

Charity number: 1159775

DONCASTER CONVERSATION CLUB

(A registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

CONTENTS

	Page
Legal and administrative information	2
Report of the trustees	3-9
Statement of financial activities	10-14

DONCASTER CONVERSATION CLUB (A registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation number 1159775)

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Governing Document

Doncaster Conversation Club is a charitable incorporated organisation (“CIO”) registered as a charity on 8 January 2015. The charity was established under a Foundation Model CIO constitution by which it is governed.

Trustees

The trustees of the CIO are its trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the trustees. The trustees serving during the year were as follows:

Chair Alan Robinson

Other trustees Nic Burne
Annette Dews (appointed 23.02.2022)
Jan Foster
Ann Hindley
Akeela Mohammed
Basil Nadeem

Principal Office

Quaker Meeting House
Shotton Walk
Doncaster
South Yorkshire DN1 3RH

Bankers

Co-Operative Bank Limited

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2022

Structure, Governance and Management

The trustees submit their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Trustees

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 2.

Trustees' Induction and Training

Trustees are provided with key documents. The trustees are encouraged to attend and participate in appropriate training activities that will help them in their role.

The Trustees have the constitutional power to appoint new trustees and keep the composition of the Board under review.

Organisation Structure and Decision Making

The trustees manage the charity. The full Board of Trustees meets a minimum of five times a year, including general meetings. The full board is mainly concerned with policy matters and the strategic direction of the organisation while more detailed trustee management issues can be dealt with through sub committees.

It is normally the case that sub committees can have delegated responsibility for matters such as

- Finance, dealing with financial decisions and monitoring of income and expenditure
- HR related matters
- Audit, including local and regional government and external audits;

DONCASTER CONVERSATION CLUB (A registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation number 1159775)

- Governance matters such as the continued relevance of the constitution and of other policy documents.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2022 (continued)

Individual members of the board also have input to the work of the charity by way of their individual skills and knowledge, which frequently leads them to take on projects to improve and extend the work of the charity. If important matters arise in between meetings the Chair and the board members communicate via email and telephone in order to reach a decision.

During the year the day to day management of the charity is in the hands of Nic Burne and Jan Foster.

Related parties

The charity rents the use of premises from the Balby (Doncaster) Local Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) (“the Meeting”). The Meeting forms part of the Sheffield and Balby Area Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (“the Area Meeting”) (Registered Charity number 1134536). The following trustees of Doncaster Conversation Club were also trustees of the Area Meeting:

Nic Burne
Alan Robinson

Neither of the above received any payment for their trusteeship with either charity.

Risk Management

The trustees have examined the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate those risks. Areas reviewed included: governance and management, operational, financial, IT, data protection, environmental and compliance. During the year under review and the subsequent period, the Trustees have carried out a complete revision of the policies of the charity, including risk assessments, and have put in place

DONCASTER CONVERSATION CLUB (A registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation number 1159775)

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2022 (continued)

appropriate risk assessments to deal with COVID-19.

Objectives and Activities

The objects of the charity are a) to advance education and relieve financial hardship amongst those seeking asylum and those granted refugee status, particularly by the provision of advice and information, so as to advance them in life and assist them to adapt within a new community; and (b) to preserve and protect the physical and mental health of those granted refugee status, those seeking asylum and their dependents.

The main task of the Charity is to respond to the needs of asylum seekers within Doncaster, and it is therefore necessary for us to be able to respond to circumstances as they change. That became very apparent during the year, with the onset of COVID-19 forcing us to close our usual Thursday drop-in and to determine new ways of working. The same events have caused the Trustees to meet on numerous occasions (in some instances weekly) to deal with the changing situation. Meanwhile, the town (and now city) of Doncaster continues to be allocated asylum seekers, to whose needs we seek to respond.

Activities

As recorded in last year's report, due to COVID we closed our Thursday afternoon drop-in on 16th March 2020. At that stage we did not envisage that it would be such a long time before we would be able to reopen. We are now operating a session once again on a Thursday, but this is now largely to help with problems rather than as a drop-in. Apart from the problems for us of dealing with an "open door", there are new factors to deal with; firstly the dispersal of asylum seekers across Doncaster, which makes the prospect of a trip into the centre less attractive, both because of the practicalities and because of the cost. The other new factor is the opening of two hotels for asylum seekers within Doncaster; we do not have the resources to deal with the people in the hotels, but try to meet needs as they arise.

The Meeting House was used occasionally to meet with those needing urgent advice /talk remotely with solicitor etc where it was deemed necessary, eventually returning to a new regular drop-in from 1-4pm in February.

ESOL began at the same time on a new day and time, 2-4pm Wednesdays in the Meeting House

DONCASTER CONVERSATION CLUB (A registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation number 1159775)

Prior to this, we had experimented with a drop-in/social at a local Church hall on a Wednesday afternoon. In due course this evolved into the two sessions mentioned above.

Although our weekly drop-in remained closed for much of this period, it was necessary for volunteers to maintain their own knowledge base, and where appropriate and available to attend training and refresher courses. The legislation on asylum is constantly changing, and politicians are liable to make pronouncements on how it should change, all of which must be kept on top of. In March 2021, the government published their New Plan for Immigration, in the form of The Nationality and Borders Bill. It is the view of many organisations concerned with asylum that this Bill is a severely retrograde step, and we considered it incumbent upon us to feed into this debate. The Nationality and Borders Act became law on 29th April 2022, and its implementation is likely to make our continuing task very much harder.

