

HAMDON YOUTH & FAMILY CENTRE TRUST

West St, Stoke sub Hamdon, Somerset TA14 6QG

Registered Charity No.1177307



Trustees' Annual Report for the period:- 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Background

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation ("CIO") and manages the Hamdon Youth & Family Centre in West Street. The Trust has a lease from Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council who own the building and it hires out the Centre on an hourly basis to children's recreational groups or for children's birthday parties.

The building is a former Methodist Church and was purchased in 2018 by the Council under the Community Right to Bid legislation. Trustees drawn mainly from Centre service users as a way of empowering villagers to have control over their own leisure facility. The Centre is only allowed to hold children-based activities under restrictions imposed by the sale by the Methodist church, the title to the property and specific Charity Commission permission.

Chair's Overview

Over the year regular hirers of the hall have continued to support us, and I am thrilled that they too have increased their numbers of young people attending showing that this is a great venue. The new huge variety of differing clubs, such as Brownies, Irish Dancers, Youth Club and Early Years role play sessions demonstrates what an adaptable space we have for the benefit of our local youngsters during the early evening and weekends. We are now looking to see what opportunities there are for new customers day-time and particularly during school holidays.

The Brownies have increased their membership numbers from 16 to 24 girls aged between 7 & 10 years old. With nearly half looking for membership in a Guide unit over the next year, there would be a demand for a Guide unit in the village as our closest Guide unit to Stoke being Martock is already over-subscribed being fed by 3 Brownie units. We are now putting out calls for new guiding volunteer leaders in the village to come forward, as being able to bring the Guide section back to Stoke into a lovely venue like the HYFC would be a great positive move for our older girls.

Girlguiding Somerset have been to the venue and approved it for overnight sleepovers and the kitchen has been made fully equipped thanks to Martock Charity shop donating items coming into their shop. A Brochure to advertise this opportunity has been put together and

is on the HYFC and County Girlguiding websites for leaders to consider when choosing a stay away.

The village Brownie unit will be celebrating an upcoming anniversary and it is hoped that photos of the celebrations can be used as a birthday promotion of hiring it for birthdays and write ups in local newsletters and handbooks.

It has been good to be included in the Stoke sub Hamdon Facebook pages and thank the administrators for doing this. More opportunities to work together with other integral organisations of the village to also promote and encourage new users to the hall is hoped for, without changing the ethos or purpose of the venue.

Trustees are really looking forward to growing the Centre as a key part of Stoke village life. The Centre has the opportunity to be the place where young people can learn skills, discipline and good social values; whilst developing their hobbies and interests and feeling valued within the wider community. Investing in our younger generation now has a direct impact on how they become young adults, parents and grandparents in the future.

Jackie Poole
Chair of Trustees

Secretary's Report

During the year the Centre took on two new regular hirers in addition to the Brownies, Youth Group and Blackrock Irish Dancers. Star Dance Co, run by a young lady living in Stoke, provided two sessions a week during term time for children aged 3 to 6 and 7 to 10 years old. These classes encourage expressive movement and for the older session an introduction to Contemporary and Jazz routines. They proved so popular that later in 2023 Star Dance will be doubling the number of classes to four and extending the age ranges.

The second new hirer was PopUpPlayVillage South Somerset, who attend the Centre on various half terms and holiday times to offer expressive role play based round village life. Children can become greengrocers, firemen, builders, doctors and nurses, shop keepers, bakers, hairdressers etc. Parents are encouraged to interact with the activities. This type of role play helps with social skills, numeracy, literacy, drawing and imagination and widening the children's experience beyond their immediate household.

Like all businesses and hospitality venues in the UK, the Trust were not alone in suffering from unexpectedly high energy bills during the year. Our electricity supplier failed to notify us of a significant increase in their rates as they were obliged to do and failed to respond not only to several requests for an alternative rate but also to a formal complaint. This caused an unwelcome spike in our utility costs which has now been rectified by a move to a new supplier with a significantly lower fixed rate. Had we not had these unexpected increases, the Centre would have been in profit at the end of the year. The Centre is now back on track.

Good governance is important for the Trustees and during the year reviewed all its policies and risk assessments, including the key ones of Health & Safety, Safeguarding, Risk Register and Fire Safety. In September 2022 the Trust was proud to gain the Charity Excellence Framework Quality Mark Award for its governance and systems, particularly in the light of the fact that the Trust and the Centre is run entirely by volunteers.

Also in September, the Trust created a new website (www.hamdonyouthcentre.co.uk) which showcases its hirers, systems and facilities. The website has a "Thank You" page to acknowledge all those organisations and individuals who have supported the Centre from its beginning up to today.

Treasurer's Report

We started this financial year with an opening balance of £20,418. The Centre's funds are held in two separate accounts: a day-to-day current account and a savings account. As the Trust is responsible for the internal repairs, the Trustees have a Maintenance reserve into which £300 is ring-fenced each year. This reserve currently stands at £1,200.

