarterly basis. In the interest of fairness, each individual member was asked to anonymously nominate a charity of their choice, these were placed in 'a hat' and at suitable intervals a charity was drawn at random to receive a mutually agreed donation. In 2025, donations were given to the North Northumberland Hospice and British Heart Foundation.

SHAPE SHIFTERS is an exercise group established in 2023 that meets every other Wednesday between 7 and 8pm. Fees for attendance being £2. The exercise is based on belly dancing which is known to be suitable for all age groups and abilities. As one of the oldest forms of dance the benefits of belly dancing are undeniable; belly dancing promotes balance and strength, improves digestion and co-ordination as well as being fun and highly expressive. During 2025, the group experienced a number of difficulties. Firstly, finding a suitable location proved difficult. The group met in a hospitality venue for free. Hospitality venues are well publicised as experiencing difficulties themselves and the group are no longer offered a no cost venue. Secondly, the group leader has experienced both personal and family health options. Therefore, in September, the difficult decision was made to suspend the group's activities. There is some hope that an alternative may be found.



ALNWICK MEN'S GROUP meets every First and Third Monday of the month. It is a group for lonely or isolated men or just somewhere to keep warm in like-minded company. Managed by volunteers who take the members on trips, undertake art, play board games, have coffee, chats offer support, friendship, and kindness. In line with the Shape Shifter group. This group was reliant on the generosity of hosting the meetings for free in a local hospitality venue. This venue was no longer able to provide this facility and although a suitable alternative was initially found this was not viewed as suitable by the group members. The group although intended to be self-managed struggled to operate under the new circumstances and now no longer meet.

TOWN GUIDES are a resolute team of volunteers who meet and greet visitors using the main town car parks. They usually undertake a two-hour shift at weekends during the tourist season and offer parking discs at a cost of £1 alongside distributing leaflets e.g. Good Food Guide, answer questions and direct people to attractions and eateries. Northumberland Council offer local organisations parking discs for a cost of £0.50 on the agreement that these are then offered to visitors at a standard cost of £1. It is estimated that approximately five thousand tourists per year engage with the Town Guides. The most dedicated town guides being members of the Alnwick Men's Group who through engagement with the group have developed the confidence to undertake this role. There have been two key figures from the Men's group have continued this activity despite both also experiencing significant health issues during the year. This is a seasonal role, and it is currently unknown whether in 2026 the key figures will be able to continue.

GET CRAFTY. Remembering All was a collaborative project with a local knot and natter group. This involved the creation of an art piece integrating textile-based crafts. The piece was designed to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE day. Alongside traditional red poppies the work incorporated purple poppies to honour animals, black poppies to highlight the contribution and sacrifice of Black, African, Caribbean, and Indigenous communities. White poppies illustrate a commitment to seeking peace and as such respects all victims of war whether they be armed forces, civilians or conscientious objectors. The final work was displayed in Alnwick Playhouse for several days including the reception for honoured guests taking part in the annual Remembrance Sunday Parade. The playhouse has indicated that they will now use the work on an annual basis.



As noted at the start of this report 2025 has been a difficult year for the trust. There has somewhat been a reliance on one or two key trustees to maintain and drive these activities forward. The main driving force has been subject to both personal health issues and close family caring responsibilities during the year. There have also been similar issues experienced by a number of the less active trustees. Therefore, consideration has been given to closing down the charity. However, following a



plea from a number of members it has been decided to give the charity a further twelve months to reestablish itself with the community.

The following Appendix provides readers with an end of year financial statement for the charity.

Joanne Smailes

Chair

alnwickcommunitytrust@gmail.com

ALNWICK COMMUNITY TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2025



Alnwick Community Trust

Charity Number:

1197210

Receipts and Payments Accounts

Period Start 01/01/25 to Period End 31/12/25

Section A Receipts and Payments							
All to the nearest £							
A1 Reciepts	Unrestricted	Restricted		Endowments		Total	Last Year
Brought Forward	5801	108				5909	6411
Donations to trust	87					87	528
Just Sing Alnwick	1160					1160	1765
Alnwick Men's Group						0	93
Town Guides (Parking Discs)	75					75	314
Percy Lion Trail						0	28
Shape Shifters	80					80	183
Getting Crafty	0					0	148
Member Donations for Charity	43					43	138
Sub Total (A1 Receipts)	7246	108				7354	9608

