



St Bernard's – Larches & Savick Community Hub (CIO)

## **Annual Report 06/04/2023 - 05/04/2024**

Registered Charity No: 1199245

Charity Name: St Bernard's – Larches & Savick Community Hub (CIO)

Other Name: The Hub

Charity's Address: Elswick Road, Larches, Preston, PR2 1XL

### **Trustees**

David Borrow	-	Chair
Emma Caffrey	-	Operations Manager
Christine Cox	-	Treasurer
Philip Crowe		
Nweeda Khan		
Jennifer Mein		
Christine Murray		

### **Description of the Charity's Trusts**

Type of Governing Document: Constitution

How the Charity is Constituted: Company

Trustee Selection Method: Elected by committee

## **Summary Of the Objects of the Charity**

To further or benefit the residents of Larches, Lea & Savick and other surrounding areas, without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions by associating together the said residents and the local authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation with the objective of improving the conditions of life for the residents.

## **Introduction**

Our annual report details our work of engaging with local residents and communities here at St Bernard's Larches & Savick Community Hub over the past year (2023 - 2024)

This was our first full year of operating and this report demonstrates our commitment to and success in meeting our obligations regarding reporting and transparency.

Unfortunately, we did not manage to resolve the issue of obtaining a gas supply to "The Hub" which hindered us over the cold winter months. Debts incurred by the previous occupants of "The Hub" and totally unconnected to our charity resulted in the gas meter being removed from the premises.

This year we have been on a steep learning curve and have had both successes and challenges as we set about connecting with new groups within the local community and offering activities.

## **Funding**

We received significant funding from the NHS in May 2023 (duly recorded in our finance report) and this was a massive help in enabling us to organise events because it allowed us to improve the infrastructure of "The Hub", and to get vital repairs completed.

Funding has been spent on:

Installation of CCTV,

Installation of broadband

Replacement of fire doors

Improvements to security including fitting of new locks

Extension of the stage area,

Purchasing of essential equipment

## **Activities and Achievements**

We consider that the activities detailed below demonstrate that we provide benefit to those members of the public who avail themselves of the activities offered at St Bernard's

A local morris dancing troupe comprising mainly children began rehearsing weekly and had numerous successes in competitions. The group's manager commented that having an asset such as "The Hub" in the neighbourhood made such a difference. She was very appreciative of the subsidised rate of hire, and of being able to commence sessions straight after school particularly because a number of members were pre-school and primary school age. Because of the generous size of the hall the members can train in lines to full formation. This has undoubtedly helped them achieve numerous successes in competitions which in turn has helped develop the children's self esteem.

The "Brew & Chat" sessions held once a week grew in popularity and with help from the NHS steering group we used other local charities to put on activities for the group. Attendees particularly enjoyed learning how to make hanging baskets and Xmas wreaths at a subsidised cost.

Our NHS social prescriber organised extra outings by mini bus to take residents who attended "Brew & Chat" for a trip out for lunch once a month. Some 15 residents regularly enjoyed getting off the estate and having a pub lunch.

A local group, "Dance Syndrome" once again hired "The Hub" periodically over the year to practice for their events.

We teamed up with a charity called "Rebuild with Hope" who put on pop up shops once a month in "The Hub". They sell ex high street new clothing and household furniture and 10% of the sales came back to us. These sessions were very popular with residents looking for low cost everyday items for their homes.

To help the community we developed a school uniform bank with the support of our local housing association and Preston City Council. This proved very successful and we intend to make this an annual event. Whilst the initiative did not bring in any revenue and we relied solely on donations and generous volunteers to run the event, the comments on social media demonstrated how valuable parents found it.

Emma Caffrey, our most hands on and ever present volunteer and Trustee, organised various one off events throughout the year to bring in extra revenue (this is documented in the financial report) Of particular note were the "Psychic Nights" which were very popular and which will be continued next year. Emma also organised 2 Christmas parties - one for adults and one for children. Both were extremely well received by residents. Both parties were "sold out" and with children's ticket prices being set at just £1.00 for children this was a distinctly affordable occasion for many.

In March 2024 we invited a food bank and a clothing & toy hub to base their operations at St Bernard's. Both groups opened twice a week and were much used and absolutely vital to many in the local community. The food bank received a small amount of funding and donations of food from businesses and individuals whilst the clothing & toy hub was entirely reliant on physical donations from the public. As such, neither brought any revenue into "The Hub" but both had a significant following on social media and contributed greatly to spreading the word about the resurgence of "St Bernard's Community Hub".