Income

With more user groups using the Centre, the total hirer income for the year was £2,426, which is a significant increase on the previous year, which was partially a 'lockdown' year. The Trust has received a total of £3,000 in grants and donations during the year with the annual management grant of £2,000 from the Parish Council, and a £1,000 donation from a private individual. Also, with the increase in bank interest rates, we have received a considerable increase in interest payments on the savings account against the previous financial year of £31.

Expenditure

The Centre's operating costs amounted to £8,241 which comprises of water and electric utilities of £7,089, cleaning costs of £470, and £682 for sundries, equipment, insurance, subscriptions and audit fees.

The Centre has experienced an unprecedented increase in expenditure in this particular year. This is not only due to the increase in user groups which ultimately causes an increase in cleaning, lighting and heating costs, but they have increased because of the current economic climate experienced nationally. Over the year, all venues have experienced several significant rises in energy prices, and this was no different for the Centre with its electricity costs rising from an average of £445 a quarter to an average of £2,789 a quarter. Our electricity supplier failed to notify us of a significant increase in their rates when energy prices started to rise and when we found it extremely difficult to get in contact with them and to progress matters. After several months of trying to renegotiate our tariff the energy supplier was still proving to be extremely unhelpful and inflexible so we brokered a new supplier with a tariff aimed specifically at charitable organisations and our energy costs have gone down to an average of £360 a quarter. The Centre would have made a profit at the end of the year if we had not had this unprecedented increase in our electricity costs.

Summary

Setting our expenditure off against our income, our net receipts for the year were -£2,784 and with the cash funds at the start of the financial year of £20,418, the cash in bank at the end of the financial year is £17,634.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Trudy Cronin for carrying out the annual inspection of the accounts. As always, she's done a fantastic job. A copy of the Receipts and Payments for 2022/23 is attached to this report for information.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Trust is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (“CIO”) and its Objects, Powers etc are contained in a Constitution originally set up in 2018. The Constitution specifies that any organisation in Stoke sub Hamdon which is involved in youth leisure activities is entitled to use the Centre and to nominate one of its members as a Trustee, and the original document sets out a list of 10 current eligible Stoke organisations. This list can be amended by Trustees at any time by a Resolution as circumstances require as new groups are established and use the Centre.

The Constitution was amended early on in 2022 to state more clearly what the Trustees’ responsibility is in regard to the Permitted Use of the building under the Transfer of Title deed restrictions. The Permitted Use specifies that no activities (with or without hire fees) which are primarily aimed at adults are allowed to be held in the building. This would be contrary to the legal terms of the sale of the building to the Parish Council by the Methodist Trustees and their ‘Model Trust 40’ provisions and approved by the Charity Commission. These are binding in perpetuity on both the Parish Council and the Trust and any subsequent management organisation. The one exception to this usage rule is a dispensation to the Parish Council as freehold owners of the building to use the Centre without charge on a limited basis, namely for the holding of their monthly council meetings.

The Constitution now identifies the financial penalties that would arise for the village should an unauthorised use of the building trigger a forced sale on the open market. In that event, the village would lose one of its two community venues, which would impact significantly on the younger generation as sufficient alternative meetings spaces are simply not available in the village.

Financial penalties involve repayment of the outstanding balance of the £150,000 Public Works Loan Board loan plus interest, and to the Methodist Trustees either £40,000 or £23.5% of the proceeds of sale. For this reason both the Centre Trustees and the Parish Council are bound to ensure that neither party take any actions regarding day to day operations and activities that are outside the Permitted Use of the building set out by the building’s title and the Charity Commission’s rule on discounted sales.

The Constitution allows for a maximum number of 17 Trustees, the majority of which must be service users, as it is intended that the Centre should be run primarily by the people who use it. The Parish Council and the South Petherton & Crewkerne Circuit of the Methodist Church are also eligible to put forward a Trustee. Three of the Trustees will be elected to serve as Chair, Secretary & Treasurer, and the quorum (minimum number) for meetings and decisions is three Trustees. As the Trust is a CIO, Trustees do not have any personal financial liability.

Reference and Administrative details

Charity Name: Hamdon Youth & Family Centre Trust
Registered Charity No: 1177307

Correspondence Address:

c/o Tamarisk
High Street
Stoke sub Hamdon
Somerset
TA14 6PP

Website:- <https://www.hamdonyouthcentre.co.uk>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/hamdonyouthcentre>

**Trustees who managed
the charity during the year:-**

		Appointed: -	<u>Representing</u>
Chair	Jackie Poole	28.2.2019	Brownies
Secretary	Barbara Brooks	16.2.2018	Blackrock Irish Dancers
Treasurer	Sarah Moore	16.2.2018	Parish Clerk
	John Bailey	28.2.2019	Hamdon Youth Group
	Hugh Donovan	16.2.2018	Independent

Declarations

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's Trustees:-

Signature(s)

Full name(s): Jackie Poole (Chair)

Date:

