

# Annual Report 2023



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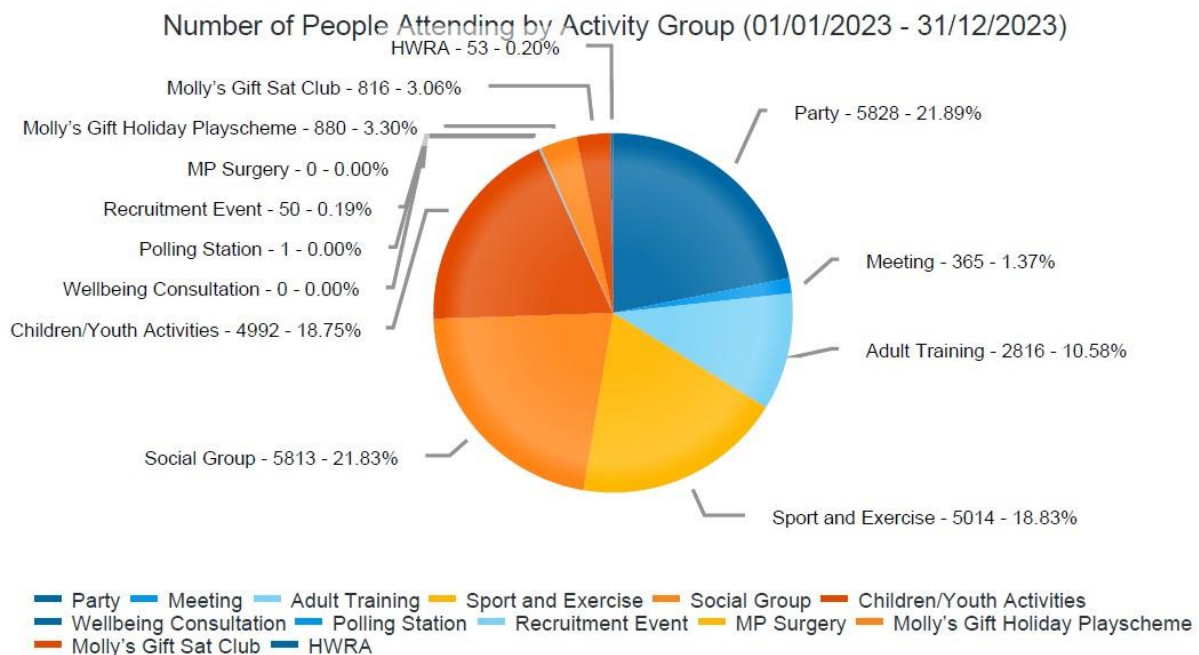
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Registered Charity number 1157806

# Introduction

Welcome to our 2023 annual report! It has been incredibly gratifying to see the number of people coming through our doors gradually increase over the year. We estimate that 26,628 people have visited that Arc compared with 16109 in 2022. We have delivered, or enabled our hirers to deliver:

Children and Youth	1222 hours	6688 attendees	340 bookings
Sport and Exercise	515.5 hours	5014 attendees	327 bookings
Parties/Life events	1243 hours	5828 attendees	195 bookings
Adult Training	180.5hours	2816 attendees	87 bookings
Social Groups	636.75 hours	5813 attendees	169 bookings
Meetings (incl. HWRA)	78.75 hours	418 attendees	30 bookings



In addition to this, we have been a polling station, continued to host PCSO beat surgeries, offered bike registration through BBuddies and hosted councillor’s surgeries. We have not wavered from our charitable aims of bringing people together to improve cohesion, to energise, advise, support and entertain and have seen our bank of volunteers increase.

After discussion, we took the opportunity to change the name of the charity, formally with the Charity Commission, from The Grange Park Centre to The Arc Community Hub. We feel that this avoids confusion (it is what we trade as) and is more inclusive.