Four of our local councillors began hiring "The Hub" on a monthly basis for their advice surgeries and not only did they help residents but they spread the word out that "The Hub" is up and running. In addition to making a financial contribution to our charity, the councillors were excellent in supporting our charity in finding pots of funding throughout the year.

We organised a local community day in July 2023 - teaming up with local agencies to promote them, and offering free advice to residents. This was an excellent day attended by some 120 people, many of whom were locals. At this event we sought suggestions from attendees about what "The Hub" could offer going forward. We evaluated the suggestions and used them in our decision making.

We continued the Warm Hub begun last year - operating it from November 2023 until January 2024. This initiative definitely provided support to the older members of our community who appreciated the free warm meals and warm clothes on offer. Funding from Preston City Council enabled us to offer this resource once a week over a two month period.

## **Challenges**

Despite our best efforts, in September 2023, we had to stop offering a weekly zumba class run by an independent instructor because of insufficient numbers. The instructor was not covering her costs and so we stopped the class by mutual agreement.

Luke Parkinson who was one of the founder Trustees in February decided to step down from the charity in June 2023. This had a huge impact on Emma Caffrey who was left on her own to manage the venue and organise events. This was a difficult period for her and "The Hub" but in late summer a number of new and committed trustees came forwards and adopted various roles to take St Bernard's forwards.

Once we received our charity status we were able to set up a bank account. It was a very lengthy process (months) to get 3 trustees the necessary permissions to access internet banking and act as signatories. This massively impacted on the running of "The Hub" as trustee Luke Parkinson was the only card holder, which resulted in trustee Emma Caffrey paying for items upfront and then being refunded from the charity's bank account.

When Luke resigned this was a spur to get the matter resolved and to have 3 trustees who are cardholders and have access to the online account.

The lack of a gas supply for heating purposes significantly hindered progress in growing activities. We took the decision to close down for 5 weeks over December and early January as we were unable to heat "The Hub" effectively enough with electric heaters.

## **Hall & Meeting Room**

Our main hall (which comfortably accommodates 80 people) and our Meeting Room (which holds 6) have been a valuable resource. In addition to providing space for low cost recreational, social and educational activities, they were hired by local groups, individuals and organisations. They were used by extended families, the police, a social housing group, the NHS, and councillors, for example and generated an income of £4052.50.

## **Volunteers**

"The Hub" is run entirely by volunteers. Last year the Operations Manager, Emma Caffrey devoted a huge amount of time to the charity when paid work permitted and was instrumental in ensuring the venture continued. She was supported by just a handful of people who helped run the "Brew & Chat sessions, for example, and who supported her at various events. We thank them for their hard work and generous donation of time and effort in the interest of the local community.

## **Assets**

Assets recognised but not valued in the annual statement of accounts included: tables, chairs, office furniture and equipment, and basic kitchen equipment.

## **Debts**

"The Hub" had no outstanding debt.

## **Liabilities**

"The Hub" had no liabilities to anyone, apart from short-term utility contracts with British Gas, TalkTalk and Water Plus. All the utility contracts were taken out on a short term basis.

**Please note** that "The Hub" was previously a Catholic Church which, along with the Parish Social Club and the former Priests' House is owned by the diocese. Preston City Council sold the land to the diocese but retained a covenant restricting the use of the land. Discussions are currently underway between the Diocese and PCC as to how to proceed now the church, social club and priests' house are no longer used for their original purposes.

## **Report Serious Incidents**

We are declaring there are no serious incidents with our CIO. Therefore, we have nothing to report.

## **Going Forward**

Our charity is actively exploring other revenues of funding, and seeking new volunteers. We are looking to build on activities that are held in "The Hub" during the day and in the evenings.

The Community Engagement Officer for Preston City Council works extremely well with us and we will continue to work alongside her to develop new activities and initiatives for the benefit of the community.

We will continue to work closely with local police officers to engage the community - for example holding bike marking sessions and coffee with a cop.

Overall, the community hub is in good health and as we strive to improve every month we are confident we can grow our engagement with and services for the community. With our new team of committed trustees onboard who have been able to relieve some of the pressure from Operations Manager Emma, the day to day running of "The Hub" should get easier.



## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### Annual Report to Trustees Re: 2023-24

Given at AGM 15th Jan 2025

Our community hub serves an area where many residents struggle financially, have health and social issues and are reliant on public transport.

One of our missions is thus to offer a range of subsidised activities to support residents' needs.

To fund such activities we need to continue to hire out the hall for private functions; apply for grants where possible; and organise a schedule of events to raise additional funds.

### EXAMPLES OF SUBSIDISED ACTIVITIES APRIL 23 - APRIL 24

DATE	EVENT	ITEM	ITEM COST	IN	OUT	BALANCE
JUNE 23	PSYCHIC NIGHT	46 TICKETS SOLD	@ £10	£460		
		PSYCHIC			£300	+£160
OCT 14	PSYCHIC NIGHT	28 TICKETS SOLD	@ £10	£280		
		PSYCHIC			£300	
		REFRESHMENTS		£17.50		-£2.50

NOV 23	XMAS PARTIES	LCC GRANT		£300		
DEC 23	KIDS XMAS PARTY	77 TICKETS SOLD	@ £1	£77		
		SANTA			£40	
		DJ			£40	
		PRESENTS			£265	-£268
	ADULT'S XMAS PARTY	36 TICKETS SOLD	@ £5	£180		
		FOOD			£250	
		SINGER			£140	-£178

#### **OTHER ACTIVITIES THAT WERE SUBSIDISED INCLUDE:**

- Open Day
- Brew & Chat - particularly when a specific activity was organised
- Friday's Warm Hub (NHS led) and Wednesday's Community Cafe (Penwortham & Larches Care and Share led)

#### **INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES**

- Hall Hire
- Bingo - weekly - run by Emma
- Car Boot - monthly - run by Penwortham & Larches Care and Share

## **Independent Examiner's Report to The Trustees of St Bernard's Community Hub**

The charity's trustees considered that an audit was not required for this year (under section 43(2) of the Charities Commission Act 1993 and that an independent examination was in order.

It was my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charities Commission
- state whether particular matters had come to my attention.

In the course of my exam, no matter came to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that the requirement to keep accurate records and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records have not been met.

After checking the Income and expenditure sheets, bank statements, receipts and invoices of the Current account, I confirm they are a correct record of the current position of the St Bernard's finances as per the information I was provided with.

John Swindells

# BALANCE SHEET St Bernard's Larches and Lea Community Hub Current Account: 82-11-07 40496524

TOTAL EXPENDITURE		TOTAL INCOME	BALANCE 5/4/23	BALANCE AT START OF FIN. YEAR	TOTAL BALANCE AT 5/4/24
					<a href="#">APRIL STATEMENT</a>
<b>£18,480.22</b>		<b>£42,275.23</b>	<b>£23,795.01</b>	£131.73	<b>£23,926.74</b>

OUT	CATEGORY	IN	CATEGORY
£466.98	ADVERTISING/PRINTING		
£286.26	BROADBAND		
£0.00	BURY MARKET	£821.20	BINGO
£110.00	CARPET CLEANING	£17.89	CASHBACK
£92.58	CONSUMABLES ACTIVITIES	£4,009.00	GRANT LCC
£109.93	CONSUMABLES CLEANING	£29,507.00	GRANT NHS
£157.02	CONSUMABLES DIY	£2,000.00	GRANT PCC
£226.70	CONSUMABLES/REFRESHMENTS	£4,052.50	HALL HIRE

£1,523.62	FIRE DOORS	£500.00	LOAN
£226.94	EQUIPMENT BINGO	£225.20	OPEN DAY
£59.00	EQUIPMENT CLEANING	£470.00	PSYCHIC NIGHT
£351.97	EQUIPMENT KITCHEN	£248.41	REFRESHMENTS
£191.98	EQUIPMENT OFFICE	£381.03	REFUND
£678.62	EQUIPMENT OTHER	£43.00	XMAS PARTY
£259.29	EQUIPMENT HIRE		
£251.59	FOOD HUB		
£600.00	FURNITURE		
£37.34	HEALTH AND SAFETY		
£1,024.19	HEATERS		
£127.05	INSURANCE		
£900.00	LOAN REPAYMENT		
£944.35	OPEN DAY		
£3.99	POSTAGE		
£729.29	PSYCHIC NIGHT		
£1,304.64	REPAIRS ELECTRIC		
£1,118.89	REPAIRS PLUMBING		

£130.00	SCHOOL UNIFORM BANK		
£321.61	SECURITY		
£711.75	STAGE/DANCE FLOOR		
£99.75	SUNDRY ITEMS		
£206.87	TOOLS		
£30.49	TRAVEL EXPENSES		
£43.80	TRIP		
£270.84	UNKNOWN		
£2,569.40	UTILITIES		
£279.99	WEBSITE/ EMAIL		
£597.50	WHITE GOODS		
£936.00	WINDOWS		
£500.00	XMAS PARTY		
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>		<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	
<b>£18,480.22</b>		<b>£42,275.23</b>	