

Introduction

1. This is the second Annual Report of Trustees for Midhurst Community Hub which was established as a registered charity on 20 June 2022. This Annual Report covers the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, and was first considered by Trustees at the meeting on 19 June 2024. It was finally approved by email on 1 August.

2. This report is produced following the guidance of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) appropriate to this form of charity, namely FRS102, as reflected in this link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prepare-a-charity-trustees-annual-report#charities-sorp>

Object of the Charity

3. The Constitution of the Hub states that its main purpose is :

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

- 1. Providing advice and assistance to people who are excluded from society, as well as the development of projects aimed at reducing exclusion.*
- 2. Referring those individuals who are socially excluded to partner organisations.*
- 3. Establishing a Midhurst Community Forum bringing together the multiplicity of charities, local trusts, local authorities and others all serving the wider Midhurst area so that common issues and concerns can be shared.*

For the purpose of this clause 'socially excluded' means being excluded from society, or parts of society, as a result of one or more of the following factors: unemployment; financial hardship; youth or old age; ill health (physical or mental); substance abuse or dependency including alcohol and drugs; disability; poor educational or skills attainment; relationship and family breakdown; poor housing (that is housing that does not meet basic habitable standards)'.

Notes: "The Midhurst area" comprises the town of Midhurst and the fifteen rural parishes in the north-west of Chichester district within the County of West Sussex.

Form of Governance-CIO

4. The Hub is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and is one of the forms of charitable organisation recommended by the Charity Commission.

The Trustees

5. At its launch the Hub had six trustees who are all local people with extensive experience of the community. The Board has since been joined by Jane Roberts as Treasurer, and now comprises:

Chrissy Abbott (Chair)	Jeanette Sutton
Jane Roberts (Treasurer)	Martin Roberts
Laura Jandac	James Yeates
Mark Purves	

6. The board meets on a regular basis with formal agendas, papers, and minutes in accordance with best practice. The secretary/administrator to the Board is Mike Abbott.

7. The formal constitution allows not less than three trustees and not more than nine. Trustees are elected for a period of three years initially.

Office

8. The registered office for the Hub is St Ann's Hall, St Ann's Hill, Midhurst, GU29 9NN. However, as and when the Hub finds its own premises, the registered office will revert to new premises about which there are ongoing discussions with Midhurst Town Council. Meanwhile the Hub continues to operate from the Library at the Grange Community Centre with kind permission of West Sussex County Council.

Our Mission

9. The mission of Midhurst Community Hub is to enable local people in need to access integrated help at a single one-stop-shop advice centre doing so in conjunction with partner organisations that are specialists in their field. These needs are likely to be complex, and include issues pertaining to poverty and debt, housing need, caring issues, mental health and wellbeing, family support, unemployment/seeking work, and loneliness.

10. The Hub does not claim any particular specialist expertise but, with the written consent of the client, and in compliance with GDPR, undertakes to work with over thirty partner organisations who are specialists in their field.

Our Values: "Enabling independence, building community"

11. The first aim, agreed by trustees at their very first meeting in June 2021, is to provide a personal service to clients, that follows through and resolves their issues to the best possible extent, and to their satisfaction. This is done by local volunteers helping local people, enabling their greater independence. The further aim is to build community life, by bringing local organisations together to share issues and possible actions. Trustees adopted the slogan of **"Enabling independence, Building community"** to summarise this endeavour. The trustees also adopted core values so that all the trustees, volunteers, and service providers to the Hub would undertake to being non-judgmental, and yet accountable, treating all our clients and providers with:

- Kindness
- Respect
- Discretion
- Compassion
- Humility

Bankers

12. The Hub banks online with the CAF Bank (Charities Aid Foundation Bank).

Review of 2023/24

13. This has been the first full year of the Hub's operation, and one characterised by a period of promotion and development. The advisory service to clients has resulted in 75 clients being helped in 2023/24 about whom further details are given below. The structure of having 4 teams of 3 volunteers in each has continued, and efforts have been made to increase the number of volunteers to 4 per team. Improvements have been made to operating practices to ensure accurate records are kept on each client and that agreed actions are followed up. Enjoyable social gatherings for all volunteers and partners were held in the summer and at Christmas.

14. Service development has been achieved largely through the Hub convening hugely successful Midhurst Community Forum meetings in May and November 2023 that brought together over 50 people from over 30 local organisations on each occasion. The top issue of concern was loneliness and isolation and its consequences. Full Reports of Proceedings can be found on the website.

