

Poole Community Exchange CIO



Parkstone United Reformed Church
Commercial Road
POOLE
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Charity No 1178207

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Annual Report and Financial Statements From 6th April 2023 to 5th April 2024

Charity No: 1178207

POOLE COMMUNITY EXCHANGE CIO

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POOLE COMMUNITY EXCHANGE CIO

Trustees' Report

The Trustees are pleased to present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the period from 6th April 2023 to 5th April 2024.

VISION AND SUMMARY OF PURPOSES IN GOVERNING DOCUMENT

Poole Community Exchange (PCE) provides a safe welcoming place for people of all faiths and none; where they can come together to relax and have fun and give (time, skills, knowledge, friendship, prayer) and receive (support, advice, learning, food, friendship, prayer....).

We promote social inclusion, helping anyone without distinction. Our community supports people who are currently socially isolated and excluded for whatever reason to build relationships, grow in confidence and integrate with the wider community.

We believe that everyone has something to offer and everyone has something they need. We know people are transformed by the experience of giving and taking. Our unique exchange model encouraging people to 'take what you need and give what you can' is an essential part of our community. We encourage and support everyone in our community to volunteer, blurring the lines between volunteers and beneficiaries. This also removes any stigma in accepting charity as people can give time, as well as donating what they can afford, and know that they are contributing to the community.

We provide:

- a wide range of support, services, facilities and opportunities, which relate to physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs, in their widest meaning;
- a space where anyone can drop-in for advice or a chat, or to engage with any of the social and leisure opportunities we offer;
- Information on help and support available from other organisations, upcoming events and the wide-range of activities and opportunities across Poole.

We work in partnership and liaise with other organisations to add value, increase efficiency, and not duplicate efforts.

We want everyone in our community to thrive, not just survive.

See page 14 for our legal objects.

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ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Food

We continued to provide food and other necessities to people in need.

The bulk of our food comes from Fareshare and local supermarkets, saving approximately 18.5 thousand kg from landfill this year. However we have seen a marked decrease in our supply from supermarkets and also in the variety available from Fareshare, especially fresh fruit and vegetables and we have had to supplement this by buying some food to support people in living a healthy lifestyle.

During the year covered by this report we estimate we fed about 12,000 people.

Where we have a glut, most often with bread, we donate food to local hostels, helping an estimated 2500 people over the year.

Any food we cannot use is donated to a local animal charity or goes to generating energy from bio waste.

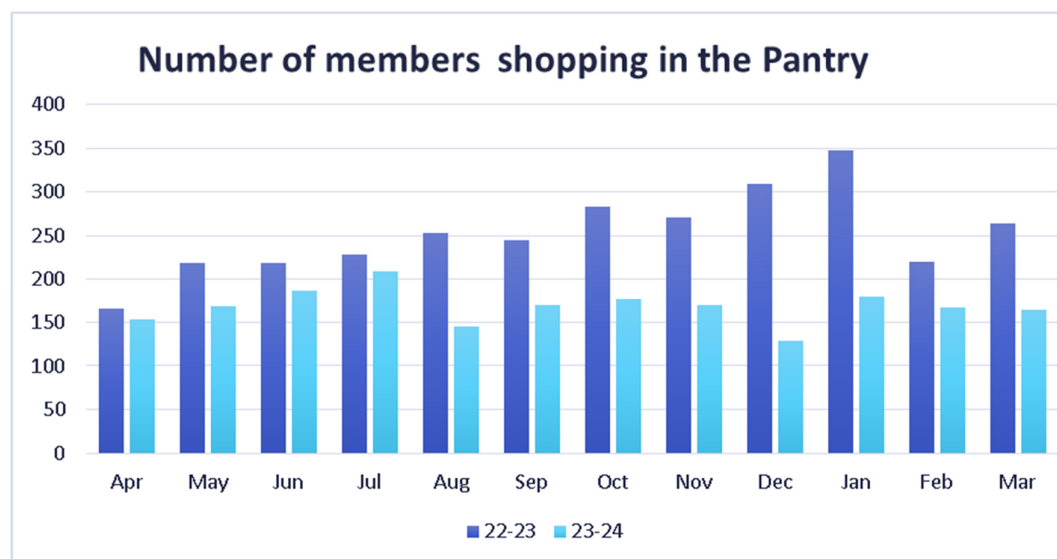
Poole Pantry and Community Fridge

Poole Pantry is membership based, for people who are struggling to feed themselves and their families. We are open 3 days a week. We do not ask for proof of low-income. People can be referred or can self-certify.