ALNWICK COMMUNITY TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2025



A3 Payments	Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowments	Total	Last Year
Loving Alnwick	0			0	335
Trust Admin: Equipment	19			19	143
Trust Admin: Legal	56			56	263
Trust Admin: Publicity	0			0	90
Trust Admin: Stationary	0			0	641
Getting Crafty: Equipment	0			0	67
Charity Donations	0	60		60	50
Just Sing: Equipment	0			0	65
Just Sing: Room Hire	1008			1008	1199
Just Sing: Session Refreshments	66			66	306
Just Sing: Stationary	173			173	126
Alnwick Men's Club: Social	0			0	156
Town Guides: Parking Discs	100			100	150
Reading Group: Equipment	0			0	80
Shape Shifters: Equipment	0			0	28
Sub Total (A3 Payments)	1422	60		1482	3699
Balance (Net of Receipts)	5824	48		5872	5909
A6 Cash Funds	10				

B5 Liabilities

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all Trustees

Joanne
Smailes

Chair

END OF REPORT

Just Social Alnwick

England & Wales - Charity number 1197210

Accounts



INTRODUCTION

Alnwick Community Trust has been subject to several significant changes to the board of trustees over the last twelve months. As noted in last year's report, a major change has been the resignation of Linda Wood-Mitchell as Chair. This has been accompanied by a number of trustee changes generally occurring either through ill health, changed family priorities or relocation. In mid-August 2024, many major changes were made to trustees including the key roles, currently, there are ten trustees with two unfulfilled vacancies. The present board wishes to use this opportunity to thank the tireless and significant contributions made to the establishment of and continued success of the Charity on the part of the departing trustees. The current Chair would like to make special mention of the departing Chair whom as a force of nature will be a hard act to follow.

This report sets out the purpose, goals, opportunities, challenges, and achievements of Alnwick Community Trusts

This report provides a framework to illustrate the projects undertaken by Alnwick Community Trust, during its third year as a Registered Charity. This includes changes that have occurred and summarizes plans for new or potential projects in the next twelve months.

BACKGROUND

Alnwick Community Trust is a registered Charity No. 1197210 formed following a mutual development of purpose between two groups: Loving Alnwick and Investing in Alnwick.

Loving Alnwick started in 2018 as a small community group with a handful of volunteers working on various environmental and social community projects. Through, connecting with additional private and public organisations, for example, Town and County Councils, the Alnwick Garden, Northumberland Estates, and the Chamber of Trade. It was agreed by the Board of Directors, in 2019, for 'Loving Alnwick' to become 'Investing in Alnwick' a not-for-profit company. Further development transpired which indicated that a Charity would encapsulate the aims and objectives of the group. Hence, the current Alnwick Community Trust was registered with the Charity Commission in December 2021.

The current and past trustees are all volunteers, who give an inordinate amount of time to improve the town and support vulnerable people through a range of projects. Our funding comes from fees, one-off events, raffles, donations, and grant giving agencies including, Alnwick Town Council, Northumberland County Council, Community Foundation, Northumberland Estates, Communities Together, Rural Us, Sir James Knott, National Lottery, Northumberland Health, Northumbria Police, Alnwick Infirmary, Northumberland Lottery, and local businesses.

The two groups focussed on the community of Alnwick by introducing several disparate activities albeit sharing the common purpose of establishing the market town as a supportive and inspiring location for residents within the region. Examples of past and present activities include the creation of a Good Food Guide; the 'Percy' App: promoting a family walk around the town; An Alnwick Men's Group; Arts and Crafts events; Community Choir; An International Women's Day Event and 'A picnic in the park.' Several grant applications being applied for and successfully awarded (> £13,000) to support these



projects. In December 2021, the two groups were formally closed to become the current charity - Alnwick Community Trust. The trust was delighted to have Her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland agree to become its in 2023.

PURPOSE OF ALNWICK COMMUNITY TRUST

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KEY ROLES

CHAIR	Joanne Smailes
VICE CHAIR	David Taylor
TREASURER	Julia Munford
VICE TREASURER	Annette Playle
SECRETARY	Claire Mitchell

CURRENT PROJECTS

JUST SING ALNWICK is a singing group formed in 2023. Singing is known to benefit our health and well-being and increasing studies suggest that this can enhance your mood, immune system, blood pressure, reduce feelings of chronic pain and is increasingly promoted as a positive activity for dementia sufferers.

The group has approximately forty members who meet every Thursday between 12.30 and 2.30 at St James Church located in the heart of Alnwick town centre. The location is fully accessible and supported by a kitchen area. This enables the group to socialise before the singing commences. The group supports members with dementia, autism, stroke, tinnitus, social anxiety, and depression. Session fees during 2023 and 2024 were £2. Members are provided with all the materials e.g. folders and song sheets as well as a complimentary t-shirt that they are asked to wear at any formal performances. The first two sessions are attended without cost and if any members require a carer they can also attend for free. Throughout the year the group have performed to the public at a variety of events including Alnwick Garden, local care and residential homes and Alnwick Story Fest.



