

Wickham Market Partnership

ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS

Year ended 5th April 2017

Charity Registration No. 1096332
Company Registration No. 4555122

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 5th April 2017

The Trustees, who are also Directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act, submit their annual report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 5th April 2017. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" issued in October 2006 in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and was set up on 7th October 2002. It is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association, which were last amended on 7th October 2002. The company achieved charitable status on 4th March 2003.

The Trustees of the charity are:

Mrs C Caudwell
Miss A J Errington
Mr G Hering
Mrs M Holland
Mr R Jenkinson
Mr C Owens
Ms P Scanlan

The trustees are appointed for a three-year term and a third retire by rotation at the Annual General Meeting and may be reappointed. Additional trustees can be appointed by ordinary resolution.

Company Secretary is Mrs C J Caudwell and the registered office of the company is:

Wickham Market Resource Centre,
Chapel Lane,
Wickham Market,
Woodbridge,
IP13 0SB

Bankers for the charity are:

The Co-operative Bank plc, P.O. Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP

Solicitors for the charity are:

Greenland Houchen Pomeroy, 38 Prince of Wales Road, Norwich, NR1 1HZ

Independent Examiner for the charity is:

Mr J Speedman ACCA, Hilton Park, Rogues Lane, Pettistree, Woodbridge, IP13 0HQ

The Wickham Market Partnership's Vision for Wickham Market is:

To be a community that values and supports all of its people

That serves the surrounding villages with pride

That works hard to sustain and improve its remarkable quality of life

Objects

Its objects are to secure and improve the economic and social framework of Wickham Market and the surrounding parishes by encouraging the development of recreational and leisure activities; offering opportunities for education and training and improving and enhancing the town and surrounding communities.

People

Trustees have met on a regular basis to make decisions on the work of the charity. Their voluntary commitment has been substantial.

Miss Linda Merriam has continued as Administrative Assistant on a part-time basis. The charity has no relationships with either related parties or any other charities or organisations.

Funding

The Partnership developed out of the Market Towns Initiative (MTI), a government scheme aimed at promoting the key role of market towns in rural communities and managed by the East of England Development Agency (EEDA). This funding finished in March 2004. The Partnership continues to attract grant funding to support the development of local initiatives, including the Peoples Millions Lottery Fund, Local Authority grants (including business support funding), local charities and local businesses.

The Resource Centre became known as the Library & Community Rooms in June 2012. The Community Rooms continue to be the base for the Partnership with regular lettings contributing to the running of them and enabling us to continue to employ an Administrative Assistant.

Membership of the Partnership demonstrates the wide range of local and statutory organisations, businesses and individuals actively supporting the work of the charity. Subscriptions provide revenue funding for the Partnership and its website.



The Resource Centre

Community Rooms

The Library and Community Rooms are a local focal point for residents and visitors. The Partnership leases the Community Rooms from Suffolk County Council. A joint Management Committee deals with issues of maintenance and statutory obligations.

The income of the Partnership was significantly improved in 2016 with the letting of the Treatment Room and an office to a private chiropractor. The meeting rooms are regularly used to provide Retinal Screening Clinics for patients with diabetes, with three extended visits during the year. The Citizens Advice Bureau, an Educational Psychologist, therapists and Coastal Leisure Learning have been frequent users. Wickham Market Parish Council is using the rooms on a regular basis for the work on the Neighbourhood Plan, whilst the Parish Clerk regularly uses the interview room for work, offering an opportunity for residents to drop in. Other village groups hire the meeting room as required.

The Partnership is fortunate to continue to have the support of a group of volunteers who regularly attend to the gardens surrounding the Centre, ensuring it is an attractive place to spend time.

Library

The Partnership is a member of the Industrial Provident Society, titled Suffolk's Libraries IPS Ltd and the Library Management Committee is a sub-committee of the Partnership. The library has become an excellent example of how a community-led effort, using dedicated volunteers, can turn a potentially detrimental situation into one of success.

The Library Management Committee, now in its fifth year, has formed the Friends of Wickham Market Library and manages its own finances. The Partnership is represented on the Committee. The library has succeeded in increasing, and continues to increase, the number of visitors as a result of the extension of the original opening hours, made possible by additional sessions contributed by volunteers. This includes a sociable afternoon for a knitting and stitching group. The opening and closing times on weekdays were altered to 9.30am and 5.30pm respectively to attract parents after dropping off their school children.