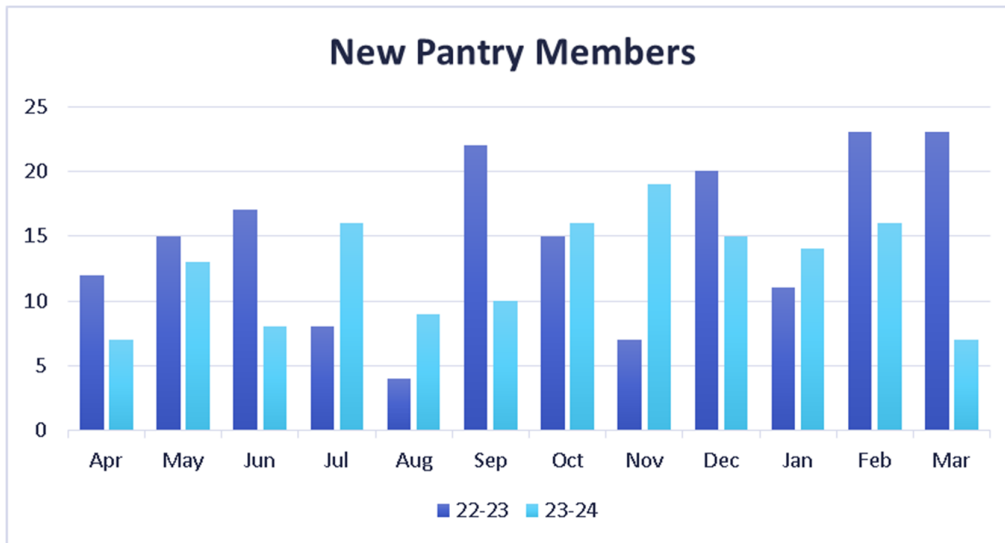
Pantry members can choose up to £20 of fresh, frozen and ambient food in their weekly shop. This year our members shopped over 3,000 times. We ask for a suggested donation of £5 to help cover our costs and members are asked to volunteer for one session a month if they are able to do so.

We have noticed a decrease in the number of times members shop each month (approximately a thousand less over the year) and a slight drop in the number of new members – down to 150 from 177 last year.

This may be because of a slight ease in the cost of living crisis but we think is mainly due to supply issues.



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Within the Pantry we also operate a Community Fridge food available to anyone free of charge to help prevent wastage, this usually includes frozen food as well as vegetables, bakery and even fresh flowers.

Comments from our community include:

- *The pantry enables to accept charity handouts but to maintain their self-esteem and dignity*
- *Weekly shops at the Pantry are a lifeline*
- *the pantry and community fridge are an essential and important lifeline; they provide access to surplus food which would otherwise end up in landfill*
- *products from Pantry allow me and my daughter just TO SURVIVE*

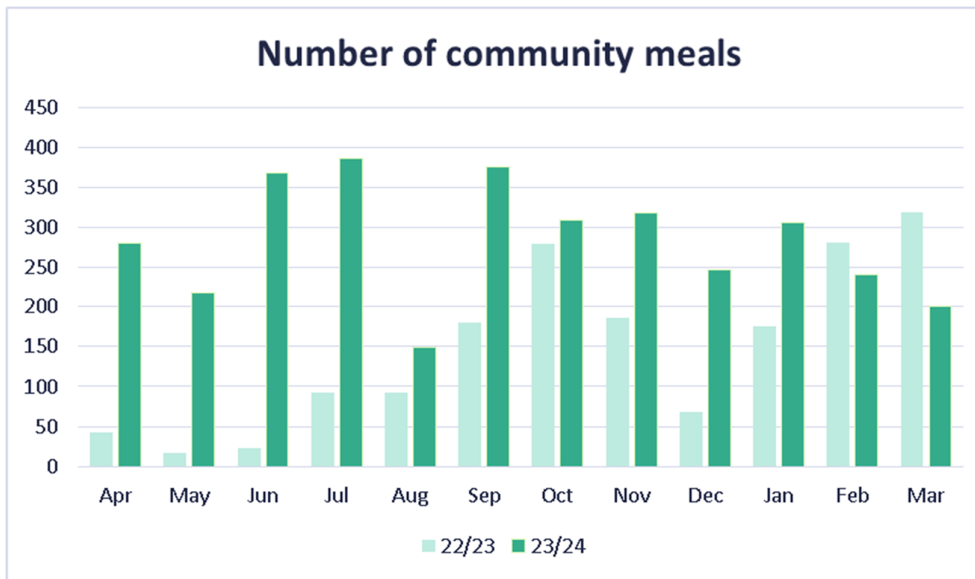
Community meals

We provide a 2 course home cooked community lunch 3 days a week. Numbers have continued to increase to approximately 70 a week.

These meals are available to anyone, and a key part of building our community. There is something special about joining together to eat. It breaks down barriers, reducing loneliness and isolation and increasing people's feeling of belonging and sense of community.

We ask for a suggested donation of £5 (half price for pantry members).

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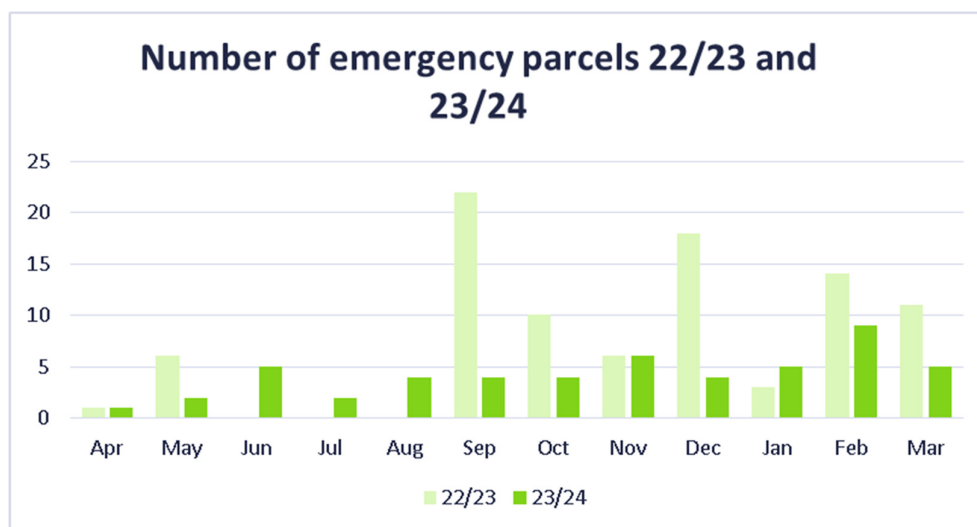
Comments from our community include:

- *The community meals have truly become a hub for the local area where a well cooked and tasty meal can be eaten. But probably even more important is the shared sense of community, activity, warmth and fun. I know that it really helped me to regain a sense of worth and purpose.*
- *It's nice to have something that someone else has cooked that isn't too pricey, like restaurant. I really like getting the community food, it helps me pay for all food during each week.*
- *The meal is lovely, so tasty; the food you can buy is very helpful. Also amazing, friendly staff*
- *The community meals are great, we come as a family and meet some lovely people. We try new things as a fussy eater+ toddler.*

Food Bank and Emergency parcels

We are a satellite for Poole Food Bank and also provide emergency food parcels on behalf of BCP council, and to people who approach us directly.

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Cookery club and lessons

One of our volunteers who is a qualified catering instructor also runs a cookery school / club for people who lack skills or confidence. It focuses on simple healthy home-cooked food on a budget.

Working with other organisations

We provided nearly 2700kg of food to Poole Communities Trust who run Moor Communities Food as they have limited storage.

We have been a member of the BCP Access to Food partnership since the start.

In partnership with Tricuro Coast and Parkstone Connect we provide volunteering opportunities for adults with learning disabilities. Tricuro Coast and Parkstone Connect bring their clients (about 17 a week) who are accompanied by a member of their staff. They help in the kitchen, including having their own dedicated cooking and baking session. They also help set up and lay tables for the lunches, carry trays, clear tables, wash up and load and empty the dishwasher. With support, some have gained enough confidence and experience to become independent PCE volunteers.

Community Living Room

We have always welcomed people who need somewhere to just be. Like last year, we were a registered Warm Space during the winter. Our Community Living Room is open between 10am and 2.30pm 3 days a week, with hot drinks, cakes and biscuits, fruit, free WiFi and recharging, and more. This year we also added a breakfast club with toast and various spreads. We recorded over 3500 visits last year.

As well as a space to chat, we offer a wide range of activities. Games, puzzles and colouring are available every day. We have a regular knit and crochet group, art and craft groups twice a week, opportunities to garden and Tai Chi once a fortnight. We started a Creative Writing for Wellbeing group in September. We time our activities to finish just before or start just after lunch so people can also eat together.

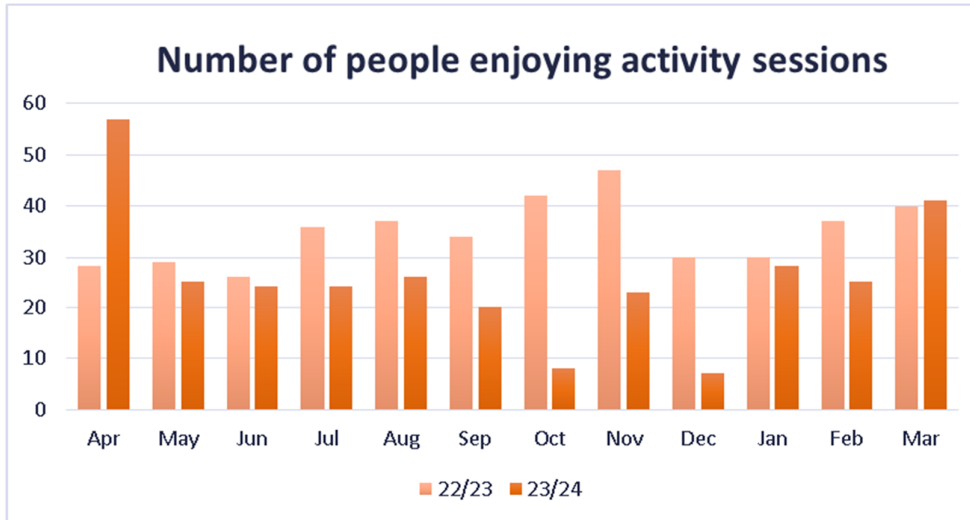
We have a small range of clothing and also have books, CDs and DVDs for exchange or for a donation.

This year we were also able to offer TEFL courses to displaced people from Ukraine as one of our volunteers is a qualified TEFL teacher.

One of our volunteers who is a trained counsellor also offered a Bereavement Group, but this was discontinued as take-up was low. Instead she will offer low rate individual counselling sessions.

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As a result of Parkstone URC's commitment to inclusion members of our community can also access other activities in the building for a reduced cost. These include Karate and Chair Yoga



Personal story

“Joy” is a very charming lady.

She came to join one of our art groups, having been quite isolated at home during and since COVID, she was looking for an art group where she could come to make friends and share her artistic skills.

She had tried other groups but was deterred by the high cost of joining and materials.

Joy is very quiet and takes a while to engage with others.

The art group that we run is very informal, everyone chats away about a variety of subjects and if anyone in the group feels anxious or worried everyone joins together in supporting them. We drink lots of tea and coffee and there are always delicious sweet treats to indulge in!

Joy often brings her own art supplies, but for those people who do not, or cannot afford to bring their own we can always supply them ourselves.

Recently we have been doing collages and mandala dotty art. Some people just like to sit and use our beautiful colouring books with soft pencil crayons. There is never any criticism of any individuals work, everyone encourages everyone else and there is often a sharing of ideas and techniques.

Joy has some anxieties and has shared some of those concerns with the group. She recently shared a wonderful poem that she had written herself which beautifully described her worries.

We also run a creative writing group on a Friday afternoon, Joy was concerned that the poem she had written was not “good enough”

I was able to assure her that her poem was much more than good enough and that she would be welcomed with open arms at the writing group. Whilst she has not joined so far I am sure that over time and with her growing confidence she will be joining in the future.

Joy is now visibly more relaxed in the art group and joins in with all the conversations and is confident enough to be able to express her own thoughts and opinions.

Recently she has said that she will hopefully be able to come to both the Monday and the Friday group.

These groups are really important to the people who come and offer much more than just an art venue.

We are providing a safe warm harbour where folk feel that they can come together make friends and be a part of a community.

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We also run one off events and advice sessions:

- The new inclusive discos “Rave in the Nave”, and Tea Dances have proved very popular (180 people);
- The Police ran a Community Contact Point where people can pop-in and discuss issues and also get crime prevention advice (25 people). They also ran a special safety talk for members of our community who are more vulnerable because of mental disability (40 people);
- Ridgewater Energy provided another talk for our community on energy efficiency (20 people);
- A cream tea celebration for the Coronation of King Charles III attended by about 80 people.

