

Trustees' Annual Report

From 1st August 2020

To 31st December 2022

Charity name: Mid Cheshire Community Shed CIO

Charity registration number: 11991054

Objectives and Activities

To promote social inclusion for the public benefit by preventing people, particularly but not exclusively men aged 18 or over within Cheshire and its surrounding areas, from becoming socially excluded, relieving the needs of those people who are socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society.

For the public benefit to promote learning for pleasure by people no longer in full time employment through the continued development of their individual capabilities, competencies, skills and understanding in subjects of educational value. Activities mainly involving the woodwork, metal work and art.

In order to pursue the above objectives, the Trustees have followed the guidelines as set out by the Charities Commission

Contribution made by volunteers

A number of our volunteers have worked at home to produce items that can be sold at craft fairs to help with finances. Others have assisted in general work to the benefit of the CIO. This has been especially valuable in the search for suitable workshop premises. In addition, the volunteers have been very productive in carrying out projects for others for example the building of a new Father Christmas Sled for the Northwich Round Table

Summary of main achievements

Due to the pandemic, there has been very little ability to achieve the main objectives of the CIO. This is because they mainly consist of interpersonal interactions between individuals and groups. In addition, the CIO has spent most of the time since inception attempting to secure premises as a future home for the members to meet, work and interact. The CIO was successful in obtaining temporary accommodation that allowed small groups to meet socially when Government restrictions allowed.

Fund raising activities performance

Fundraising has been minimal as to secure high levels of funding we need an address that can be seen as the “workshop”. In addition, the monthly donation by the participants had to be suspended until there are suitable premises. Once these have been agreed the initial income will be in the order of £10000 per annum from the participants.

There has been some small scale fundraising by sales of items made by members at local craft fairs. Some local business have included the CIO in small fund raising schemes. These include ASDA, CO-OP, Northwich Round Table, Lostok Parish Council and Hartford Parish Council.

(See table 1 for financial information)

Further information

Investment performance against objectives

The CIO has been unable to take part in any investment to date. However, our initial investment for 2022 will be to establish a permanent workshop facility.

General information

From being told by Age UK Cheshire (AUKC) in March 2020 that funding would cease from 31/08/2021.

There were assurances given that there would be funding until the end of August 2021 provided by Japanese Tobacco Industries (JTI) of Crewe, and there would also be £30,000 of funding to be shared by all the Cheshire Sheds to transit to independence. Within a few days of this announcement, all sheds were closed due to the Covid Pandemic Age UK Cheshire made the decision to permanently close the Hartford shed. Essentially the funding ceased from 23rd March 2020, although some of the transition funding was made available to pay solicitors fees for submitting the application to the Charities Commission.

Five of members of Hartford Shed were elected to investigate the feasibility of a replacement facility. These were, Richard Bates, Malcolm Dunlop, Bob Hayward, Steve Jackson, and Stuart Poucher who became the working party tasked with developing the new independent "Shed". This was initially done via "Zoom" meetings and included the assistance of Paul Gee (former Co-ordinator, Men in Sheds, Hartford) and Christine Mathews-Sheen (Former Senior Co-ordinator, Age UK Cheshire). Very early on it was decided that the original Hartford women's section should be reincorporated back into the new venture, and that a new lower the minimum age of 25 and offer membership to the disabled of the area as well. The

new organisation would be called "The Mid Cheshire Community Shed" to reflect our new status.

Age UK Cheshire had also taken the decision not to continue with the lease on the Hartford premises and this meant that a new venue would be required.

With the assistance of a firm of Solicitors in Liverpool the Mid Cheshire Community Shed gained registration as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in late August 2020. Members of the task group became the Trustees of the CIO and could then set about solving the most important tasks. Firstly, obtaining a bank account, and secondly finding a new workshop. What would appear at first site to be the easier of the tasks, i.e., getting a bank account, proved to be quite protracted. Because of the Covid Pandemic banks were no longer engaged in "in person" new banking so it proved to be difficult to get an account until well after Christmas. This seriously impeded our progress in the finding of new premises.

The Trustees were informed of the first potential premises we in Lostock Gralam, which at that time came to nothing, but led us on to "The Old School" next door. The negotiations with the owner went very well and had the CIO been successful with a bank account by then this may have been successful. However it did lead to an introduction to the Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire David Briggs CVO MBE KStJ. His role apart from organising visits to Cheshire by the Royal Family, is to assist Charities in their endeavors and he has been very helpful over the months.

There then followed a number of weeks looking at premises in the Northwich area, tracking down the owners and finding they were not available, too small or just not suitable. Cheshire West and Chester Councillor Sam Naylor (now Mayor of Northwich) suggested properties to us, one of which namely the old "Greenwood Furniture" shop in Tabley Street in Northwich, seemed to be promising. Negotiations with the Council started just after Christmas 2020, but this proved fruitless

The latest development of up to present day is that we are now waiting to sign the lease agreement and terms of conditions with Cheshire West and Chester Council for what will be the new home and registered address at 314 Chester Road, Hartford, Northwich, Cheshire of the CIO.

