

Wickham Market Partnership

ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS

Year ended 5th April 2020

Charity Registration No. 1096332
Company Registration No. 4555122

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 5th April 2020

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 2020. 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
Mr G Hering
Ms J Hopps (appointed June 2019)
Mr R Jenkinson
Mr R Lewis (appointed February 2020)
Mr C Owens
Ms P Scanlan (retired October 2019)

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.

Ms Amy Drayson is the charity's part-time Administrative Assistant. The charity has no relationships with either related parties or any other charities or organisations.

This year saw the retirement of Ms Paula Scanlan and the appointment of Ms Josie Hopps and Mr Ray Lewis, maintaining our Trustee number at six.

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 Community Rooms are 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 managed 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 with Suffolk Libraries IPS managing the building on their behalf. A joint Management Committee deals with issues of maintenance and statutory obligations.

The Treatment Room and an associated office continue to be hired by 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, a craft group, a counsellor and a range of therapists 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 uses the interview room for work, offering an opportunity for residents to drop in. Other village groups hire the meeting room as required.

In January the Partnership arranged and paid for the upgrade of the kitchen area, which has been well received by all users. It is now a much more functional and pleasant place to prepare tea and coffee for meetings, for library staff and for volunteers. Sadly the volunteer gardening team has been unable to look after the rear garden again this year due to repairs to the Church wall being delayed.

Library

The Partnership is a member of Suffolk's Libraries IPS Ltd, an Industrial Provident Society, providing library services for Suffolk County Council. The Library Management Committee is a sub-committee of the Partnership and the Partnership is represented on the Management Committee. The library is an excellent example of how a community-led effort, using dedicated volunteers, can support and develop local services under potential threat. The Library Management Committee, now in its ninth year, has formed the Friends of Wickham Market Library and manages its own finances.



The library has succeeded in increasing the number of visitors as a result of the extension of the original opening hours, made possible by additional sessions contributed by volunteers. The library now attracts some 12,000 library users each year and regular events include a sociable afternoon for a knitting and stitching group and a 'chill and chat' group. IT help sessions with advice from skilled volunteers for laptops, tablets and mobile phones are available on Friday mornings and have proved very popular. Recent

developments have included help with family history searches and there are a number of new ideas to provide activities for children. The library also offers the only printing and copying service available in the village.

The library has provided a welcoming space for private study and its free Wi-Fi is much appreciated by Library users. The library has benefitted in recent years from funds sourced from planning permissions for new housing and this has enhanced its already attractive appearance.

The end of the reporting period saw the introduction of national lockdown as a response to the Covid-19 crisis. This meant that Wickham Market library was closed and all local library services were suspended. It is hoped that some library provision will be available later in 2020.

Website

The Partnership launched a more interactive visitor website for Wickham Market, www.visitwickhammarket.co.uk, which now provides access to extended information on local businesses and organisations. This was funded with grants from East Suffolk District Council and the East Suffolk Partnership, as well as Wickham Market Parish Council, with the Partnership matching this from its own resources. Attracting new membership is a key priority for the future to enable the hosting and management of the website to be self-funding using the services of Attain Solutions Ltd. The website provides an important advertising tool for local businesses, organisations and events. Events are advertised in chronological order to improve the visitor experience to Wickham Market.



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.

Community Grants Scheme

This was launched three years ago, offering financial support for small local projects that might otherwise not attract funding from bigger providers; the maximum grant was £1,000. Providing this first grant can encourage others to 'match fund' a project; a requirement of this funding.

This year a grant was awarded to the Wickham Market Care Project to purchase additional programmes for their interactive Tova Tafel table; this grant was returned later in the year due to closure of the project when Lehmann House was once more closed. A further grant of £1k was awarded to All Saints Parochial Church Council to assist the repair of the east wall of the church, and another of £1k was awarded to the Avocet Academy Trust to enable the purchase of a new roof to their outdoor learning area. The Community Grants Scheme has now closed.

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, instigated after the formation of the Town Team, continued through to November 2018, after which the Parish Council offered to take on responsibility to ensure its viability after volunteer organisers were not forthcoming. The Summer and Christmas markets continue to be successful community events.

Such has been the success of the Town Team its work has been wound down, with the initial working groups moving on to the Parish Council where appropriate, as well as the markets. The management of the email distribution list, the *Wickham 'Round Robin'*, is now undertaken by our Administrative Assistant, Amy Drayson, as part of her weekly duties. Following the new guidelines on General Data Protection Regulations, 'Mailchimp' has been adopted as the appropriate platform to meet these. Messages are circulated on a weekly basis from the Partnership office and efficiently advertise local events and information.

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. In 2019 the shop front was again dressed to support the Poppy Appeal and a number of fashion shows were held locally, bringing funds to local charities and organisations. With the advent of Covid-19 in March 2020 the shop was closed for three months, re-opening with reduced hours in late June.



The George. Following the incorporation of The George (Wickham Market) Ltd as a Society for Community Benefit the organisation sold shares to 321 people, which funded the purchase of The George with the vision of rebuilding and restoring it as a Community Pub. An application for a grant of £1m from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) was made in May 2018 but initially this was unsuccessful. However a re-submission made in May 2019 was later accepted.

Following Permission to Start granted by the NLHF the first step was to appoint the Professional Team. The Project Manager has been appointed and is in place. Selection and appointment is in hand for the Cost manager, the Design team lead and the Heritage Interpretation Planning, Activities Consultant.

October 2019 saw the third Big Draw event hosted by **Wickham Market Arts**, which included an exhibition of local art, the production of a community greetings card and art activities for a whole day in the Village Hall and on The Hill. It was very successful and was to be repeated in 2020, though sadly Covid 19 curtailed these plans. However, local artists now display their work for sale on a dedicated art wall in Inspirations, which brings commission to the shop and to the project.



The **Wickham Market Shed** project held its introductory meeting in January, at which 16 attended to listen to a presentation from an ambassador from the UK Mens Shed Association. Following this, fortnightly meetings ensued where options for the siting of a Shed were explored, other Shed projects were visited and ideas for the type of Shed shared. Sadly Covid 19 curtailed these meetings but Trustees continued to explore the options put forward and kept in touch with those interested in being part of this exciting venture.

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 Arts Project group (including our Administrative Assistant, Amy Drayson); Inspirations (Wickham Market) CIC and the George Public House.

The Partnership has pledged £5,000 to both The George project and the Village Hall Rebuild Fund; important for matched funding applications.

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 regularly recognised for.