Following a review, of costings associated with the group, the trustees have agreed that in 2025 session costs will rise to £3 per session. However, this cost will now also include refreshments at the start of each session and contribute toward a quarterly external charity donation (E.g. Alzheimer's Society, Cancer Research, RNIB). In the interest of fairness, each individual member will be asked to anonymously nominate a charity of their choice, these will be placed in 'a hat' and at the end of each quarter a charity will be drawn at random to receive a mutually agreed donation.

SHAPE SHIFTERS is an exercise group established in 2023 that meets every other Wednesday between 7 and 8pm. Fees for attendance being £2. The exercise is based on belly dancing which is known to be suitable for all age groups and abilities. As one of the oldest forms of dance the benefits of belly dancing are undeniable; belly dancing promotes balance and strength, improves digestion and co-ordination as well as being fun and highly expressive. During 2023 the group met at a conference room in a local bar within the centre of Alnwick. This room was offered to the trust without cost, as a gesture of thanks the group would briefly socialise after the session at the bar. However, at the start of 2024, the bar experienced a change in management. Despite numerous communication attempts to re-establish arrangements, the trust learned from members that they were being informed that classes were not taking (or had never taken) place at this location. Unfortunately, over time this significantly impacted on attendance rates. The trust have found an alternative but much smaller location which is also offered without cost. Therefore, although attendance is now sparse (around five people per session) current membership still value the exercise and socialisation and hence viewed the group as viable to still operate. The trust would like to thank the management of The Ale Gate public house for offering their meeting room at no cost for the shape shifter sessions to take place.

ALNWICK MEN'S GROUP meets every First and Third Monday of the month. It is a group for lonely or isolated men or just somewhere to keep warm in like-minded company. Managed by volunteers who take the members on trips, undertake art, play board games, have coffee, chats offer support, friendship, and kindness. This is a free entry project that was initially supported by 'Communities Together' grants. The group meets in the White Swan and the trust would like to thank the management for offering the use of their facilities at no cost.

LOVING ALNWICK GATEWAY. Loving Alnwick as a community group developed and maintained a patch of land near one of the main roundabouts leading to the town centre. This was close to the former chair's residence and once established was principally maintained by the Chair and her husband. Following, their residential relocation out of the area, it has been agreed that the 'Alnwick in Bloom' organisation will now use the space from 2025 onwards. Hence the Loving Alnwick Gateway will no longer be a project associated with Alnwick Community Trust.

TOWN GUIDES are a resolute team of volunteers who meet and greet visitors using the main town car parks. They usually undertake a two-hour shift at weekends during the tourist season and offer parking discs at a cost of £1 alongside distributing leaflets e.g. Good Food Guide, answer questions and direct people to attractions and eateries. Northumberland Council offer local organisations parking discs for a cost of £0.50 on the agreement that these are then offered to visitors at a standard cost of £1. It is estimated that approximately five thousand tourists per year engage with the Town Guides. The most dedicated town guides



being members of the Alnwick Men's Group who through engagement with the group have developed the confidence to undertake this role.

GOOD FOOD GUIDE. Each year the Trust produces five thousand updated copies of a Good Food Guide. The guide is a town centre map which highlights establishments that offer food and/or accommodation. Users are provided with a handy symbol-based guide to outline key facilities such as disabled access, dog friendly establishment, vegan options etc. All the Hotels, Restaurants and Cafés who wish to be included in this guide contribute to printing costs. Volunteers associated with the Trust then make distribute these guides either in person i.e. Town Guides or across key locations in the town. E.g. Library, Museum. It has always been a very welcome document to guide tourists to attractions and well-loved eating places.

PERCY LION TRAIL. This is a fun trail app for IOS phones which was developed during the pandemic to help families to start getting out in the fresh air together and start appreciating their environment again. The trail takes families around Alnwick encouraging them to seek out all the lion architecture. It is a fun App that includes both a children's fun story and provides adults with historical facts about the town. The app continues to be downloaded albeit in small numbers. Consideration will be given to either further investing in the App to be compatible with Android phones or working with other organisations within Alnwick to develop an alternative more wide-ranging product.

GETTING CRAFTY. The area of North Northumberland (and in particular Alnwick) is a popular tourist destination. There is also an emerging art scene across the wider area. This provides the trust with an opportunity to draw upon volunteers' skills to pass on their knowledge to other interested parties at low cost. This in turn potentially serves as a provision to promote forms of craft- based employment. In late 2023 and 2024, one example was the holding of a wreath making workshop. Workshops to make door wreaths are numerous within the region. However, many of these are costly, a typical workshop can be between £40 to £60, thus can be financially challenging. On the other hand, can be a valuable learning experience in floral artistry. Therefore, the trust through its network of volunteers were able to offer a workshop which rather than based on a fixed cost was offered on the basis of pay for what you use.

Both workshops attracted around a dozen participants cost whom with guidance from a facilitator produced wreaths for an average £12.50. However, it is recognised that this significant cost difference is partially due to a local public house offering facilities for free and access to volunteer gardens for the collection of greenery. As well as being a very cost-effective learning experience to participants, the workshops also raised modest additional funds for future projects within Alnwick Community Trust.

In 2025, it is anticipated that further craft workshops will be offered. For example, the Alnwick Men's Group have expressed interest in learning skills associated with stained glass.



POTENTIAL FUTURE PROJECTS

READING GROUP. In 2025, one of the trustees has agreed to lead a reading group. This reading group will be hosted in the Mind and Sole Hub - a growing charity base within Alnwick. Fees are still to be confirmed but these will be set to principally cover the room hire and refreshments. In order to improve participant accessibility, it is the intention to loan out for a small fee an eBook reader. This would allow those with either sight issues or dyslexia to set font type and size which meets their needs. The wreath workshop held in late November 2024 was able to raise enough funds for the purchase of one book reader. During 2025 additional funding sources will be sought for additional book readers and in order to further expand accessibility an “Audible” or similar subscription will be considered.

HOMIES. A BBC news report on 3 June 2024 noted the increasing number of families who have chosen to home educate their children. Mental Health and the wider impact of the pandemic noted as the main reason for this rise. Furthermore, an increasing number of parents noted how they felt schools were unable to meet children’s special educational needs with home education viewed as the only viable option. Home education is particularly prevalent in the North-East of England where a 27% rise was reported between 2020 and 2023. A couple of trustees have personal experience of this dilemma. As a result, it has been proposed that Alnwick Community Trust could initiate a weekly provision for parents and children who are home educated to exchange experiences, socialise, and play. Alnwick has several excellent locations that can enhance the home learning experience within a compact geographical area. This includes Alnwick Castle and Gardens, Alnwick Playhouse which houses the library and Barter Books – a famous second-hand bookstore. The trust would seek to hire a location close to these amenities and purchase a number of resources for the group (For example, Montessori inspired toys). It is anticipated that over time the group would become self-sustainable. However, there are some trustees/volunteers with educational academic backgrounds who could act as advisors to the group. It is recognised that due to the involvement of children, albeit accompanied by a guardian, any volunteers involved in the project will require enhanced DBS checks and funds to support the project will need to be raised. Initial research has begun in respect to potential grants that may support the establishment of this group.

This report has captured the activities of Alnwick Community Trust in 2024 and outlines how the trust expands to expand and flourish further in 2025. The following Appendix provides readers with an end of year financial statement for the charity.

Joanne Smailes
Chair
alnwickcommunitytrust@gmail.com

ALNWICK COMMUNITY TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024



Alnwick Community Trust

Charity Number:
1197210

Receipts and Payments Accounts

Period Start 01/01/24 to Period End 31/12/24

Section A Receipts and Payments						
All to the nearest £						
A1 Receipts	Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowments	Total	Last Year	
Brought Forward	6010	401		6411	7195	
Donations to trust	528			528	1371	
Just Sing Alnwick	1765			1765	465	
Alnwick Men's Group	93			93		
Town Guides (Parking Discs)	314			314	531	
Percy Lion Trail	28			28		
Shape Shifters	183			183	652	
Getting Crafty	148			148	272	
Member Donations for Charity		138		138		
<i>Allstars Socials</i>					1554	
<i>Coronation Event</i>					864	
<i>Communities Grant</i>					2532	
<i>International Womens' Day</i>					1729	
<i>Sir James Knott</i>					3000	
<i>Community Foundation</i>					1550	
Sub Total (A1 Receipts)	9069	539		9608	21715	

ALNWICK COMMUNITY TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024



A3 Payments	Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowments	Total	Last Year
Loving Alnwick	335			335	293
Trust Admin: Equipment	106	37		143	
Trust Admin: Legal	243	20		263	678
Trust Admin: Publicity	90			90	449
Trust Admin: Stationary	424	217		641	1423
Getting Crafty: Equipment	67			67	
Charity Donations		50		50	
Just Sing: Equipment	20	45		65	2907
Just Sing: Room Hire	1152	47		1199	1336
Just Sing: Social Event	306			306	2821
Just Sing: Stationary	111	15		126	
Alnwick Men's Club: Social	156			156	654
Town Guides: Parking Discs	150			150	400
Reading Group: Equipment	80			80	
Shape Shifters: Equipment	28			28	259
<i>Training</i>					80
<i>International Women's Day</i>					2554
<i>Percy in park picnic</i>					50
<i>Coronation event</i>					660
<i>Refunds</i>					740
Sub Total (A3 Payments)	3268	431		3699	15304
Balance (Net of Receipts)	5801	108		5909	6411
A6 Cash Funds	16.18				

B5 Liabilities

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all Trustees

Joanne
Smailes

Chair

ALNWICK COMMUNITY TRUST
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024
END OF REPORT



Just Social Alnwick

England & Wales - Charity number 1197210

Accounts

INTRODUCTION

As the chair of Alnwick Community Trust, I am delighted to share our journey with you from its beginnings in 2018 to the end of 2023. This report sets out our purpose, goals, opportunities, challenges and achievements in our first two years as a Registered Charity.

We started our journey in 2018 as 'Loving Alnwick', a small community group with a handful of volunteers working on a number of environmental and social community projects. We went on to achieve recognition through the Love Northumberland project.

As Chair, I was keen to work in partnership with other private, public and third sector organisations including for example, the Town and County Councils, the Alnwick Garden, Northumberland Estates, the Chamber of Trade and a range of voluntary groups.

The Board of Directors agreed that we could open more doors to funding and support by creating a new but more formal not for profit company and as such we created Investing in Alnwick Ltd in 2019 and went on to achieve new goals.

Working hand in hand with Loving Alnwick we decided to consolidate our efforts and develop a Charity. This was no easy task, but with excellent policies and procedures already in place and an exceptional team of Trustees working at the helm, Alnwick Community Trust was born and registered with the Charity Commission December 2021.

We have 12 Trustees, all volunteers, who give an inordinate amount of time to improve the town and support vulnerable people through a range of projects. Our funding comes from fees, raffles, donations and grant giving agencies including, Alnwick Town Council, Northumberland County Council, Community Foundation, Northumberland Estates, Communities Together, Rural Us, Sir James Knott, National Lottery, Northumberland Health, Northumbria Police, Alnwick Infirmary, Northumberland Lottery and local businesses.

I hope you enjoy reading about our projects and we welcome any comments and suggestions for the future in helping to make our town a happy and healthy place to live and play.

On a personal note, I will be standing down as Chair in 2024 to give the Trust an opportunity to take on a new exciting direction. It has been an amazing and exciting journey for me and one I feel very proud of. As such I will stay on as Treasurer and look forward to working with a new Chairperson at the helm.

Linda Wood-Mitchell
Chair
alnwickcommunitytrust@gmail.com
07592 401 521
www.alnwickcommunitytrust.co.uk



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Social Media: FaceBook: Alnwick Community Trust

How to contact us: You can write to the Chair, Linda Wood-Mitchell at email address:

alnwickcommunitytrust@gmail.com

or Tel 07592 401521

'Thank you for pestering me to join the choir, I didn't realise how much pleasure it would bring me as I just couldn't get over Mam's passing.'
Tracy S

BACKGROUND

Alnwick Community Trust is a registered Charity No. 1197210 and was born out of a merger between two groups: Loving Alnwick & Investing in Alnwick. Loving Alnwick was a small community group that Linda Wood-Mitchell established in 2018 to both support the then Chamber of Trade and also increase community provision of social support services and activities, such as Arts and Crafts, Town Guides, the Good Food Guide and a gardening project near the Oaks Hotel. A grant from the Lottery and Northumberland Council provided the group with over £13,000 to fulfil and progress these ideas.

As time went on it was felt that the group needed to be formalised to enable us to attract more funding and as such 'Investing in Alnwick Ltd' was established in 2019 with a committee of local residents. Applications were made for further grants for our project ideas such as: International Women's Day, Alnwick Men's Group, Arts and Crafts events and of course the Percy App and the Picnic in the Park (Column Field). Whilst Covid halted many of the activities, it did give us time to reflect on our success as well as our ongoing needs. It was agreed that because of overlapping interests and our increasing income we should apply to become a charity. The plan was to merge the two groups and give the Charity a new name - Alnwick Community Trust (the Charity was formally registered in Dec 2021).

The two groups I mention are now closed and we only operate as the above registered Charity. This has been a good move and whilst all our bids for funding have not been successful, many have. We feel we are also achieving greater recognition in the town for our work.

We continue to enjoy an excellent relationship with over 40 key organisations in the town from all sectors. We were also delighted this year when Her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland agreed to be our Patron and support our work. We have consequently also developed an excellent reputation that we hope will continue to create a healthier and happier environment for everyone.