The long and sometimes frustrating journey has brought us to achieve the goals we set ourselves for the Mid Cheshire Community Shed. Now we look to the future with increased membership, collaboration with other similar local charities and local businesses and of course a successful funding program. This will put us in a much better position to develop and help more people in Cheshire.

Financial Review

The financial period is only the latter nine months of 2021. The finances of the CIO have improved although by very much less than would normally be expected due to the restriction. The first six months prior to the bank account had a stable sum held as cash. For a more detailed summary see table 1

The Mid Cheshire Community Shed CIO is holding no reserves apart from the sum in the bank account. This is because there are no financial liabilities up to 31st December 2021

Risk for continuation as a going concern

A SWAT analysis carried out in 2021 indicated that the main areas of concern were the need to ensure that suitable premises were achieved. Failure to do so would risk the continuation of the CIO. In addition funding, and membership were all identified as potential areas of concern and these are currently being addressed. Once the CIO has secured a premises a further SWAT analysis will be carried out in order to ensure the previous threats are reduced and suitable action taken

Principal sources of funding

Funding falls into three types:-

- 1) Sales of items made by the members
- 2) Membership monthly payment of at least £10 per month
- 3) Funding by external sponsors
 - a) Small value funders such as supermarkets who have already proved successful
 - b) Large scale sponsors. We have been unable to approach these until we have suitable permanent and registered premises

The first of these is currently at a very low level as such items are having to be made at home. The second is unlikely to have its full effect until premises are secured. There is currently a very small income by a few subscriptions being paid. The latter of the third is currently nil, again due to the lack of a suitable address.

Investment Policy

There has been no investment policy included in the first year of operation. Further work will be undertaken in 2022. The whole raison d'être of the CIO is an investment in social wellbeing

Principal risks

The principal risks largely revolve around the acquisition of suitable workshop facilities. This, however, is likely to be alleviated in early 2022. Any further risks are mainly financial until a sustainable income can be achieved

Structure, Governance and Management

The Mid Cheshire Community Shed is governed by the constitution as approved by the Charities Commission. This is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Trustee selection and approval is at the discretion of the Trustees as laid out in the constitution. This includes a time limit on named trustees. These can be re-appointed once the views of the membership are included in the decision. There is the possibility of increasing the number of Trustees, however, at present it is unlikely that this will be enacted as there is an intention of integrating members as part of working/ management groups.

Induction and training of Trustees

A policy for the induction and training of new/ replacement Trustees is under development. This will follow the guideline as laid out by the Charities Commission

Organisational structure

It is intended that the operational aspects will be undertaken by working groups, each with specialist areas e.g., metal working, wood turning, art. Their responsibility will be the organisation of the day-to-day management of their respective section. Until the CIO has premises such a system has no benefit. Should finances allow it is possible that a manager will be appointed as an employee.

Relationship with similar organisation

The CIO is a member of the national Men's Sheds Association. This body is not a resource centre and plays an advisory role in the operation of similar sheds. It also has agreements with some suppliers for discount for equipment etc.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity name	Mid Cheshire Community Shed CIO
Other name the charity uses	
Registered charity number	11991054
Charity's principal address	7 Wardle Drive Northwich CW9 7LW n.b. change expected in early 2022

Trustees

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
1	Malcolm Stuart Dunlop	Interim Chairman/ Treasurer	Since April 2020
2	Steven Jackson	Secretary	April 2020
3	Stuart Poucher	Chairman (to Dec 2021)	April 2020
4	Robert Hayward	Safety Officer	April 2020
5	Richard Bates	Trustee	April 2020
6	Graham Alcock	Trustee	July 2020
7	Gillian Heddon	Head of Womens' section	January 2021

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	
NONE		

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	No funds held
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	None
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	Not applicable

Table 1 Finances


n.b. Bank account not opened until March 2021 due to pandemic

	01/08/2020 to 31/12/20	01//01/21 to 31/12/21
Membership fees	0	270
Product sales	0	249
Payment to purchase consumables for projects	0	1413
Commission projects	0	540
Events and Activities	0	398
Sales	0	573
Donations	0	900
Gift Aid	0	0
Float	1885	65.61
Starting balance		1885
TOTAL	1885	6293.61
EXPENDITURE		
Rent	0	0
Utilities	0	0
Insurances	0	173.48
Training	0	0
Maintenance	0	0
One off projects expenditure	0	1169
Stationery	0	55.52
Event entry/ rent	0	80
TOTAL		1478
TOTAL INCOME SINCE START (Aug 2020)		6293.61
INCOME LESS EXPENDIITURE		4815.61

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Malcolm Stuart Dunlop	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Treasurer/ interim chairman	
Date	22/01/2022	