15. The issue of loneliness and isolation has been addressed, following endorsement by the November Forum, by two projects. The highly successful **Midhurst Community Lunches** launched in January as a free weekly lunch funded by grants from the Boltini Trust and Hyde. Similarly, work was undertaken in early 2024 to recruit volunteer callers for the (Keeping) **"In**

Touch” telephone buddying service modelled on the experience of colleagues in the Selsey Care Shop with their “Good Morning Call”. In Touch’s first client came forward in June 2024 and will therefore be reported next year.

16. Successful bids to the Lottery (Awards for All) and to the Hyde Charitable Trust enabled the commissioning of a self-employed Admin Services consultant to improve systems and procedures. This has included an improved newsletter and mailing system, a spreadsheet to log DBS clearances and training provision, improved and more secure client files, assistance in promoting the Forum, establishing the process for online team meetings and commissioning a review of the website.

17. The Board of Trustees met on 4 occasions this year, and besides approving essential grant bids has focussed on redressing weaknesses in its policies and procedures. The appointment of a volunteer Treasurer in December 2023 has achieved a security of practice and the approval of new Financial Regulations. Improvements have been made to reporting on Safeguarding, and the adoption of a Risk Register and Critical Incidents procedure. In March 2024 the Board approved a proposal to update the website and this has since been achieved.

18. To sum up, 2023/24 has been a period of rapid growth for the Hub sustained by committed and capable volunteers and with welcome funding from grant donors. It is intended that 2024/25 should be a quieter year of implementation and consolidation.

Impact

19. Part of the accountability to clients and to funders is to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Hub’s contribution against its mission and core purpose. As is noted on the website this process is known as the theory of change and sequences the impact of our efforts on those we serve.

Advisory Service

Inputs

20. The Hub operates with 4 teams of approx.3 people with each being on duty one week in four. The Hub is open for 3 hours on each of Saturday and Monday (except Bank Holidays) but allowing for set -up/take down of a further hour this amounts to some 24 hours a week or approx. 1,100 hours pa. To this should be added:

- Time spent outside opening times on client follow up:
- Time of the Secretary
- Time of Chair and Trustees

21. Adding in these activities effectively doubles the total volunteering time to around 2,800 hours pa.

Outputs

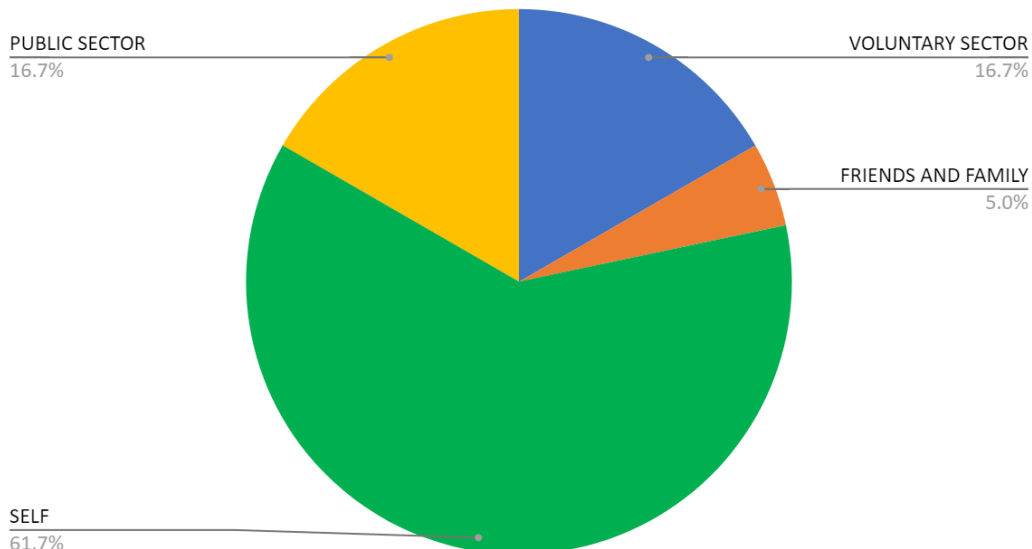
22. An information sheet is completed for each client who has contact with the Hub. Each new client is also given a unique identifying reference number. The information sheets capture contact information, how clients came to the Hub (referral pathway), their housing type (e.g. social, private rented) the issue(s) that brought them to the Hub and the agreed actions that the Hub will take to address those issues, subsequently described as “cases”. The information for the client information sheets is then analysed to help the Hub get a deeper understanding of our clients and the challenges they face in order to provide better support in future.