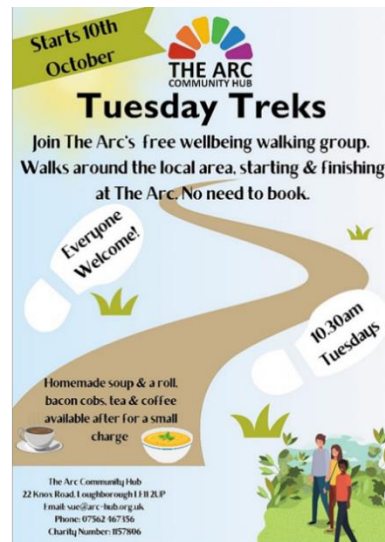
We have extended our social media presence and are delighted to report that we have over 1400 followers on Facebook. Feedback on our new website has been very positive and we hope to see the effects of our increased profile in 2024.



The Arc Community Hub charity exists to help people to come together, sustaining a stronger community



# Cohesion - The Arc Groups



**EVERYONE** Little Stars, our weekly Parent, Baby and Toddler Group, continues to be incredibly popular, with up to 35 families enjoying a substantial range of toys, crafts, refreshments and the opportunity to meet with peers every week. Our volunteer team of Jo, Emma, Helen, Gina, Maria, Zoe, Ang, Julie, Pauline, Gemma and Brogan bring enthusiasm and structure to the group and we are delighted to welcome new volunteers, Nellie, Claire and Emma to take us in to 2024.



**ENERGISE** This year we decided to start a new exercise group, aimed at older people. Week 1 saw 18 attend and we now have over 50 on role with up to 30 joining us every week. Feedback has been so positive, with attendees telling us that they feel more confident on their feet, move more freely and enjoy the social side of meeting people. The NHS have been keen to support it and the physiotherapy department of Loughborough Hospital actively promote it to their patients. We are the only non-referral exercise group for the over 60s in this area (that we are aware of). Thank you to Active Charnwood, We are Undefeatable and councillor Birgitta Worrall for helping us cover the costs of our instructor.



**ENERGISE EVERYONE** Another new initiative was our Tuesday Treks, a free Wellbeing Walking Group, meeting every Tuesday morning for a walk of an hour/hour and a half followed by bacon cobs, cheese toasties, cake, tea and coffee back at the Arc. Led by volunteer Bob, this has been very successful and has proved a lifeline to some participants. We decided to amalgamate it with our pop-up coffee shop to make better use of our volunteer's time and have hosted the PCSO Beat Surgeries as part of the activity. Thanks to Ang, Thomasina and Claire for staffing the kitchen.

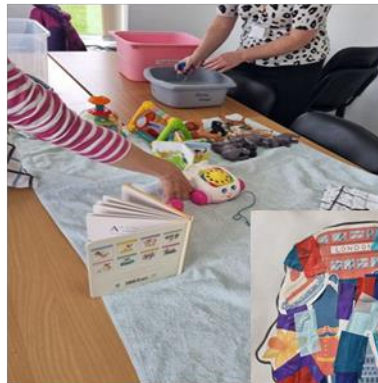


**COHESION** Our Youth Group, delivered for us by GoGetta, ran throughout 2023 thanks to funding from Charnwood Borough Council. Aimed at young people in school years 4, 5 and 6, our aim has been to provide a safe space to explore and grow with positive role models to encourage participants to fulfil their potential.



**ENERGISE** The Arc Table Tennis Club continued throughout the year with good levels of attendance on a Sunday evening. Thanks to volunteers Alex and Sharon, who took over the running of it and continue to provide a fun evening's exercise for all ages! Our weekday group has had low numbers and will be reviewed in 2024.

