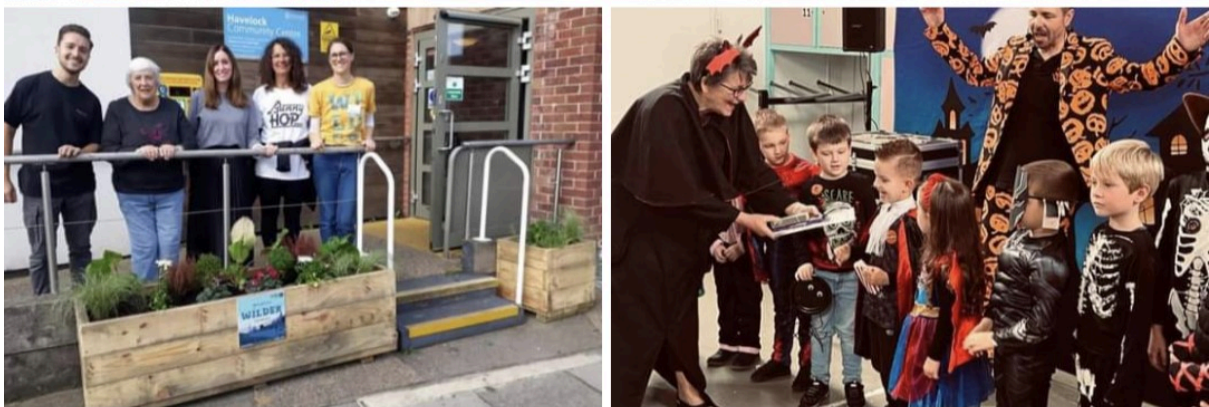


# Havelock Community Centre



## Annual Report and Financial Statements For the year ended 31 March 2023

Charity Number: 299580



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## FOREWORD

**Vision:** *Our vision is for Havelock Community Centre to be the heart of our local community, providing a sustainable, secure, culturally diverse and accessible space that is valued and supported by the people living in and visiting Southsea. We will promote, enable and facilitate varied and inclusive activities, which embrace and address the education, training, employment, welfare, health, social, cultural and recreational needs of the local community.*

Since April 2022 we have started to organise more events than were possible over the period of the pandemic. We were fortunate in obtaining funding of £500 from The Partnership Foundation which enabled us to organise a Queen's Jubilee Party in June 2022 which was greatly appreciated, especially by people who might otherwise have spent the day alone. Our trips in 2022 included the Mayflower Theatre to see The Lion King, a visit to Chichester and the Theatre for a musical and the Watercress Line 50's and 60's event. This year we have had successful trips to Savill Gardens & Runnymede Boat Trip and to Millets Wildside and Falconry Attraction in Abingdon. These trips continue to be popular but increasing travel costs mean that future trips will need to be carefully considered and budgeted for. However they will remain an important way for people, especially older members, to socialise and enjoy outings at a reasonable cost.

We are always mindful that we should respond to the changing needs of our local community. We were successful in obtaining funding from the Arnold Clark Community Fund which enabled us to provide weekly coffee mornings from May 2022 to October 2022 for the large number of Ukrainian refugees in the city. Each week, up to 20 refugees from small children to grandmothers, attended the group with different Ukrainian guests coming and going as they established their own friendship groups outside the Centre. We were also supported by the Morrisons and Tesco Community Champions who provided tea, coffee, biscuits and toiletries. In August 2022, for the Ukrainian National Independence Day, we held a party attended by over 40 Ukrainians and their Southsea hosts as well as the local MP and a local councillor. Although the coffee mornings have ceased, several members of our Ukrainian community continue to hire the Centre for celebration events.

In October 2022 and again in 2023 we participated in the Portsmouth 60+ Festival by offering free classes to new centre users and had more entries in the Festival Handbook than any other local organisation resulting in an increase in the number of local people visiting us for the first time. We also had an article published in the local Pompey Pensioners magazine highlighting our facilities and this was followed up with an article about the opening of the Centre in 1988 by the Princess Royal.

We have also worked in partnership with other organisations and groups, such as Fawcett Road Greening Group, and in October 2022 with the aid of our joint Jubilee Neighbourhood Grant we were able to facilitate a planting session and exhibition. The problem of plants "disappearing" has subsided as the beautiful plants in the 2 wooden planters and the self-seeding marigolds have become established, providing a more welcoming entrance than the previous stark appearance as well as contributing to a greener city.

We also held a very successful family Halloween event in October 2022 with lots of new members joining and our 2022 Christmas Fair was a huge success in terms of fundraising and also providing free activities for children, musical and written word entertainment for the adults and the local school choir. Following on from the success of our 2022 events, in May 2023 we held a Coronation Party, brilliantly organised by our Centre Manager, and attended by 50 adults, 20 children and 15 volunteers as well as the Lord Mayor & Lady Mayoress, several councillors and our local MP. The survey comments from people attending were all positive - "*Great food, great entertainment and great atmosphere*" "*Absolutely brilliant afternoon*", Again we received £500 from The Partnership

Foundation which enabled us to keep the admission cost affordable and attracted new visitors to the Centre who could only afford to attend because the ticket price was subsidised.

In common with so many Community Centres throughout the country, we no longer receive revenue support from the local council. We do however receive welcome advice, assistance and training from the Portsmouth City Council (PCC) community projects officer and Action Hampshire and we hope this will continue. PCC also maintain the fabric of the building under the Service Level Agreement and in 2022 provided a new lift to the upstairs hall. As many groups need regular access via the lift, (for example parents with buggies, fitness classes with equipment, disabled centre users) it is essential that the lift works reliably. After a few early difficulties with the lift's operation, it now seems to be working properly.

In 2022/23 with the support of local councillors, we received a substantial grant from Portsmouth City Council which covered the greater part of the costs of replacing the old, worn, grubby carpets with hard-wearing vinyl flooring throughout most of the downstairs areas. This work was completed in October 2023 and has received positive feedback from Centre users

Now that so many local church halls and other organisations provide or accommodate the services traditionally only available at Community Centres, it is essential that we continue to provide relevant, affordable, up-to-date facilities for local residents. New groups will come and go as the need arises but at the core of our Community Centre are the groups which have been in existence over many years and whose volunteers and members continue to be the life and soul of our Association (Annual Group Reports are available at the AGM and from the office on request).

The Trustees are determined to provide clean, modern facilities which are fit for purpose but most of all we are committed to being a warm and friendly centre with a caring atmosphere which welcomes everyone and we are extremely grateful to the hard work and dedication of all our staff and volunteers who enable us to achieve this. We have always had a small group of volunteers but we need to encourage more volunteers to help with one-off events, assist with nurturing new groups and enabling them to become self-sufficient and to improve and maintain a positive social media and internet presence. Our current hard-working staff do not currently have the capacity, working alone, to undertake these essential additional duties.

Signed:  Theresa Hall

(Secretary/Trustee)

29th November 2023

## LOOKING AHEAD

Prior to 2020 the number of visits to the Centre was in excess of 35,000 per annum and until very recently the post-pandemic numbers were increasing towards previous levels but the recent economic uncertainty has meant that some classes and groups are struggling to maintain viability. We have responded to the cost-of-living crisis being experienced by some Southsea residents by introducing new sessions as part of our Cold Hands; Warm Hearts project which started at the end of October 2022 and is continuing to this day through generous successful funding and grant bids for support the project.

We hope to expand on this idea and have been successful in acquiring funding to be able to host low or no-cost family-friendly events at a time when so many young families are experiencing such financial difficulties. This will allow us to provide our new project, Stay and Play sessions, which has



been made possible by a further £500 grant from the Partnership Foundation, we will shortly begin the planning of this provision set to run across Easter and May school holidays.

We would like to build on the services we provide to the community and this will become an integral part of our long-term development plan. We want to ensure we are working to advocate and provide for the variety of needs across Southsea. We are currently exploring what options we have with this and what ideas the community would like us to prioritise going forward through user surveys to allow us to fully fulfil our vision for the centre.

This year we have reviewed our terms of reference for section groups of the centre to take these valuable volunteer-led not-for-profit groups in the centre and not only ensure their long term viability but to be able to work with the group leaders to help them obtain the resources they might need to allow the group to continue to thrive. We have made the guidelines clearer to also be able to have new qualifying section groups join us at the centre and strengthen these provisions.

We have recently held several Table Top Sales which have provided lots of bargains for local residents and are building this into our 2024 calendar of events. Currently we are busy preparing for our popular Christmas Fair which will provide free children's activities, face-painting and a visitor from the North Pole so that families can enjoy a few hours' fun at no cost, host a variety of small businesses and stalls made possible by the generous donation of our users.

We have had some amazing support from local businesses to make this event special and this will be another integral part of the plan for the community centre's long term success. We want to build on our partnerships across the city and work with all the innovative local businesses to find solutions to the community needs. Our current new year project in progress is looking at hygiene poverty and working with some generous businesses to hopefully be able to offer products to those in our community in need.

Although we have been successful over the last two years in obtaining grants for projects and capital expenditure, this has been on a somewhat scattergun approach with grants applied for as and when they crop up. In the future we need to have a more planned approach since, although we are able to afford to purchase small items such as new laptops, we need to consider how to finance more expensive items which cannot be funded from our regular sources of income or small grants.

With this in mind we are moving forward with a development plan which will tell us:-

“Where we are, where we want to be and how we will get there”.

## **Business Development Plan**

We will be conducting surveys amongst users and non-users to find out what people want from the Centre, and the staff and Trustees are holding a brainstorming session early in the new year to work out our priorities. The Portsmouth City Council Leader arranged for us to have a high-level energy survey carried out which fed into our Environmental Sustainability Policy. This provided suggestions for energy savings measures but these are likely to be very expensive and will need to be funded by outside sources and grants.

Other capital items that we need to consider in the medium term are items of expenditure not included in our Service Level Agreement with the Council, for example, replacement flooring in the large hall (latest estimate £10,750), redecoration throughout, garden improvements and any other

suggestions that the surveys may indicate are needed. A refurbished flat-screen Wi-Fi enabled TV would enhance our centre's conferencing and meeting facilities. The addition of this equipment could provide numerous benefits including hosting movie nights and other engaging activities.

Our current website is not well-maintained and is very out-dated compared with similar organisations. We are now investing in a newly designed website and will need to ensure that it is efficiently and regularly updated and that it can display additional information such as room and hall availability. We now have a more efficient system of booking rooms and invoicing which should save many hours of staff time.

The Business Development Plan will need a lot of input from Trustees, staff, volunteers and residents but we hope that it will provide a sense of direction and strategic vision for the future as well as assisting us in targeting our funding bids in a more co-ordinated way so that Havelock Community Centre can be a place we can all be proud of.

Sarah Garrad (Centre Manager)

29th November 2023

## **1. The Community Centre: where we are and what space we offer.**

Havelock Community Centre is well served by public transport and close to the bustling Albert Road Shopping Area in Southsea. The Centre has a large upstairs hall, 3 downstairs rooms, 2 of which have access to a beautiful, enclosed garden. The centre is available from 7am to 11pm, seven days a week, all year round and the office is staffed Monday to Friday between 9am and 1pm.

Address: 324 Fawcett Road, Southsea, PO4 0LQ

Telephone Number: 02392 295821

Email address: office@havelockcc.co.uk

Registered Charity Number: 299580

Bankers: Barclays

## **2. Havelock Community Centre Activities**

The Centre has been used extensively during the year by a whole range of organisations and people. The Association has two core activities:

- To provide affordable space for organisations providing services to the local community enabling them to operate from the heart of the community they serve
- To provide facilities and activities for local people to promote wellbeing and inclusiveness

We have a number of member groups (Sections - see below) and not-for-profit, community-led groups including:-

Havelock Howler's Singing Group

Chat over Chai

Ian's Guitar Lessons

Grannies & Toddlers

Connors Toy Library

Narcotics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous

Cold Hands Warm Hearts

Autism Hampshire

Shift Creative

An up-to-date listing of all activities and events can be found at [www.havelockcc.co.uk](http://www.havelockcc.co.uk)

### **Community Centre Run Group:**

#### **Cold Hands:Warm Hearts Report**

We provide twice-weekly free sessions where people can come into the warm space provided in our Garden room and stay for as long as they wish, enjoy free tea, coffee and cake refreshments and one another's company. Table games and jigsaws are proving popular. We initially received almost £1000 in funding from ASDA Foundation which covered our costs until March 2023 when we intended that the sessions should cease. The project was intended to support people who were having to make difficult choices as to whether to eat or to heat their homes over the winter. However there was a continuing demand for the project to carry on and further funding from the McCarthy Stone Foundation and Portsmouth Community Lottery has enabled this to happen with just a short summer break. We have been heartened by the numbers of new volunteers who have stepped forward to help with this project. As a Centre with the Community at its heart we will continue to do all we can to meet the needs of our local residents throughout the cost-of-living crisis and beyond.

#### **Sections:**

We have 3 regular Section groups: Kurling Club, Bingo, and Indoor Games and Activities (age 50+).

Many of the members of these groups also volunteer at the Centre and, although not the main objective of the groups, their income has proved a valuable contribution to the running of the centre. Individual reports on the Sections follow.

## **SECTIONS**

### **Indoor Games and Activities (age 50+)**

Saturday Morning 10:00-12:00

#### **ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022-23**

This group was started by Ken and Jenny Bennett on 21 June 2014. In the last eight years the group has grown and now has 17 regular members. The average attendance during the 46 weeks has been 10 members per session.

Members have the use of 3 Pool Tables, 2 Table Tennis Tables and 1 Dart Board. There are also some table-top games and puzzles.

Many of the members have said that they thoroughly enjoy attending the group and it is something they look forward to.

The group members give a warm and friendly welcome to all. It is open to new members.

The weekly subscriptions are £3.00 per person which includes all of the games plus Tea or Coffee and biscuits at the break.

	£
Brought forward from 2021-22	189.73
Income (Subs at £3.00)	1196.00
Expenditure (Refreshments)	-119.08
Rent Donations Paid to Havelock CC	<u>-1200.00</u>
Carried Forward to 2023-24	<u>£66.65</u>

### **Kurling**

Monday afternoon

Although not a large group we continue to enjoy the exercise and friendship the group gives.

### **Bingo**

Wednesday Afternoon

Our members have increased over this past year and now, because of the numbers we can accommodate in the space, we have reached capacity. It is a very popular afternoon and thoroughly enjoyed by all the members.

### 3. Financial Review

#### Examination of Accounts, how and by whom

An Independent Examination of Havelock Community Centre's accounts has been made by Helena Cole (Chartered Institute of Management Accountants). A copy of the certificate can be found at Appendix 1.

#### 3.1. Finance Report

The purpose of this report is to give information to the committee and stakeholders regarding the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 which are attached at Appendix 1.

#### Income:

##### Grants and donations

We received £13,890 in grants and donations during the year, made up as follows:-

PCC - Downstairs Flooring (CIL Funding)	£10,546
PCC - Fawcett Road Greening Group	1000
Arnold Clarke (Ukrainian Coffee Mornings)	500
Warm Hearts Service - ASDA	996
Warm Hearts Service - Donations	48
ASDA one-off grant	300
Partnership Foundation - Coronation Community Party	<u>500</u>
	£13,890

Most of the smaller amounts were spent during the year on services provided for the community. The remaining Coronation grant was spent in the following year but the largest amount (£10,546) was still held in the bank deposit account at the end of the year as the downstairs flooring refurbishment was not undertaken until October 2023.

##### Room hire etc

We received £44,528 in room hire fees, a considerable increase over the previous year figure (£29,052) which was impacted by the Coronavirus measures.

##### Membership fees

Similarly as the numbers of centre users increased as people became more confident in using the facilities, so did the number of members. The membership fee remained at the rate of £5 pa and the income increased from £450 (2022) to £755 (2023).

##### Fundraising

As well as the usual sundry fundraising throughout the year (book and jam sales etc), this year the Centre held one-day events, including a very successful Christmas Fair, which provided income as follows:-

Table Top	£251
Christmas Fair	£1228

##### Income summary

Total gross Income for the year was £78,559 which included gross Key Deposit Income of £10,630, which was mainly refunded during the year. The previous year's total income was recorded as £53,355 but this included the key deposits in a net figure of £225.



## Expenditure:

Staff Costs have increased by £12,201 (£31,195 - £18,994).

## Community Centre Trips

The cost of trips rose substantially during the year as fuel prices rose and so determining in advance the ticket prices for the various trips was a difficult task and as a result a loss was incurred on several trips. The total trip expenditure exceeded trip income during the year by £629 (£5211 - £5840).

## Community Projects

The expenditure of £2709 related to various community projects and services including:-

Fawcett Road Greening Group	£ 1000
Ukrainian Coffee Mornings	500
Warm Hearts Service	977

All of the above expenditure was funded by various grants and donations (see Grants and Donations Income above)

## Community Events

This expenditure related to the October 2022 Halloween Family Event (£282) and the Queen's Jubilee Party (£674) for which a Partnership Foundation Community Grant of £500 was received in the previous year ended March 2022.

## Expenditure Summary

Expenditure rose by £35,082 over the previous year (£73,073 - £37,991). However excluding key deposits refunded (which were netted off against income in the previous year), this reduces the comparable difference to £24,327 (£35,082 - £10,755). Similarly there were no trips in the previous year which further reduces the comparative figures of expenditure.

	Year ended March 2023	Last year
Total Expenditure	£73,073	£37,991
Less Key deposits refunded	10,755	0
Trips	<u>5,840</u>	<u>0</u>
Comparative figures	<u>£56,479</u>	<u>£37,991</u>

There was a one-off expense of £5285 during the year for the new garden awning which was funded entirely by a grant received in the previous year ended 31st March 2022.

## Net Receipts

Net receipts have decreased from £15,364 to £5,486. The previous year's income was boosted not only by the awning grant of £5285, but also £14,500 in Covid grants without which a considerable deficit would have arisen.

## Total funds held in cash/bank:

2023: £56,822

2022: £51,336

## Summary

Although the net income exceeds the expenditure for the year by £5,486, and the bank balance has increased, this is in the main due to the PCC Flooring Grant (£10,546) remaining unspent at the year end. The Treasurer commented in last year's annual report:-

*"I expect us to revert to loss-making in future, as we will lose our grants but increase our running costs owing to increasing staff wages as well as taking on an extra member of staff. I anticipate that the surplus for the year 21/22 will be negated by the losses in the following 2 to 3 years".*

This is of course unsustainable in the long-term and measures are in hand to increase our room hire income and reduce expenditure, for example by employing a cleaner rather than using an outside company. The Trustees also review the outstanding debtors at every meeting and these are kept at a minimum by more regular chasing of outstanding amounts by our staff.

## 3.2 Fundraising, naming sources of income, and major contributors.

HCC's main source of income is from hiring out rooms within the centre for leisure, physical, social activities, and for private meetings and parties. The major sources of grants are listed in 3.1 above totalling £13,890.

### Fundraising for Centre Objectives:

Fundraising events took place as mentioned above and we are now signed up to the weekly Portsmouth Lottery draw and 'Give as You Live' an online shopping fundraising scheme. Income was received in the year ended 31st March 2023 of £104.

## 3.3 Reserves Policy

The Reserves Policy was thoroughly reviewed during the year and the Trustees determined that the charity's designated funds should be based on the following:-

- (a) **Essential Future Spending:** This includes specific projects or the replacement of assets such as fixtures, fittings, cooker, furniture, and other capital items. These are usually set in line with a business development plan and are likely to cover maintenance and replacement of fixtures and fittings as defined in the tenancy agreement with Portsmouth City Council.
- (b) **Unexpected Closure or Loss of Income:** The amount so designated is based on the risk of suffering unforeseen loss of income which cannot be replaced in the short term. The Charity Commission no longer suggests a specific reserve but their previous guideline of between 3 to 6 months of running costs has been adopted by the Trustees based on an assessment of the likely risk.

Details of the Reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 are as shown at Appendix 2.

## 4. Structure, Governance and Management

### 4.1. Constitutional Structure, including Objects

Havelock Community Centre became a registered charity in 1988.

Our charitable objects are as follows:

- (i) To promote the benefit of all inhabitants of Southsea without discrimination of gender, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinion by associating together the

said inhabitants and the local authorities, volunteering 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 object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants.

- (ii) To secure the establishment of a community centre (here in after called the centre ) and to maintain and manage the same (whether alone or in cooperation with the local authority) in furtherance of these objects

A thorough review of the Constitution was carried out during 2022 and amendments agreed by the Management Committee. These were mainly to reduce the numbers present at meetings for them to be quorate and for participation in meetings by electronic means should such meetings be required in the future. In addition numerous typing errors were rectified. The amendments were agreed at the Annual General Meeting held in January 2023.

Havelock Community Centre is a membership organisation. There are currently 183 members.

## 4.2. Management of the Charity

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity is entitled to exemption from Audit under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011, however an independent examiners report is required.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- a) ensuring that the charity keeps proper accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the act.
- b) preparing financial statements that give a true and fair view of the financial health of the charity at the end of the financial year and of its income and expenditure for the year.

The Board of Trustees meet regularly to administer the charity. A manager has been appointed to manage the day-to-day operation of the charity.

The Trustees have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit at all times throughout the year and it is a specific focus at Trustee meetings. Similarly the Trustees ensure that any fundraising activities are carefully planned and supervised and comply with the Charity Commission Charity Fundraising Guide (CC20). No complaints about our fund-raising activities have been received.

## 4.3 Trustees

Havelock Community Centre elects Honorary Officers to the Management Committee at the annual general meeting each year. The Honorary Officers elected at the January 2023 AGM were:-

Chair of Trustees	Janice O'Neill
Vice Chair of Trustees	Vacant
Secretary	Terry Hall
Treasurer	Rob Birznieks
Cashier	Heather Sanders

As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 there were 9 trustees. They were:

#### Trustees:

Janice O'Neill (resigned August 2023)  
Rob Birznieks (resigned September 2023)  
Heather Sanders  
Terry Hall  
Maureen Greenspan  
Shirley Mundy  
Juanita Cary  
Janet Slade (resigned July 2023)  
Luke Woodhouse

In addition, 3 new Trustees were appointed during the year:-

Wendy Heyes  
Kevin Rough  
Jennie Brent

New trustees are introduced to the operations of the Community Centre and given information on the responsibilities of being a trustee, as well as a copy of the Constitution and access to all the Policies and Procedures. All trustees are signposted to any relevant information and training opportunities such as the Charity Commission 5 minute Guides for Trustees produced in 2022/23.

#### 4.4 Staff and volunteers

Havelock Community Centre currently employs 4 members of staff:-

1 x centre manager 30 hours per week  
1x centre admin assistant 15 hours per week  
1x centre admin assistant 10 hours per week (casual contract)  
1 x Cleaner 10 hours per week (casual contract)

In addition we currently have 15 volunteers providing support on reception, gardening and maintenance and for events. We are extremely grateful for the many hours our volunteers have spent helping to run the centre. Our volunteers run the reception desk and support office staff most days as well as helping to maintain the centre's garden and running or helping at several of our groups and events.

Since the year end we have also been supported by a social media/design volunteer who has worked with the centre on the marketing strategy of the centre to streamline the social media output, widen the reach of the social media channels and supported with the creation and output of marketing content raising our brand profile. A new IT volunteer has also worked with the centre manager on search engine optimisation, identifying online opportunities for growth and assisted with the creation of online user survey to further support the centre aims in the coming year.

We certainly wouldn't be able to function as a busy centre without all our volunteers.

#### 4.5 Policies and Procedures.

In the previous year we conducted a year-long review of all our Policies and Procedures reviewing over 30 existing or new Policies, Procedures and forms including:-

Terms and Conditions of Employment	Equal Opportunities Policy
Safeguarding Policy and Procedures	Governance and Standing Orders
Grievance Policy	Reserves Policy
Disciplinary & Capability Policies & Procedures	Whistleblowing Policy
Volunteer Policy	

Since then we have continued to review and create new policies and procedures including:-

Appraisal Policy

Leavers Policy

Environmental Sustainability Policy

CCTV Policy & Procedures

Lone Working Policy

Social Media Policy

Complaints Policy

Sections ToR

## 5. Health and Safety Report

All Trustees have a duty of care towards our staff, volunteers, members, visitors and centre users and all trustees are responsible for ensuring that the Centre is a safe and healthy environment in accordance with the statutory legislation. We have a nominated Trustee who, working with the Centre Manager, is responsible for ensuring that regular safety inspections are carried out, fire drills and fire alarm tests are correctly reported, safety inspections, risk assessments and lone working procedures are managed and employees and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities.

The Centre Manager and the Health and Safety Trustee have worked together to produce a comprehensive Health and Safety Checklist. This is completed each day by a member of the office staff. Fire alarms tests are undertaken on a weekly basis and recorded in the Fire Safety Book. Alarms are activated from a different call point in rotation so that over a six week period all alarms have been tested. Group leaders are responsible for carrying out their own group fire drills. This is currently done annually. PAT testing is carried out annually for all Centre electrical equipment, group leaders are invited to have their group equipment tested at this time. Fire extinguishers and other fire-fighting equipment are subject to annual testing.

There has only been one accident reported over the last twelve months. A group member lost their balance and fell in the Sports Hall resulting in a minor injury. It was a straightforward accident and there was no liability on the part of the Centre. The incident was reported and recorded in line with the relevant procedures.

The Centre Manager has recently completed Basic First Aid training. Recently updated Terms and Conditions now state that first aid is the responsibility of each group leader.

Portsmouth City Council have carried out work on the solar panels to prevent pigeons from roosting under them. This has proved to be very successful and there is no longer a problem with their droppings falling into the garden area where children play.

Following the press coverage of the RAAC (Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete) crisis affecting many schools and other public buildings, we are pleased to report that we have received reassurance from the Head of Building Maintenance at PCC stating that they 'are not aware of any buildings constructed using RAAC construction'.

The Centre now has a Lone Working Policy. All staff and front-of-house volunteers have undertaken online training on Handling Violence and Aggression. This will give them the tools required to help defuse potentially difficult situations. There is now a set procedure that all lone workers should follow to protect themselves when working alone. The Centre Manager is currently trialling a selection of Lone Worker apps. Once a decision has been reached the app will be installed on the relevant staff phones. Staff will then be required to switch on the app when they are working alone. The apps have a range of safety features such as manual alarms, time-out alarms and fall detection alarms. From this app their movements can be monitored and they will be required to 'check in' at regular intervals, failure to do so will result in an alarm being raised by the monitoring company.



## 6. Safeguarding Report

The Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk continues to be an important priority for the trustees and employees of the Centre. A thorough review of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures was undertaken during the previous year and the revised policy was agreed by the trustees in March 2022. The goals set for that year were to ensure that all groups and hirers had returned the new, updated hiring forms and had read the safeguarding requirements.

As a result of that updating exercise it was noted that on one occasion a leader of a group which included unaccompanied children, was unexpectedly unable to attend a session, and had sent someone else in his place to lead the group. That substitute person had not had his DBS evidence checked by HCC. The Safeguarding Policy, procedures and booking forms were therefore reviewed and amended again in May 2023 to clarify that any group leader, if attending as a replacement for however short a period, must undergo the required DBS checking procedure including actual evidence rather than photocopy documents.

Meetings take place regularly between the Safeguarding Trustee (Terry Hall) and the Centre Manager who was the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) during the year ended 31st March 2023. The new Centre Manager is completing Safeguarding training so that she can take-over the DSL role from the interim DSL (Trustee Heather Sanders).

Safeguarding is a fixed agenda item on management committee meetings and trustees and staff know that they must take all safeguarding concerns seriously. DBS checks will continue to be kept up to date and safeguarding training for any new staff or volunteers will be provided in accordance with the role undertaken. Apart from the occasion mentioned above there have been no other safeguarding issues since the date of the last Annual Report.

DRAFT

## 7. APPROVAL

Approved by the Trustees on 29th November 2023

Theresa Hall

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Secretary on behalf of the Trustees