

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.

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CONTENTS	PAGE
Background	3
Purpose	4
PROJECTS:	
Just Sing ALNWICK	5
Shape Shifters Belly Dancing	6
Loving Alnwick Gateway	6
Alnwick Town Guides	7
Green Token Scheme	7
Good Food Guide	7
Alnwick Men's Group	7
Percy Lion Trail app	8
Percy's Picnic in the Park	8
International Women's Day	9
Arts and Crafts weekends	9
Art Attack	10
Getting Crafty	10
Alnwick AllStars	10

Social Media: FaceBook: Alnwick Community Trust

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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*

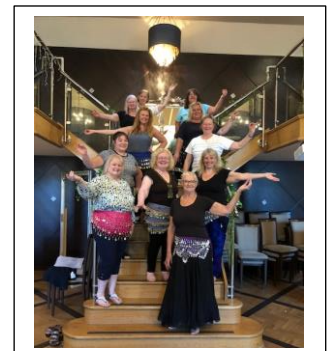
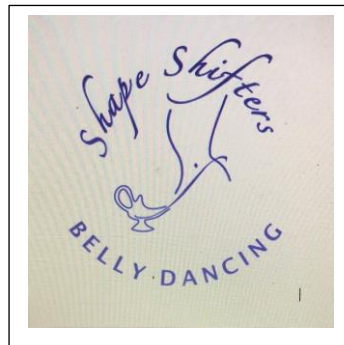
SHAPE SHIFTERS BELLY DANCING

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.

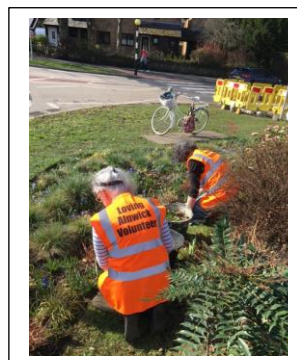
As one of the oldest forms of dance the benefits of belly dancing are undeniable; belly dancing promotes balance and strength, improves digestion and co-ordination as well as being fun and highly expressive.

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

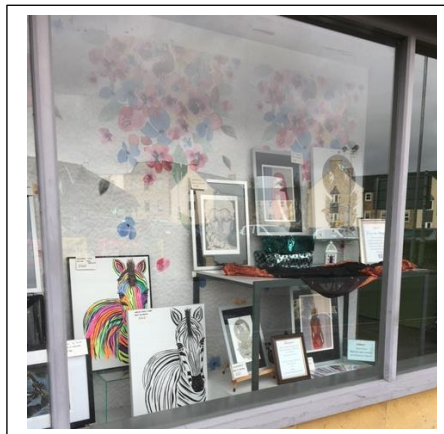
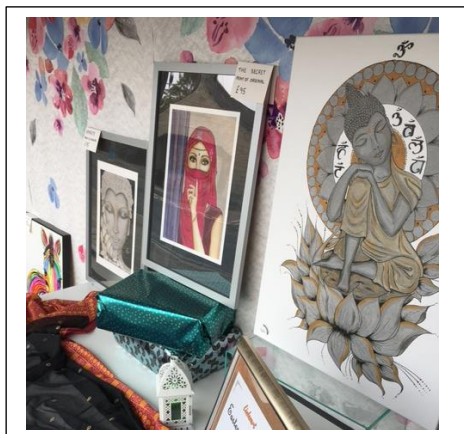
This is usually on the nearest weekend to the International Women's Day and is arranged to showcase the talents of local women. Held in the White Swan over 2 weekend days.



'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

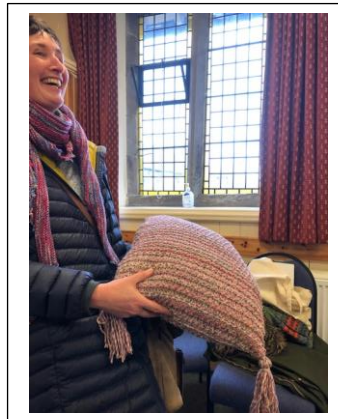
ART ATTACK

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 1/1/2023	To	Period end 12/31/2023
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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