23. In 23-24, the Hub helped **75 clients**. It is not uncommon for each client to seek assistance with more than one issue, so the number of cases dealt with was **105** (see figure 3). The importance of the Hub working in partnership with other organisations is demonstrated by around a third of referrals coming from public sector bodies (e.g. Chichester District Council) and other voluntary organisations (e.g. the Midhurst Food Bank).

REFERRAL PATHWAY

Figure 1

REFERRAL PATHWAY 23-24



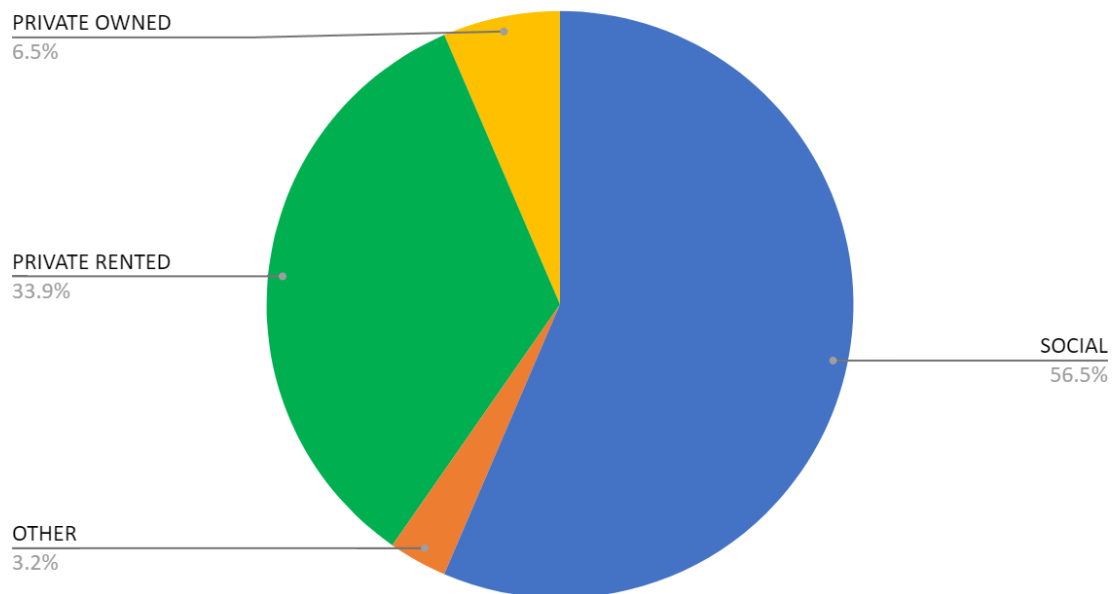
24. According to the National Census data for 2021, 17.7% of the population of Midhurst live in social housing (the percentage in the neighbouring parishes is lower). This is in-line with the national average. However, over half of the Hub's

clients are currently living in social housing, a far larger proportion than would be expected looking at the breakdown of housing type alone.

The same applies for the percentage of the local population living in rented accommodation (18.1% but a third of the Hub's clients)

HOUSING TYPE *Figure 2*

HOUSING TYPE 23-24



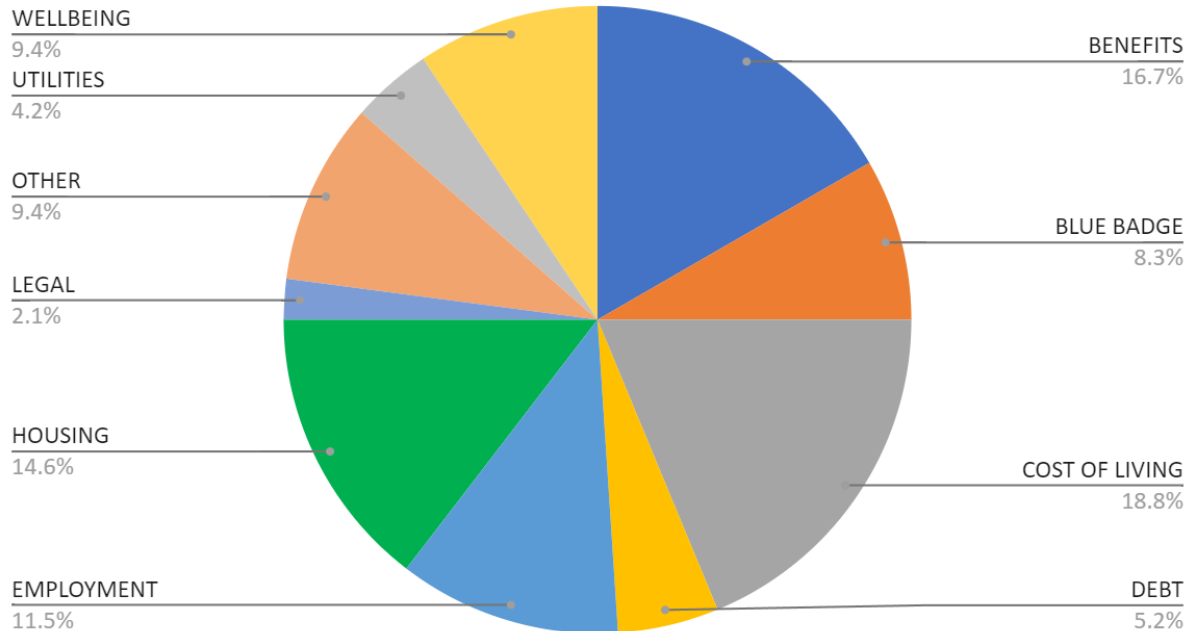
25. The 3 main reasons for clients seeking support from the Hub make up 50% of the cases dealt with. These issues are:

- Cost of living - including Food Bank referrals and assistance with basics such as furniture and white goods
- Benefits - including advice on entitlement and assistance with applications
- Housing - including assistance with complaints to social and private landlords about maintenance issues and concerns over rent and maintenance charge issues.

CASES BY TYPE

Figure 3

CASES BY TYPE 23-24



Main Projects

Midhurst Community Lunches

26.The Midhurst Community Lunches began in mid-January, following endorsement at the November Forum. This initiative was conceived as a way to encourage lonely and isolated members of our local community to reconnect with family, friends and local support services. The plan was for a steady increase towards a weekly target of 25 guests by the summer. The lunches take place on Mondays at the Methodist Church, under generous rental terms, and in a hall with good facilities. This location is in a safe and secure space in the centre of the town, close to public transport connections, and with the facilities enabling a nourishing homecooked meal to be provided.

27.The core start-up team of 8 volunteers has been boosted by a further dozen helpers, allowing individual time and attention to be given to each of our guests. After serving meals and refreshments to each table the volunteers make a point of joining guests to eat and continue conversations. We are seeing two or three new faces each week as word spreads; by the end of March more than 50 guests

had come along at least once and weekly we are averaging 20 to 25. The peak attendance so far was 28 at the start of Easter week.

28. Guests frequently comment on the warmth of our welcome, the friendly atmosphere and both the quality and choice of our meals. It has been very encouraging to see and hear directly about the positive impact that has already been achieved in these first months of operation and we look forward to further strengthening these new links within the local community.

29. Meals are entirely free of charge, though many guests insist on making a donation. After set-up costs just under £700, net weekly running costs have settled within the budget of £2.50 per head. Generous gifts and grants already guarantee our first twelve months operation through to 2025.

30. A link has been established with UK Harvest to receive excess farm and supermarket produce for use in our meals, with any surplus offered free to guests each week.

In Touch

31. The concept of In Touch was endorsed at the second Community Forum in November 2023 Forum at which the Chairman of Selsey Care Shop and Forum gave a presentation about their "Good Morning Call" service upon which In Touch is based. Further invaluable advice was obtained from Selsey colleagues at a meeting in March. The process of recruiting, briefing, clearing (DBS and signed confidentiality forms) was then begun. In Touch then went live in April (the next 24/5 Report year)

Work Connections

32. During the period of this Report meetings were held with Chichester District Council's Choose Work team and the newly formed Midhurst Business partnership to discuss and agree a way of providing readiness for work training to those at the edge of the employment market with vacancies that might exist in local businesses.

Overall Impact

33. The Hub has reached out to many people and organisations in the Midhurst area through:

- Well attended meetings of Midhurst Community Forum in May and November 2023.
- Development of new projects in response to the Forum's concerns, particularly about loneliness and isolation. The Lunches already have 20-25 guests each week. In Touch telephone befriending service is just launching.
- Promoting awareness of the Hub to schools, parish clerks, churches, health centre, social prescriber, Hyde Housing, which has 1,000 residents in the Midhurst area and some 30 partner organisations

- Assisted 75 clients in the year addressing 105 separate cases they raised
- Impacted on individuals in a beneficial way, including for example:
 1. commissioning catering services from a Hyde tenant trying to set up in business.
 2. a Hyde tenant becoming a volunteer cook at the Lunches.
 3. by the close engagement with the tenant of a private landlord facing eviction, supporting him in the eviction being stayed
 4. by securing Blue Badge forms for infirm clients needing disabled parking badges and unable to complete the 36 page online form themselves
 5. by securing benefits for those entitled to them and, with Frontline, obtaining debt relief orders
 6. challenging utility companies about energy accounts and bills
 7. challenging social landlords about damp/mould in properties
 8. finding white goods and furniture for those moving into new properties without these facilities