The Summer Reading Challenge, together with the 'Easter Eggstreme' one, continues to attract local children who receive certificates on completion, together with Book Cards from Wickham Market Primary School. A very popular service which is now offered is that of computer help and advice from skilled volunteers, for laptops, tablets and mobile phones.

The library is due to undergo refurbishment later in 2017 thanks to funds sourced from planning permissions for new housing developments in Wickham Market.

Website

The Partnership continued to provide the Wickham Market website which is funded by members' subscriptions. This entitles them to advertise their organisation and any special events. It continued to top the Google search engine for 'Wickham Market', offering a valuable gateway to the village and surrounding area. The website continues to provide an important advertising tool for local businesses, organisations and events. The Calendar of Events enables local groups to promote their regular activities and special events. This is displayed on the library notice-board and in local shops on a weekly basis. The Facebook page continues to show information and photographs of these events.

Tennis

Following the installation of three hard tennis courts, funded by the Peoples Millions of the National Lottery in 2008, tennis activities continue to be managed by a Tennis Club, including sessions with a dedicated coach. The maintenance of the courts remains the responsibility of the Partnership. Pay and play sessions are also available by booking through a local business outlet, R & S Hardware.

Wickham Market Town Team

Following a meeting organised by the Partnership, inviting local businesses, the Parish Council and interested individuals, a Town Team was formed in 2013 to address the problems of the loss of retail outlets in the centre of the village and the impact this was having on the community. The Team is a sub-committee of the Partnership. This loss included two major units, the Co-operative and Seagers, which continued to remain empty.

The regular monthly market is now well established on the third Wednesday, as well as a mini market on the remaining Wednesdays. Boosting this were a Summer Street and a Christmas Market when local organisations and crafts people joined the regular stall-holders, together with street food offered by local businesses. Profits from the markets allowed the purchase of additional Christmas lights to put in the London Plane trees on the square.



The Town Team sub-groups, formed as a result of the surveys, have continued to work on areas for improvement within the Action Plan.

The Traffic and Parking group successfully implemented a new parking regime in conjunction with Suffolk Coastal District Council, with up to one hour's free parking in the Chapel Lane and Percy Mason car parks, and half an hour on the square. The Village Hall car park has also been integrated into the strategy; this has led to a considerable improvement in parking availability for visitors to the hall. The group continues to monitor the impact of this and other highways and parking issues.

The Communications group has continued to grow the email distribution list for circulating events and items of interest, including using its Facebook page, and has now installed a Map and Information Board in the centre of the village. It has also supported the markets with a range of advertising. The Welcome Pack continued to provide newcomers to the village with information on schools, medical facilities, websites, local services and organisations.



Inspirations opened in May 2016 and quickly became a destination store, not only for residents but also for visitors from neighbouring villages and towns, some from quite far afield. Negotiations with the East of England Co-operative Society by the Shops and Facilities group led to a Community Interest Company being formed to develop the empty store on The Hill into a shared retail space for small entrepreneurs. Inspirations (Wickham Market) CIC presented the project to

the community in February 2016 and received a tremendous response, with 210 shares being taken by local people to finance the set-up costs of the project, together with a number of substantial private donations. The Directors of the CIC, all members of the Partnership or Town Team, continue to manage the company, promoting it with a range of marketing and attracting new retailers.



Unfortunately the only remaining public house, destroyed by fire in 2013, remained in a derelict state, to the frustration of local residents. However, a group of local residents has been working hard on trying to purchase the site and developing a feasibility study to see if a new business would be viable. The results of this are due towards the end of 2017.

Future Plans

The Partnership is a key player in many village developments, with trustees being represented on other major committees. These include the Parish Council, the Neighbourhood Plan (led by the Parish Council); the Village Hall refurbishment committee; the redevelopment of Lehmann House (now open and owned and managed by De Vere Care) and the future of the George Public House. Trustees are also involved in the newly formed Arts Project group.

It is encouraging to note that new volunteers are also coming forward to offer their help and expertise with these projects, and demonstrates the community values that Wickham Market is becoming recognised for. The marketing of Wickham Market as an attractive place to live and visit remains a key priority, with a new visitor website being progressed during 2017 with the support of grants from the Local Strategic Partnership and Suffolk Coastal District Council.