

Annual report 2019-20

Denby Dale Community Project, operating as Denby Dale Community Library

Constitution

The Denby Dale Community Project (DDCP) is a charitable incorporated organisation governed by its constitution and registered with the Charity Commission (registration number 1155111). It operates under the name Denby Dale Community Library (DDCL). Its registered address and details of its trustees are included further down this report.

In summary, our objects are to benefit the residents of Denby Dale and surrounding areas through the establishment and management of a community centre and library, which will help advance education and provide facilities for leisure and social welfare.

COVID-19 update

At the time of writing (July 2020) our building is closed to the public because of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are hoping that we will be able to re-open soon so that we can continue to provide this well-used and well-regarded service in our community.

Trustees are continuing to meet regularly to discuss our financial position; the security of our building; communication with our customers, community and stakeholders; and plans for re-opening.

Our financial position is good. Our costs during closure are limited and we have sufficient reserves to cover these costs for at least a year. We have agreed a significant rent reduction for our tenant and strategic partner, Kirkwood Hospice, as their fundraising has been badly affected by the pandemic.

Annual report

The rest of this report summarises our activity and performance for the year ending 31 March 2020.

The Trustees are pleased to report another successful year. We provide a safe and welcoming building for the community of Denby Dale and surrounding villages, together with a small and well-used community car park.

The building provides a free space for Kirklees Council to run a community-supported library, thus preserving a popular service within the village. It also provides a community hub for a wide range of activities, both formal and informal. The building benefits from a café and gift shop, run by Kirkwood Hospice, a local charity.

Delivering what our community wants

In 2018/19 we conducted a survey within Denby Dale and the surrounding villages that form the catchment area for our library. We said that we would use the feedback from the survey to target our priorities for the next three years, particularly looking at increasing our book stock and improving the provision of local information. These remain our ambitions for the longer term.

During the year we have made improvements in a number of areas that people said were important to them, including the car park, activities and access to photocopying.

We were delighted to have further evidence of local support by a record sale of raffle tickets at Christmas, with proceeds half as much again as last year. This is our main community fund-raising activity; we deliver a book of raffle tickets to every household

in Denby Dale and some of the surrounding villages, together with some brief information about the services we provide. The prizes we offer are donated by local businesses. This approach means the raffle is a very good way of seeing how much we are valued by our local community.

None of our work would be possible without the time, energy and support of our volunteers, for which we are very grateful.

Increased use of our building

We have again seen increased use of our building, by both groups and individuals.

Kirklees Library statistics show a 25% increase in books borrowed, over 17,000 books borrowed by 1,024 active users. Our number of active users has increased by 20% for the second year running. An impressive 489 new users were registered in the year and there were 572 uses of the public access computers, up 10% on last year.

Volunteers gave 1,253 hours in support of Kirklees Library Service, with a volunteer always matching the paid staff hours. As Kirklees Library Service staff are not allowed to work alone in a building open to the public, our volunteers are essential to keeping the library open for our community.

We held 231 events, with a total attendance of 1,804 adults and children. We have been particularly pleased to increase attendance at RhymeTime (for pre-school children) and StoryTime (for all children) and would like to put on record our thanks to the volunteers who put on these events. The Story Walk during half term was also very well attended and we hope to build on its success in the future.

We have a number of regular craft and reading groups, which are open to anyone in the community to join, meeting in our building during the day. Our local history group is gradually building up and we provide support for people wanting to research their family, their home or even a particular object.

Our partner, Kirkwood Hospice run the café and gift shop. They too are seeing increased takings and are making good use of the building for meetings and events. Between us, we provide a friendly welcome to people of all ages, whether in groups or on their own - parents and toddlers, walkers, teenagers seeking wifi, isolated people seeking company, even people just wanting shelter while waiting for the bus!

Our evening use is rather more limited, but with gradually increasing numbers, offering weekly meditation classes and a monthly programme of literary events, including author talks and poetry readings.

Improvements to our building

Our focus during the year has been on the car park and access to the building.

We have improved access safety by installing a motion sensor light over the door and steps, adding yellow grip strips to the edges of the steps, and re-surfacing the ramp.

We have repaired sections of the car park where the old tarmac was damaged and unblocked the drains to alleviate the previous problems of puddles forming. We have also repointed the boundary wall and re-instated the old cast-iron railings, which our volunteers have carefully sanded down and re-painted.

The most visible improvement has been the white lines drawn to mark out parking spaces more clearly and, most importantly, a specific space for disabled parking near the bottom of the ramp.

The improvements to the building have been made easier by the establishment of a volunteer caretaker group, who do a weekly safety check and undertake many of the smaller repairs and improvements.

Within the building we have made some modest improvements to signs, layout and access to information. More importantly, we have been able to provide a sofa in the children's reading area, thanks to a generous donation in memory of longstanding library user, which means that children and adults can sit and read together.

Governance and finance

We have 12 Trustees with a wide mix of skills and experience. Trustees have agreed that the position of Chair will be held for a year at a time, rotating amongst those who are willing to take it on. The first of these was, Janet Johnson, who was appointed Chair in November, taking over from Pete Belsey who had been doing the role on an interim basis.