# Everyone



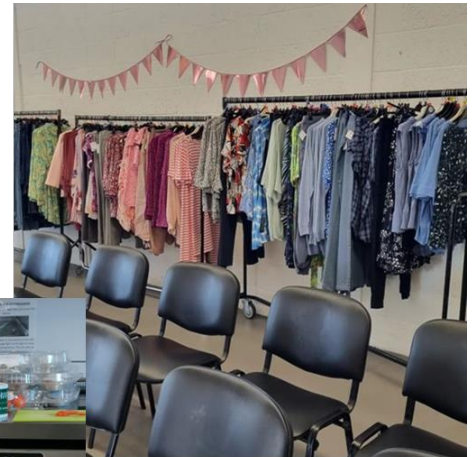
Although money was exceptionally tight last year, we were determined to bring the community together for some of the special occasions during 2023. Our Easter family fun day saw the unveiling of our new coconut shy, with prizes of Easter Eggs donated by Tesco. Families took part in art and craft activities, planted seeds and enjoyed refreshments served by our staff and volunteer team.

The King's Coronation gave the community the opportunity to give something back by taking part in the Big Help Out. Local residents turned out to litter pick and to help clean chairs and toys and although the weather wasn't kind, many brought picnics to enjoy in our hall.

Our scarecrow trail ran in October with some very creative ideas demonstrated and it was nice to see people following the trail in order to vote for their favourite.

We ended the year with our free community Christmas party. Our Santa's Grotto was again very popular, selling out within a couple of days and crafts and party games were provided for our youngest visitors! Entertainment was also provided by Novo Dance, one of our newest hirers, who showcased a variety of children's dance.

# Entertain



2023 saw our inaugural fashion show. Tickets included a glass of prosecco and sold well and SOS Fashion brought along a range of high street brands to be purchased on the night. Feedback was very positive and a few of the models may have looked familiar...!

Once again, our Family Halloween party sold out quickly and we were delighted to see the return of DeeJayz Parties to deliver the entertainment. Over 100 people came along, fancy dress was encouraged and hotdogs were devoured!

Our hugely popular Christmas Gift and Craft Fair took place in November, with a number of returning stalls alongside a few new faces. We took on board feedback from 2022 and provided a seating area with refreshments which went down very well. We are committed to supporting local, independent makers and businesses and were happy to see a good footfall and receive positive feedback from the stall holders.

# Fund Raising



As a self-supporting charity, we do not have regular income from external bodies to support us and cover our overheads. Fewer grant pots were last year available and increased competition has meant that we have had to think more creatively about our income. We joined Easyfundraising, a free shopping platform that big brands sign up to and make % donations every time a supporter shops. There is no cost to us or our supporters and as they say, every little helps! If you haven't already done so, please consider joining to help us in 2024. We have also had a clothing bank installed in our carpark and receive payment per ton of clothes, bags, shoes and belts. Please think of us next time you have a clear out. Our JustGiving page is active should anyone want to make a donation and we were fortunate to be chosen by The Co-op as a cause members can choose to support when they shop.

Our biggest grant in 2023 was from The Access Foundation (thank you!) and enabled us to buy a projector and screen which we hope to use for movie nights/children's films during 2024.

A small number of organisations still make donations towards running costs of charities and we are waiting to hear the outcome of a couple of bids which were submitted in the last quarter of 2023. Fingers crossed!

Our hirers are incredibly valuable to us, whether it is a group delivering a regular weekly class/session or a member of the community hiring our hall for a party. You are our bread and butter and we rely on this income to meet the bulk of our overheads. Thank you to all of you!

# Going Forward

2023 was always going to be challenging as the cost of living crisis and the increase in utility prices bit hard. We view last year as a learning curve and took the opportunity to raise our profile. It is easy to forget that we only opened our doors in November 2019 and swiftly closed them again in March 2020 as a result of the national lockdown. It is fair to say that we are in a much stronger position in January 2024 than we were in January 2023 with a bookings calendar which is fuller than ever and an established operations team. Our priority for 2024 is to increase income from hiring to ensure our financial viability so that we can continue to deliver the priorities of residents of the Grange Park, Shelthorpe and Fairmeadows estates.

Our residents survey, conducted in the last quarter of 2023, will give us focus on what is important to you. We will analyse the responses and endeavour to deliver those priorities. We are already addressing requests for a pop-up pub and for film nights and look forward to welcoming you to them. Our communications have improved through our new website, regular mailing list and increased following on social media. We will continue to be approachable, welcoming and responsive.