Help and advice is also available twice a week from Citizens Advice who helped 229 people deal with 354 issues. They also provide us with an expert energy advisor once a week.

In partnership with Parkstone URC and The Borough of Poole Chaplaincy Services we also support spiritual wellbeing with prayer, contemplation and discussion. We offered an 8 week course exploring holistic wellness: body mind and spirit

There are also regular trips to Hillfield Friary’s retreat days.

Comments from our community include:

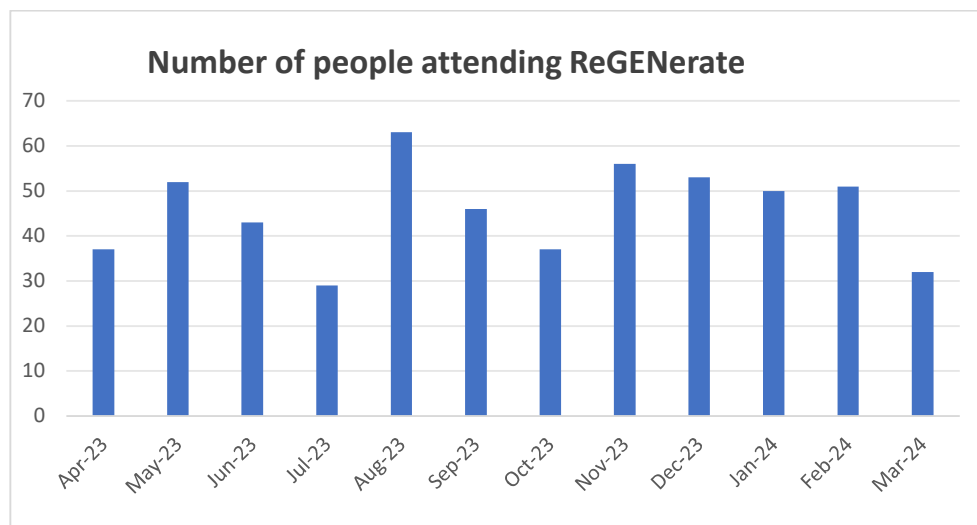
- *It's nice to come here. Everyone is very welcoming. It's good to have a chat, make friends, and keep warm in cold weather. I live alone; it's so good to be involved in a community*
- *I was introduced to the Monday group by the CMHT (...) I feel more confident around unfamiliar people now and have a reason to get up in the morning and to leave the flat. There are different types of art on every session or I am able to do my own thing*
- *I enjoy working and doing the art group. It makes me feel valuable and I enjoy working with people and helping them. I have felt a little lonely and sad and it helps. I would like to do more activities and try new ones myself too.*
- *Coming down helps me feel part of the community.*
- *I feel more happy.it helped my mental health as it helps me have routine. Met new friends. Therapeutic to be part of gardening group. Enjoyed planted seeds and watching them grow. I like seeing the wildlife.*
- *I come to socialise with other people. I really like the atmosphere here, everyone is friendly. Its good that everyone comes here and supports the community. My mood gets lifted.*
- *It's lovely to be part of something in my local community*

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Regenerate

We partner with Faithworks SMILE and the church in the Regenerate project. This runs twice a month after school for single parents and their children, providing a hot 2 course meal. There is a quiet space with WiFi for homework, a children's play area for younger children and craft activities. There is a trained children's worker so parents can take time to socialise and access support.

60% of the children who attend have special education needs and disabilities.



Our volunteers

We could not do what we do without our volunteers.

During the year about 90 people volunteered for us giving thousands of hours.

Many of our volunteers started off as socially excluded beneficiaries but with support have become regular volunteers.

All our volunteers have attended a safeguarding course or demonstrated that they have the required knowledge from other roles, e.g. health care or teaching.

Several of our volunteers had expressed an interest in First Aid training. With financial support from URC Wessex Synod we were able to fund a course on First Aid Awareness for 10 of them. We are also exploring the options for providing training on Mental Health Awareness and Working Alongside People with Learning Difficulties

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Personal stories

'Kim'

Like a lot of people the Covid 19 pandemic was hard for me and my family.