The partnerships with Kirklees Library Service and Kirkwood Hospice are important to us and we hold regular meetings with their representatives to make sure our building continues to meet their needs and that our purposes are aligned.

We are in a good financial position. Rent and lettings income covered our running costs for the year and our car park improvements were funded from grants and donations received in the previous financial year. This means that our fundraising for this year is available to support our closure during the pandemic and future improvements to the building and to the services we provide. We are very grateful for all our supporters, including members of our Supporters Club; people who have bought raffle tickets, attended events or donated into our collecting tins; the Parish Council and local Kirklees councillors who have given us grants in the past; and local people who have donated money and time.

In order to manage our risks, we aim to have reserves sufficient to cover at least 12 months' future operating costs and we are currently comfortably within this position.

Our accounts are awaiting independent examination and will be available on the Charity Commission website before the end of January 2021.

Trustees

Trustees are appointed by resolution at a properly convened meeting, with due regard being paid to skills, knowledge and experience. The following Trustees have served during the year (for the full year unless it says otherwise):

Janet Johnson	(Chair from 14 November 2019)
Derek Lawrence	(Vice-Chair from 14 November 2019) Appointed 30 May 2019
Neil Denby	(Treasurer)
Peter Belsey	(Chair from 15 April 2019 to 14 November 2019)
Jim Dodds	(Chair to 15 April 2019) Resigned 15 April 2019
Richard Brook	
Susan Daniels	
Tansy Hepton	Appointed 30 September 2019
Kath Kerr	Appointed 30 May 2019
Linda Kitson	
Jon Milner	
Graham Turner	
Kate Tunstall	

Risks

We have identified the following key risks:

COVID-19

- There is considerable uncertainty as a result of the current pandemic. We do not know when we will be able to re-open nor what restrictions there may be on the services we can deliver. As a consequence there are significant risks to our income, both rental and fundraising. At the moment, Trustees consider our reserves to be sufficient to mitigate this risk for the next year.
- We are reliant not just on funding, but also on a pool of dedicated volunteers who match the Kirklees Library Services staff hours. Many of these volunteers are in the “vulnerable” category as defined by Government guidelines and will not be able to return to their roles until it is safe to do so. We are endeavouring to keep in touch with existing volunteers and be sensitive to their circumstances. Initial re-opening will be for reduced hours so we should be able to manage this with fewer active volunteers, and build up at an appropriate pace. We will continue to look to maintain recruitment of new volunteers from within the community, as soon as possible.

Health & safety

- We take the health and safety of the people using our building seriously. Our volunteer caretaking group perform an agreed programme of tests, checks and inspections. All of our volunteers have a health & safety induction.
- A Health & Safety management review was conducted in July 2019 by a Kirklees auditor. No material issues were found and all resultant actions have been completed.
- Health and safety will be a key consideration as we plan for re-opening and we will work with Kirklees Library Services to ensure we comply with Government recommendations for social distancing and personal protective equipment.

Data protection

- We are compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit and have approved the trustees’ report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees

Signature:	<i>Janet Johnson</i>
Full name:	Janet Johnson
Position:	Chair of Trustees
Date:	24 July 2020

The Denby Dale Community Project
Denby Dale Community Library
364 Wakefield Road
Denby Dale
Huddersfield HD8 8RT

Denby Dale Community Library

Income & Expenditure Account for year to		March 2019	March 2020
RECEIPTS	£	£	
Rent & room hire		£8,200.75	£9,546.00
Donations		£1,007.00	£0.00
Supporters fund / Fund raising		£3,102.01	£4,269.11
Bank interest received		£17.11	£30.41
Solar feed in tariff		£58.45	Other £439.90
Insurance (wall)			Other £600.00
EDF Refund			Other £130.07
		£12,385.32	£15,015.49
PAYMENTS			
Services		£4,041.86	£4,038.81
Maintenance		£2,565.25	£2,890.54
Others		£1,188.79	£1,844.36
		£7,795.90	£8,773.71
TRADING SURPLUS		£4,589.42	£6,241.78
CAPITAL ITEMS			
Solar panels	£8,838.50		Car Park £7,611.60
Lighting	£1,283.16		
Cashbox	£15.99		
Less: Capital grants / donations	-£15,000.00	£4,862.35	£7,611.60
OVERALL SURPLUS FOR YEAR		£9,451.77	-£1,369.82
Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2019			Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2020
	£	£	£
Building	£250,000.00		Building £250,000.00
Additions - covered by grant	-	£250,000.00	- £250,000.00
Equipment b/fwd		£500.00	Equipment b/fwd £500.00
Bank current account		£9,254.85	Bank current account £6,523.22
Bank deposit account		£16,895.45	Bank deposit account £18,014.26
Cash float		£50.00	Cash float £50.00
Rent refund (paid in error)		-£243.00	
		£276,457.30	£275,087.48
Funds b/forward		£267,005.53	Funds b/forward £276,457.30
Surplus for the year		£9,451.77	Surplus for the year -£1,369.82
		£276,457.30	£275,087.48