Last year we said that we would increase provision for the older generation and we have delivered on this through our Over 60s exercise class and Wellbeing Walking group. We see 2024 as a year of consolidation but will maintain our aim of trying to meet community need in a sustainable way, either independently or through partnership work with like minded organisations.

We are eternally grateful to our team of volunteers; the keyholders, the kitchen team, the baby group team, those who offer to mend and paint and of course our Trustees. We are always on the look out for people who can give us a little time whether on a regular basis or ad hoc, so if you think that could be you, please don't hesitate to get in touch. We look forward to hearing from you!





# The Legal Bit

## Reference and Administrative Information

The Arc Community Hub

22 Knox Rd

Loughborough

LE11 2UP

T: 07562 467356

E: [enquiries@arc-hub.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@arc-hub.org.uk)

## Legal Status

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

## Governing Document

Charitable Constitution

## Charity Number

1157806

## Trustees

Harriet Burt (to summer 2023)

Sue Willetts (to summer 2023)

Mike Ellerby

Anatu Mahana

David Sangwine

Anne Gray

Gina Piscopo (From Dec 2023)

## Accountant

Michael Welbourne, Coalraven Ltd

## Independent Examiner

Colin Wood

## Bank

Lloyds Bank plc

## Staff Team

### Operations Manager

Sue

### Bookkeeper

Ian

### Social Media/Events Coordinator

Camille

### Cleaning

Lucy

## 2023 Financial Review

2023 was the 1<sup>st</sup> full financial year of operation for The Arc Community Hub since the lifting of the Covid restrictions in February 2022. The team have worked hard to promote the venue, and also implemented a price increase to help cover increasing utility costs. Hire income has increased by 7% from £44,086 in 2022 to £47,217 in 2023.

During 2023 approximately £7,000 of the Restricted Funds to ‘complete and equip The Arc’ were used to: Fix the paving/walkways around the Arc, repair the guttering, install the projector screen, and equip it with a new website. Improving and maintaining the facilities at The Arc are an on-going task with further work planned for 2024. We are very grateful to the small team of volunteers who help with this and help keep costs down.

Grants received in 2023 helped to:

- fund The Arc weekly youth club (engaging GoGetta)
- fund the Over 60’s exercise class
- buy a projector and screen to use for community events e.g. Movie Nights

### Description

Mar 23 – Active Charnwood - Over 60’s exercise class	£1,000
June 23-The Access Foundation – projector & screen	£4,600
Aug 23- CBC grant scheme - weekly youth club for years 6-8	£2,400*
Oct 23 – CBC Member Grant - Over 60’s exercise class	£500
Nov 23 – We are Undefeatable - Over 60’s exercise class	£500**

\*Half paid Aug 23, remaining paid in 2024

\*\* Remaining budget is being carried forward to 2023.

The ‘cost of living crisis’ has hit the Arc with a substantial increase in utilities costs: Gas +150%, Electricity +40% and Water +21%.

As stated in the 2022 AGM Report, the Trustees have invested unrestricted funds during 2023 to increase staff hours. This was to improve the smooth running of The Arc, but also give them time to focus on increasing hire income and securing project grants.

The Trustees continue to closely monitor this approach – balancing achieving the charitable objectives with the goal of achieving financial sustainability.

### Reserves policy

General Reserves have decreased from £78,718 in 2022, to £65,148 in 2023.

The current Reserves Policy is for 9 months of running costs to be held (approx. £54k based on 2024 forecasted operating expenses)

## **Statement of Trustees' responsibilities**

The charity Trustees are responsible for preparing the annual report and financial statement in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards.

The law application to charities in England and Wales requires the charity Trustees to prepare final statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are required to

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose the reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2016, the Charity Regulations 2013 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees for the purposes of charity law who served during the end and up to the date of this report are set out on page 9.

Approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:

**Michael Ellerby**

Chair of Trustees– 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024