34. The scope of the Hub's impact is reflected in these verbatim comments from clients:

"It was good to see you and thank you for your visit and help. I do tend to panic when faced with numbers, but with your kind help all was very satisfactorily dealt with " (MCH 036)

"We are extremely grateful to you and the Midhurst Community Hub for all the help you gave us. I have no doubt that without your intervention we would still be struggling to contact OVO" (MCH054)

"It has been such a difficult 10 years since losing my husband, and I have even wanted to give up, sell up, curl up, but I know I have to stay strong for my gang, which is a little easier knowing that people like you are ready to listen, support and try get some help to come along. So, yes, thank you so much" (MCH 055)

"Thank you so much for all the help you have given me and my family" (MCH 077)

"I really appreciate all the help and support that your giving me and time isn't a concern because I'm always At Home and I'm grateful for any help and support that I can get." (MCH 085)

"I couldn't have done it without your amazing work and support." Application for attendance allowance (MCH 090)

Safeguarding

35. The Hub was established with a safeguarding policy and procedure from its inception. However, this original policy was revised at the Trustees meeting in

March 2024. A single central record of names, roles, DBS clearances and training has now been established. The principle is established that all Trustees, Voluntary advisers and In Touch volunteers should be DBSd. The principal organisers of the Lunches are all DBSd but the advice of the agency used by the Hub for Enhanced DBS clearances, Thirty-one Eight, is that those just helping/serving the weekly lunches on a rota do not need to be DBSd. Safeguarding is a standard item on every Trustee agenda.

Finance

36. The full accounts for 2023/24 are as Appended. The accounts are produced on a Receipts and Payments basis as the income of the Hub is under £25,000.

Looking Forward to 24/25

37. This year, 2023/24 has been a Development Year for the Hub, promoting awareness since its launch in November 2022, securing grants and promoting projects to address issues raised in the Forum.

38. The Trustees wish to use 2024/25 as a year of consolidation of both its advisory service and projects. The successful grant bids have enabled the commissioning of Admin Services from a self-employed consultant, and this has enabled procedures and processes to be improved. The key aims in 2024/25 are to:

- further improve client record keeping and the assessment of client satisfaction
- to enable the four teams to reach the point in volunteer numbers, and effective procedures and processes that they can take full responsibility for client phone calls, emails and personal visits during the entirety of their duty week
- ensure all volunteers have had safeguarding training
- reach out more to the rural villages outside Midhurst itself and in particular to Hyde residents
- to secure longer term funding, allowing core costs to be funded and the continued retention of an Admin Services person
- to move into Lilac Cottage as an office base.

Chrissy Abbott, Chair of Midhurst Community Hub

July 2024



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Midhurst community Hub

1199385

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/04/2023

To

31/03/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Grants	15,000	5,400	-	20,400	7,900
Donations	708	-	-	708	4,568
Bank Interest	20	-	-	20	10
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	15,728	5,400	-	21,128	12,478
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	15,728	5,400	-	21,128	12,478
A3 Payments					
Admin consultant	2,190	-	-	2,190	-
Administration	886	-	-	886	183
Advertising	688	-	-	688	817
Bank charges	60	-	-	60	40
Communications	956	-	-	956	335
Community Lunches	132	1,209	-	1,341	-
Events	887	-	-	887	255
Office Supplies	381	-	-	381	412
Printing	414	-	-	414	222
Refreshments	-	-	-	-	35
Set Up Costs Phones & Laptops	-	-	-	-	602
Website	545	-	-	545	397
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	7,139	1,209	-	8,348	3,298
A4 Asset and investment purchases. (see table)					
Table & Chairs	330	-	-	330	-
Phones & Laptops	-	-	-	-	3,516
Sub total	330	-	-	330	3,516
Total payments	7,469	1,209	-	8,678	6,814
Net of receipts/(payments)	8,259	4,191	-	12,450	5,664
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	8,259	4,191	-	12,450	5,664

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		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	13,923	4,191	-

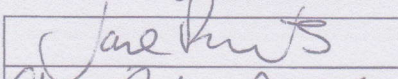
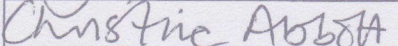
	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	4 x laptops	Unrestricted	-	-
	4 x mobile phones	Unrestricted	-	-
	Table & 4 chairs	Unrestricted	-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	JANE ROBERTS	24.07.24
	CHRISTINE ABBOTT	24.07.24