



THE CODDENHAM CENTRE

Annual Report 2021-22

April 28, 2022



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This report is provided annually to inform the Coddenham Parish Council and the parishioners of Coddenham, of our progress. Accounts are subject to audit and are therefore initially confined to CPC. A public copy will be made available on completion of audit and submission to the Charity Commission later this year. Previous accounts are available on the Charity Commission website at www.gov.uk.

Background

The Coddenham Centre Charitable Incorporated Organisation was formed in May 2019, at the Coddenham Parish Council request, as a vehicle for the community centre and estate. The transfer was completed in November of the same year. The current Trustees are Andrew MacPherson (Chair), Ray Collins (Treasurer and Deputy Chair), Debbie McDonnell and from January of this year, David Wythe. Part time Employees are Gail Springett (Centre Manager) and Charmian Hall (Centre Care). Both the Chair and Deputy Chair agreed to be appointed for a further term of three years, in April of this year.

The Financial Year 2021 - 2022

The year began, in a precarious manner with The Coddenham Centre largely closed for indoor events during April and May, because of ongoing Covid-19 restrictions. Nonetheless, Nordic Walking and other outdoor activities meant we were one of the very few community centres in the county to continue to offer services to the community and beyond.

The collapse of revenue streams was only partly alleviated by our success obtaining a Central Government restart-up grant of £8,000 supplied via Mid Suffolk District Council (MSDC).

In parallel, the ongoing failure of the heating system through historical poor maintenance, presented huge demands. Rather than replace the oil-fired system with like for like, we sought an environmentally improved solution. Trustees were of a view that as a community resource it was important, we try and lead by example in the regional and national march towards net zero carbon.

The restart grant plus support from both Viridor Credits and MSDC, enabled us to go ahead with the installation of insulation to the ceilings and void spaces of the hall to reduce further heat losses. A survey had revealed not just inadequate insulation, but none at all, adding to a growing list of legacy issues.

Having studied a number of quotations from clearly a still maturing sector, with technical advice from Kevin Pocock, a local advisor in this field, we chose Baddow Eco Solutions to supply Mitsubishi air source heat pumps. Beset with global logistics issues, COVID illnesses, the state-of-the-art system was finally commissioned in February 2022.



The Coddenham Centre and the Environment

During the year we added further to the Coddenham Centre's environmental credentials, with the community's first public car chargers. Four charge points were introduced in November, with capital costs being met by the Suffolk County Council environmental team.

We celebrated one hundred years of the Coddenham Recreation Ground leading a community planting of over 400 hedging plants and trees, as a contribution to H.M. the Queens 'Green Canopy'.

We established new 'Wildflower Work-out Areas', in conjunction with local residents and increased our use of environmentally approved cleaning materials.

These combined efforts meant the Coddenham Centre applied for and were awarded an SCC Carbon Charter accreditation, spoke at the Ipswich 'leg' of the COP26 roadshow and were short-listed for the 'Greenest Suffolk' Awards.

Estate Management

The Coddenham Athletic Football Club were one of the victims of the pandemic, de-registering for the 21/22 season, with the Trustees thus bearing the brunt of the maintenance of the Recreation Field (not helped by the theft of the motor mower in November). The use of Trustee labour reduced the estate management costs for this year but is unsustainable in the long term and we look forward to the return of the football club in this summer.

We continued to improve the Centre's infrastructure and facilities during the year with the addition of two more security cameras to improve safety and combat vandalism, a new floor treatment, various repairs and improved drainage to the Recreation Field.

Restoring Confidence and Recovering Business.

Despite a gradual relaxation of lockdown restrictions, considerable effort was required to restore both user and supplier confidence. We provided short-term holidays for hire fees and the careful re-introduction of Sunday Brunches were instrumental in bringing together and supporting the community, accompanied by the appropriate precautions. Our volunteers were incredibly supportive and we continue to be indebted to them..

Our marketing stressed the Centre's space, air circulation and high ceilings. After a number of Omicron cancellations, we were able to introduce a successful (and safe) Quiz Night, a Baby Sensory Class and re-introduced a Toddlers Group, a collaboration between St Mary's Church, the Gardemau Trusts and the Coddenham Centre, that now supplies all 'ten' local villages and beyond.

Our Suffolk School of Nordic Walking extended its work by supporting the NHS with dedicated classes for Macmillan cancer patients. During the forthcoming 'Carers Week' it will provide the same for local NHS carers.

We lost a long-established trainer because of a COVID inspired career change, but gained a replacement, lost 'Tai Bo' exercise, but introduced Tai Chi. We hosted local Ramblers and helped out the Coddenham Ukulele band. We still managed to hold successful wedding and baptism celebrations.

The kitchen continued to help local catering start-ups and food manufacturers, plus supported contractors using our facilities to train essential workers. Centre Manager Gail Springett devised successful catering packages by way of diversification. Centre Care Leader Charmian Hall, worked tirelessly to support our rigorous (and very necessary) hygiene standards.



Working with the Community

We continued to play a large role in the Coddenham Community Response Group, our voluntary and charitable colleagues in the Parish, particularly the Community Shop whose important ticket sales and promotions, contributed to both our footfall.

The Future

Looking ahead, a number of further projects are required to be delivered in our pursuit of sustainability and viability. Projects for this year include the installation of solar panels to offset the mounting electricity prices (our low fixed price contract ends in March 2023) and the reconfiguration of the dry changing rooms to provide us greater capacity flexibility and potential new revenue streams. Integral to this is the addition of new storage. We hope to re-instate our closed loop hearing for the hard of hearing and establish a PA system.

We will play a major part in H.M. Queen's Jubilee Celebrations in Coddenham.

In the longer term we intend re-purposing the rapidly deteriorating bowling green with a new community area and diversification of available activities, subject to consultation and discussion. Work is under way with the help of the Suffolk Pro-help scheme. We are also indebted to the Day Foundation for its ongoing support, along with the Gardemau Trusts, MSDC, Viridor Credits and Suffolk County Council.

Our Accounts

We ended the year with a £2,192 gain over the budget figure, although this included liabilities of £772 (hire charges paid in advance for next financial year) and an electricity charge of £423 for March. Our overall position (including reserves) showed a decline over last year of £10,681, although we are anticipating some additional funding from MSDC, which should restore the balance.

While it's difficult to compare 'like with like' in terms of operational levels, Q4 showed a 40% improvement in bookings, which is encouraging. We will need to manage an unexpected 37.2% shortfall in our budgeted precept receipts from Coddenham Parish Council. A newly refreshed and experienced Council, we hope will offer the prospect of informed support and engagement.

While business remains fragile, our dependency on the community contribution has effectively reduced by a further 46.0%, an astonishing achievement for 2 ½ years against the backdrop of a global pandemic for the majority of the period.

Conclusion

In real terms, the Coddenham Centre continues to play a vigorous supporting role in the community, its wellbeing and the 'Coddenham brand'; for less than the price of a monthly bottle of milk, per resident. The continued support of our parishioners, stakeholders and suppliers is appreciated.

Andrew MacPherson - Chair

Ray Collins - Treasurer

On behalf of all Trustees, Staff and Volunteers.

The Coddenham Centre CIO. 28th April 2022.