My Mum who had dementia was in a local care home and all visiting ceased. She was absolutely terrified she had no idea what was happening and it was very difficult to explain to her or reassure her. Until her death from Covid in February 2021 I visited her daily and sat outside on the window sill where we could wave to each other. It was from here that I watched her decline and eventually pass away after catching the virus.

The funeral was postponed for months and eventually was held outside in the churchyard with just a few close family.

It was very traumatic I could feel myself becoming increasingly sad and depressed.

My job which I really enjoyed also came to a close as a direct result of Covid and I was feeling socially isolated.

The summer of 2022 my husband and I met an old friend who was a volunteer at PCE. We chatted and I was really interested to learn about everything that was happening there.

The following day I went down and filled in an application form.

The first day I met a man called Ben who asked me if I could cook! My reply was yes I enjoyed cooking but was not a chef and had never been trained. Don't worry about that said Ben I can teach you!

Then within just a few weeks I was working in the kitchen three days per week with Ben and Debbie and serving the meals and clearing up afterwards. Suddenly my life was filling with this busy and interesting schedule, there was no longer time for sadness. It really helped me to regain a sense of worth and purpose.

Partners

One of our key values is to work in partnership with other organisations. We can do more together than we could individually.

During this year our partners included

- Parkstone URC, who have provided us with space at a low costs ever since we started, and are now actively partnering with us in the Community Living Room and providing opportunities for people to explore faith and spirituality,
- Hillfield Friary, we offer members of our community the opportunity to attend their retreat days,
- Citizen's Advice, who are on site twice a week,
- Faithworks Food Bank in central Poole,
- Tricuro who provide volunteers from their COAST project and also run the local day centre,
- Parkstone Connect who also provide volunteers
- The Borough of Poole Chaplaincy Service which provides our in-house advisory and pastoral care work.

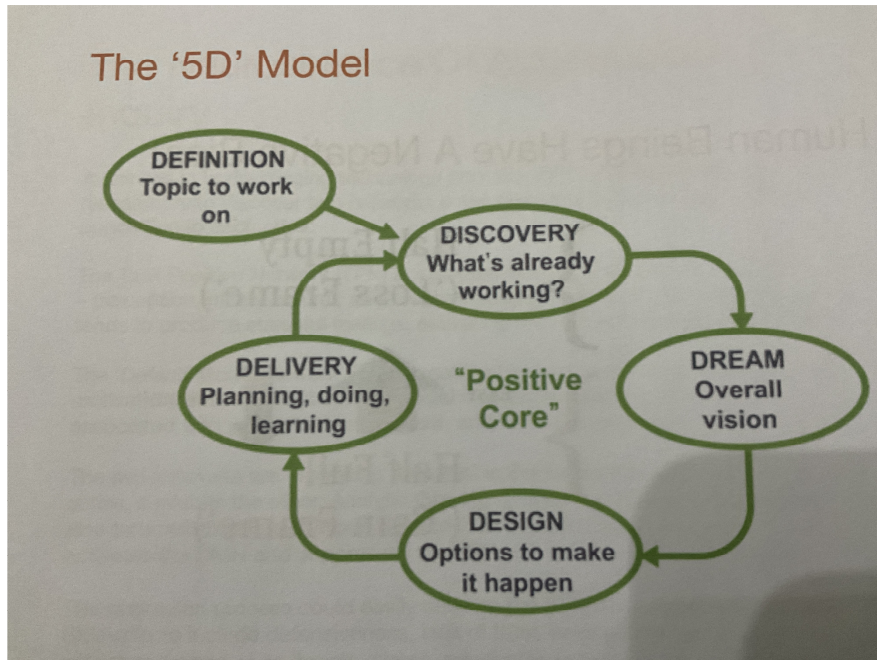
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Other

One of our volunteers ran an Appreciative Inquiry Project for us.

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a method of facilitating organisation development. It focuses on an organisations strengths and successes to come up with a vision for the future. The process is collaborative and involves people from right across the organisation. New ideas are generated which may be used to fix existing problems or to create new areas and/or procedures.

It has 5 stages as shown below.



Our topic was: "How do we, Poole Community Exchange, survive and thrive in the future?"

We ended up with about 50 suggested actions around equipment, people, processes, marketing, the building and some miscellaneous.

After prioritising them we have been gradually working our way through and are making progress, though not as quickly as we would like due to capacity issues with skilled and experienced trustees and other volunteers.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

When planning these activities, the trustees have taken into account the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and consider that all of these activities provide a public benefit and made a difference to our beneficiaries by:

- providing food and support to vulnerable people in need;
- redistributing good quality surplus food and reducing food waste;
- encouraging healthy eating;
- encouraging self-confidence and a sense of self-worth by volunteering rather than passively receiving;
- supporting people to increase their interpersonal (social, communication and relationship) skills
- fostering a sense of community by meeting for a morning tea/coffee break and/or round the lunch table and sharing food and conversation, giving people the sense that they belong;
- reducing loneliness and isolation by providing an inclusive space where everyone is welcome
- encouraging creativity and experimentation, providing a safe place to fail;

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- increasing wellbeing through creativity
- encouraging self-confidence and a sense of self-worth by using existing skills and learning new ones;
- giving people with mental health issues a safe and welcoming place;
- improving physical health by offering Tai Chi for health classes;
- working in partnership with Ridgewater Energy to provide advice on reducing energy bills
- providing a space where people can get help and advice on a wide range of issues through Citizen's Advice Bureau.

The ability to access food is one of the most basic human needs. By providing food from the Pantry, as well as cookery lessons and hot lunches, our project is meeting people's need for good, healthy food, on which all other aspects of life depend. This supports not only their physical but their mental health too, as it helps reduce anxiety about when and how they might eat, and there is scientific evidence that a healthy and varied diet improves mood and wellbeing. As well as helping to provide people's physical needs for food and warmth we also meet their need for love and belonging. Everyone is welcome and accepted in our community whoever they are and whatever their needs. For those struggling with feelings of loneliness and isolation this is a vital lifeline. For people struggling with addiction meaningful activity helps.

When people have the knowledge, skills and, ingredients to cook meals from scratch they can make healthier food choices, improving their physical and mental wellbeing. It also boosts self-confidence and self-esteem, and makes budgets go further.

THE FUTURE

During 2024-25 we will continue to fight food poverty, and help people with basic needs.

We intend to continue our original vision of a safe, welcoming space for people to chat, play, be creative, learn, connect with one another, and get any help and advice they might need. To continue to create a true community exchange where people bring their gifts, skills, knowledge etc to share with others. We are always open to exploring new ideas and encouraging people to share their passions.

As part of our vision to help people thrive not just survive, we will also focus on extending our range of social and leisure activities. Current plans include a pottery as we have 2 volunteers who are experienced ceramicists and have been donated a kiln.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

No fund is materially in deficit.

No funds are held as a custodian trustee.

Reserve Policy

Our 2023/2024 accounts show £26,497 unrestricted funds brought forward into this year.

However some of these funds are directly related to donations given from either the Pantry or the Community Lunches. Although these donations have not been given specifically for that purpose and are therefore not restricted to that purpose, the trustees feel that it is only right for that money to be reinvested in the costs for those projects.

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£3,218 is held from the Community Lunches and £14,128 from the Pantry. So out of the £26,497, £17,346 is Designated, leaving £9,151 free for any purpose.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Name	Poole Community Exchange CIO
Registered Number	1178207
Principal Office	Parkstone United Reformed Church (PURC) Commercial Road Parkstone Poole BH15 0JW

Trustees who managed the charity during the period of the report

Name	Office	Dates acted where not for whole of the period
Mark Phillips	Chair	
Sarah Percy	Secretary and Treasurer	
Joan Percy		6/4/23 to 3/7/23
Michael Hancock		
Andrew Williams		6/4/23 to 29/6/23
John Ralph		29/6/23 to 14/3/24
Karen Ralph		29/6/23 to 14/3/24
Jennifer Carlton		From 27/7/23
Meg Beardsley		From 23/11/23

There are no corporate trustees or trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity.

Trustees who managed the charity at the time the report was signed

There has been no change in trustees since 5/4/24.

Independent Examiner

Bicknell Business Advisers Ltd
40 Broadway Lane
Bournemouth
BH8 0AA

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Poole Community Exchange (PCE) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation governed by its constitution. It was incorporated and registered on 2nd May 2018.

No person or body is entitled to appoint any trustees.

Trustees are recruited by word of mouth and advertising on sites such as Reach. Potential trustees complete a volunteer form, submitting two references and explaining why they want to be involved, and what skills and knowledge they can offer. References are taken up and potential trustees then meet with existing trustees. Trustees are appointed at trustee meetings by the existing trustees. They are appointed initially for

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three years. They may be re-appointed when their term ends. Trustees may serve a maximum of three terms. They must then take a one-year break before they are eligible for reappointment.

LEGAL OBJECTS

The legal objects in the constitution of Poole Community Exchange (PCE) are:

“For the benefit of the residents of and visitors to, in particular but not exclusively, the town of Poole:

- (1) to promote social inclusion by preventing people from becoming socially excluded and, by relieving the needs of those people who are socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society;
- (2) to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare, for recreation and leisure time occupation, with the objective of improving conditions of life; without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious, or other opinions by associating together residents, visitors and the local authorities, voluntary and other organisations;
- (3) to promote physical, mental and spiritual well-being mainly, but not exclusively, by the provision of chaplaincy services to offer advice and support.

‘Socially excluded’ means being excluded from society, or parts of society as a result of one or more of the following factors:

- unemployment;
- financial hardship;
- youth or old age;
- ill health (physical or mental);
- substance abuse or dependency including drugs and alcohol;
- discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, belief, creed, sexual orientation or gender reassignment;
- poor educational or skills attainment;
- relationship and family breakdown;
- homelessness or poor housing (that is housing that does not meet basic habitable standards);
- crime (either as a victim of crime or as an offender rehabilitating into society).”

APPROVAL

Approved by the Trustees of the charity on 16 January 2025 and electronically signed on their behalf by:

Mark Phillips
Chairman of Trustees

Sarah Percy
Secretary, Treasurer and Trustee

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Financial Statements for the Year Ended 5 April 2024

Poole Community Exchange CIO						
Financial Statements for the Year Ended 23-24						
Receipts and Payments						
	Unrestricted Funds (£)		Restricted Funds (£)		Total Funds (£)	
Receipts	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23
Grants	0	5,000	26,227	13,700	26,227	18,700
Donations	31,079	23,545	2,859	1,105	33,938	24,650
Trading Income		440				440
Interest	475	183			475	183
Reimbursement	3,181				3,181	
Fees for Charitable Services	3,796	2,656			3,796	2,656
Direct Fundraising	503		220		723	
Other						
TOTAL RECEIPTS	39,034	31,824	29,306	14,805	68,340	46,629
	Unrestricted Funds (£)		Restricted Funds (£)		Total Funds (£)	
Payments	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23
Core Costs	5,300	3,099	6,257	4,308	11,557	7,407
Direct Project and Activity Costs	35,046	5,106	7,875	33,347	42,921	38,453
Trading Costs		413			0	413
Other Expenses	378	274			378	274
Disbursements	1,671	1,651			1,671	1,651
PURC Grant Disbursements			3,000	3,100	3,000	3,100
Neo-Monastics					0	0
Sub-total Payments	42,395	10,543	17,132	40,755	59,527	51,298
	Unrestricted Funds (£)		Restricted Funds (£)		Total Funds (£)	
Asset Purchased for own use	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23
Office Equipment			2,417		2,417	0
Kitchen / Catering Equipment		280		1,546	0	1,826
Pantry Equipment	217			5,325	217	5,325
IT Equipment			561	592	561	592
Other Equipment			144		144	0
Sub-total Assets for own use	217	280	3,122	7,463	3,339	7,743
TOTAL PAYMENTS	42,612	10,823	20,254	48,218	62,866	59,041

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	Unrestricted Funds (£)		Restricted Funds (£)		Total Funds (£)	
	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23
NET RECEIPTS	(3,578)	21,001	9,052	(33,413)	5,474	(12,412)
Transfers between Funds						
Cash funds last year end	30,075	9,073	4,827	38,241	34,902	47,314
Cash Funds this year end	26,497	30,075	13,879	4,827	40,376	34,902
Statement of Assets and Liabilities						
	Unrestricted Funds (£)		Restricted Funds (£)		Total Funds (£)	
Cash Funds	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23
Petty Cash	116	19		0	116	19
Other Cash	50	43		0	50	43
TSB Current Account	1,874	8,070		(1,090)	1,874	6,980
TSB Savings Account	24,457	21,943	13,879	5,917	38,336	27,860
TOTAL	26,497	30,075	13,879	4,827	40,376	34,902
Assets retained for our own use at cost		Unrestricted Funds (£)		Restricted Funds (£)		Total Funds (£)
Current Year		217		3,122		3,339
Previous Years		280		15,148		15,428
Total		497		18,270		18,767