In brief:

- Amalgamation of Loving Alnwick Community Group & Investing in Alnwick Ltd
- Registered as Charity in Dec 2021 - One Account for all projects (2 out of 3 to sign)
- Articles and Memorandum & Extensive range of policies. Income around £21k
- 12 Trustees – All Volunteers (meet as required usually at the White Swan)
- Grants: Alnwick Town Council, Northumberland CC, Community Foundation, Northumberland Estates, Communities Together, Rural Us, James Knott, Lottery, Northumberland Health, Alnwick Infirmary, Northumberland Lottery, local businesses

'It's great to meet up and just have a chat and a game of dom's. I enjoy the trips out, it's all good fun as sometimes I just wish I wasn't alive. I look forward to Mondays' MB

OUR PURPOSE

1. *To promote social inclusion for the public benefit in Alnwick by preventing people from becoming socially excluded, relieving the needs of those people who are socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society.*

For the purpose of this clause 'socially excluded' means being excluded from society, or part of society, on the grounds of economic or social disadvantage.

2. *For the public benefit in Alnwick to provide or assist in the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disability, financial hardship or social circumstances with the object of improving their conditions of life.*



'I hadn't been out of the house since Covid so this was a big step for me, but everyone was so welcoming at the Just Sing group, it made me think if I can do this maybe I can do other things'
Amy B

PROJECTS

JUST SING ALNWICK is a new singing group (commenced on 18th May 2023) which meets every Thursday at 12.30 for refreshments and a chat, then singing starts at 1.00-2.30 at St James Church. We specifically support members with; dementia, autism, stroke, tinnitus, social anxiety, feeling of loneliness and depression. Carers can also come along for free. The first two sessions are free for everyone then its £2 a session. We sing 50's, 60's, 70's, 80's and 90's songs using backing tracks. During 2023 we performed at 7 events (local Care/Residential Homes and The Alnwick Garden and we look forward to performing our own show for the 2024 StoryFest in Feb).

Singing is something we all do at some point in our lives, whether as a child or an adult but in the main we do it for the joy it brings us. Singing is known to benefit our health and well being and studies suggest that belting out a tune can enhance your; mood, immune system, blood pressure and can also reduce feelings of chronic pain. *'Some GP's in England are starting to prescribe singing for a range of conditions'* Michael Mosley BBC

We were thrilled when Billy Mitchell, frontman of Lindisfarne 1996 – 2003 agreed to be our Mentor and Patron of the choir and we are grateful for his guidance, enthusiasm and support.



*'I love coming to **Just Sing Alnwick**, John has dementia and we hardly go out. I just love to see him singing, it means everything to me, thank you'. Margaret F*

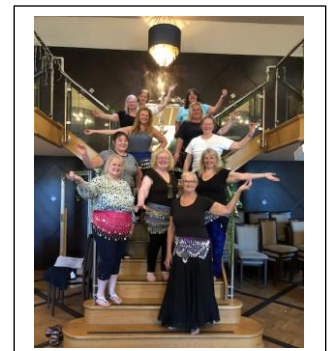
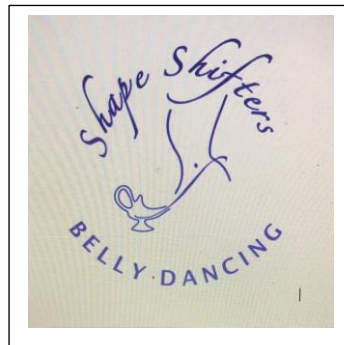
SHAPE SHIFTERS BELLY DANCING

This is a new exercise group that meets every other Wednesday in Alnwick at the Plough Pub.

Belly Dancing is a great way to stay in shape, gain confidence and stay healthy no matter what your dance experience.

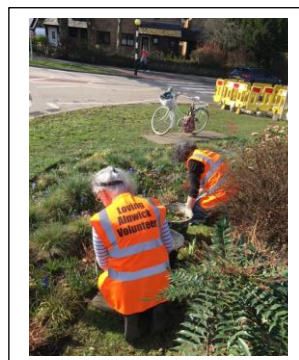
As one of the oldest forms of dance the benefits of belly dancing are undeniable; belly dancing promotes balance and strength, improves digestion and co-ordination as well as being fun and highly expressive.

The classes cost just £2 and are very popular in the town.



LOVING ALNWICK GATEWAY

Loving Alnwick as a community group was where it all started for the Trust and a generous grant from the Lottery enabled us to develop the entrance into Alnwick from South Road near the Oaks Pub. A small team of volunteers continue to maintain this patch of green space, which we entitled the Loving Alnwick Gateway and which also provides a splendid resting place for many local residents.



'I just love our Belly Dancing sessions, especially the warm-ups which move muscles I rarely use, and its such a lovely bunch of women. It's my special ME time after a hard day at work' Joan H

TOWN GUIDES

Our dedicated team of volunteers meet and greet visitors around the town. They usually undertake a two-hour shift at weekends during the tourist season and distribute leaflets/the Good Food Guide, answer questions and direct people to attractions and eateries, generally making people feel very welcome. On average we speak to around 5000 tourists in the year.

GREEN TOKEN SCHEME

Town Guides sign in and out at the Tourist Information Centre in the Playhouse and receive a token for their sessions worth £5 which they can spend at participating venues for coffee and cake etc to give them a welcome break. This is usually funded through a grant or through the kindness of private businesses. The businesses are then reimbursed via the grant.



GOOD FOOD GUIDE

Each year the Trust produces 5000 updated copies of the Good Food Guide. All the Hotels, Restaurants and Café's contribute to printing the Guide and these are available throughout the Town and in the Library. It has always been a very welcome document to guide tourists to attractions and well-loved eating places.

ALNWICK MEN'S GROUP

Meets every First and Third Monday of the month. It is a group for lonely or isolated men or just somewhere to keep warm in like-minded company. Managed by volunteers who take the members on trips, undertake art, play board games, have coffee and chats and offer support, friendship and kindness. This is a free entry project that is supported by 'Communities Together' grants.



'I am very happy to be part of the Green Token Scheme. The Town Guides do a cracking job for the town and I can see that it builds their confidence in talking to tourists and welcoming them. This is a wonderful project' Baileys Café

PERCY LION TRAIL APP

This is a fun trail app for IOS phones which was developed during The Covid regulations to help families to start getting out in the fresh air together and start appreciating their environment again. The trail takes families around Alnwick encouraging them to seek out all the lion architecture. It is a fun App that includes both a children's fun story and provides adults with historical facts about the town.



Percy even had a Pork Pie named after him, thanks to Turnbull's.



The App was funded by the Community Foundation and the Town Council. It continues to be a fun Trail for visitors and residents.

The Duchess's Community High School got involved designing the Percy character as part of a competition to promote the App



PERCY'S PICNIC IN THE PARK

As part of the ongoing promotion, the Trust organised a free Picnic in the Park (Column Field) inviting families to bring a picnic and enjoy an afternoon of music and fun and of course Percy made an appearance to keep the party going.



'We were lucky with the weather. It was a great event, I hope they do it again'.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY (IWD) – MARCH 8TH 2023

A sponsored event to recognise the efforts and dedication of local women. Nominations are made by the community and awards are made to 5 local women chosen by an independent panel of judges. The event is always held on the global IWD celebration day of 8th March at the White Swan and includes speakers, entertainment and a three course meal along with the awards ceremony. This is an event which is always looked forward to.



ARTS AND CRAFTS WEEKEND

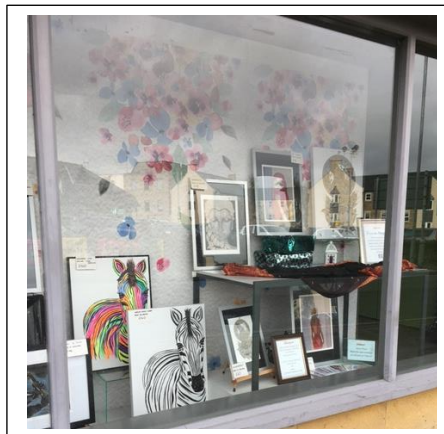
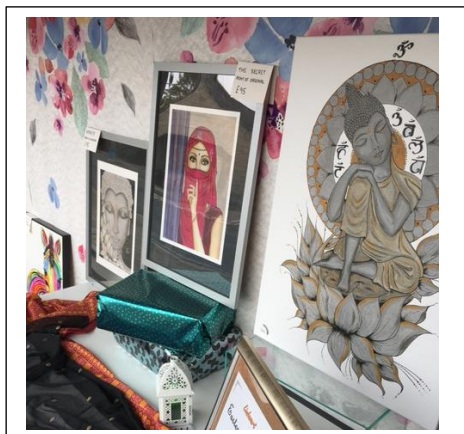
This is usually on the nearest weekend to the International Women's Day and is arranged to showcase the talents of local women. Held in the White Swan over 2 weekend days.



'The International Women's Day is always a grand and important occasion for local women. Many thanks to the Trust for organising this event'
Tracy S

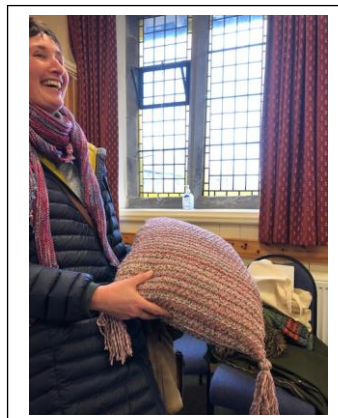
ART ATTACK

During periods of 'too many empty shops in the town', the Trust organised screens in the empty shop windows to display local crafts to improve the appearance of the shops until they became tenanted.



GETTING CRAFTY

Arts and Crafts plays a big role in Alnwick and people love coming together to share their skills. This group was a short-term project to enable people to learn from each other.



'I like the idea of having home-made items around the house so I was delighted when someone was able to show me how to knit'.

Alice M

ALNWICK ALLSTARS

We started this vocal group during 2022. It has now become a private business and left the Trust to make its own way in the world.

However, we are delighted that our new singing group **JUST SING ALNWICK** is growing



in the same popularity and will remain as a charitable project for vulnerable people and those who prefer the support of a smaller singing group that offers a social and well-being aspect alongside the singing.

Our performances in local Care Homes and Alnwick Garden have been very well received.

This report captures our activities since our inception and we hope gives you a flavour of our charitable work.

If you enjoyed reading about our efforts and would be interested to learn more about us or you would wish to see an end of year financial statement, please contact Linda Wood-Mitchell on 07592 401 521 or by email at alnwickcommunitytrust@gmail.com.





CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Alnwick Community Trust

No (if any)
1197210

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end
	1/1/2023		12/31/2023

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted to the nearest £	Restricted to the nearest £	Endowment to the nearest £	Total to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Brought Forward	3,979	3,216	-	7,195	4,160
AllStars Socials	-	1,554	-	1,554	2,462
Coronation Event	-	864	-	864	235
Donations	677		-	677	
AllStars fees	1,822			1,822	
Alnwick Mens Group/Communities Together	310	400	-	710	1,086
International Womens Day		1,729	-	1,729	1,948
Belly Dancing Fees	652	-	-	652	
Parking Discs	531			531	700
Getting Crafty /Fees	72	200		272	
Just Sing Fees	465			465	
Rural Us					200
Sir James Knott		3,000		3,000	
Northumberland Estates					1,011
Community Foundation		1,550		1,550	3,412
Social events					442
other Donations	694			694	747
co-op					1,180
aAnwick Town Council					1,275
Loving Alnwick					2,025
Good Food Guide					800
	9,202	12,513	-	21,715	21,683
Sub total(Gross income for AR)		-	-	-	
A2 Asset and investment sales	-	-	-	-	-
Total Receipts	9,202	12,513	-	21,715	21,683
A3 Payments	-	-	-	-	-
Training	-	80	-	80	-
Room Hire -Alnwick AllStars & Just Sing	732	604	-	1,336	384
Equipment & Clothing - AllStars & Just	1,157	1,750	-	2,907	3,760
Stationery & Office	142	1,281	-	1,423	803
Refunds	130	610	-	740	-
Publicity	29	420		449	318
IWD		2,554		2,554	1,912
Trips - Alnwick Mens Group , AllStars		654		654	1,506
Percy in the Park -Deposit for band		50		50	2,233
percy app					1,570
Loving Alnwick Garden	293			293	75
Parking Discs purchase	200			200	285
Safety/Legal - Licenses	491	187		678	323
Town Guides - green tokens		200		200	600
Belly Dancing - scarves and veils		259		259	
Coronation event ticket payments		660		660	
good food guide					669
Donation					50
social events AllStars and Trust	868	1,953	-	2,821	-
Total payments	4,042	11,262		15,304	14,488
BALANCE Net of receipts	5,160	1251		6411	7195

	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
A6 Cash funds last year end				
Cash funds this year end	£31.60(cash at end 2022) - £15.63 (debit)	16	-	
Total cash funds		16	-	-
B5 Liabilities. Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Linda Wood-Mitchell Chair/Treasurer			1/13/2024

Just Social Alnwick

England & Wales - Charity number 1197210

Accounts

Alnwick Community Trust

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2022

and

Receipts and Payments sheet for 31st December 2022

Accounts Completed By
Mrs Laura Biagioni
Treasurer

Alnwick Receipts	Community and	Trust Payments	Account
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Carried Forward			£4,159.53
Receipts			£17,523.40
Total			£21,682.93
Payments			£14,488.07

Alnwick Community Trust
Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2022

Bank Account Lloyds Bank Alnwick

£7,194.86

Current Liabilities	0
Net Assets	£7,194.86

Balance as at 31st December 2022	£7,194.86
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