The health of those seeking our services has remained a priority throughout the year, and one of our volunteers has continued to visit all new arrivals to ensure they were receiving all their health entitlements, had the correct documents, and were registered with GPs. This is significantly harder to achieve with ensuring the availability of dental treatment, where appointments are few and far between and for emergencies only. A very few of those coming to us managed to get taken on by a dental practice, but most have had to join a waiting list of up to two years.

As noted above, a Doncaster hotel was secured in August 2021 to house asylum seekers on a temporary basis until Dispersed Accommodation becomes available for them. This Initial Accommodation was booked for a 3 month period. DCC volunteers visited the hotel, which had very limited communal space for collective activities, and due to the ongoing pandemic it was decided that our resources were insufficient to provide any support within the hotel. Our health team however did go in to help with HC2 applications for assistance with health charges, in order that they received an NHS number which is essential for when they move on, and we continue to provide what help we can within our limited resources.

DCC, volunteers, people seeking asylum and refugees have been taking part in a research programme with University College London entitled : [Solidarities: Negotiating migrant deservingness](#). We were approached by Prof Mette Berg and her research assistant Dr Eve Dickson, and were delighted to be involved in this project. Due to the ongoing restrictions, most interviews took place either by zoom or phone, although Prof Berg was able to make several visits to Doncaster once restrictions were eased

We have renewed our OISC registration for the fifth consecutive year

One of the effects of the pandemic was the closure of charity shops. People had more time on their hands, cleared out cupboards, and had nowhere to take their unwanted goods. We had to turn down offers of clothing (mostly unsuitable) as people were just trying to offload to make space in their homes.

DONCASTER CONVERSATION CLUB (A registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation number 1159775)

Numbers of asylum seekers being dispersed to Doncaster have continued to increase. At the end of March 2022 there were 417 supported asylum seekers. The majority of these are living in outlying areas of Doncaster a long way from the town centre, Mosques and halal shops.

DCC are looking at ways of providing a service to all these outlying areas.

By 31.3.22 DCC had resumed a near normal service. It is acknowledged that DCC will never return to the pre pandemic state, mainly due to the logistics of the majority of our client group living too far away from the town centre. To this end we have been engaging in a process of reimagining the organisation, to explore how we should go forward and be sustainable.

Prior to the pandemic, the charity had developed a working relationship with the Welcome Project at the Glenthorne Quaker Centre (Registered Charity no 232575) which enabled us to refer some of our members to the Glenthorne Quaker Centre for a weekend of relaxation in the Lake District. Glenthorne Quaker Centre too closed its doors during lockdown, but is now once more open and accepting guests. We have therefore renewed our contacts with them which (outside the year under report) has enabled one family to have a weekend there.

The charity works closely with the local theatre, and has been involved in the National Theatre's Public Acts production of The Caucasian Chalk Circle. Unfortunately this production had to be put on hold, but remote meetings have continued, and a short film of personal stories has been produced. We continue to work with other organisations. With the help of the Local Authority, we organised 30 food parcels each week from food provided by Fareshare Yorkshire and the Hygiene Bank, to be provided to our members on a rota system.

How our activities deliver public benefit

Our main activities and a description of our client group are both set out within this report. All our charitable activities focus on work with refugees and asylum seekers and are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit.

Contribution of volunteers

The charity is run entirely by volunteers and the report above makes clear our reliance on them. We rely on grants and donations to keep going. We are extremely grateful to Doncaster Quakers for their continued support and for the use of their Meeting House for our Thursday drop-in, and for occasional use during the pandemic.

DONCASTER CONVERSATION CLUB (A registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation number 1159775)

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2022 (continued)

Achievements & Performance

The charity continues to work for the benefit of refugees and asylum seekers in the area. Large numbers of individuals and families have been helped by our activities. It is very satisfying to see an asylum seeker being granted the right to remain, and to begin to develop a new life in the UK. As a side effect, many volunteers have acquired skills which they are able to use for the benefit of the community in all kinds of activities.

Funding

The charity continues to rely on grants and donations, and is grateful to those who have contributed.

Public Benefit Statement

Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives, and in planning its future activities, which is an annual process. Many examples of such public benefit have been described earlier in this report.

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

Charity law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the group for the year. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make sound 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; and

DONCASTER CONVERSATION CLUB (A registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation number 1159775)

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has appropriate systems of control, financial and otherwise. They are also responsible for maintaining proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the group and charity, and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 and the Charities SORP where applicable. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. We have taken all reasonable steps to ensure that there have been no financial irregularities during the year which would adversely affect the maintenance of our responsibilities.

Approved by the board on 30th September 2022 and signed on its behalf by

Alan Robinson

Alan Robinson (Chair)

Receipts and Payments Accounts

For the period from

01/04/2021

to 31/03/2022

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
DCC	3,637	-	-	3,637	491
Gainsborough	-	-	-	-	200
SYHA	-	-	-	-	500
Yvonne and S Hedley	-	-	-	-	100
AFCL	-	1,474	-	1,474	
Brelms Trust	-	-	-	-	4,620
Laptop Fund	-	-	-	-	4,440
RAS Fund B Gillhan	-	-	-	-	500
SYCF Covid 19	-	44	-	44	5,000
Lottery Fund	-	9,246	-	9,246	-
XP School Bikes	-	450	-	450	776
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	3,637	11,214	-	14,851	16,627
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
None	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-

Total receipts	3,637	11,214	-	14,851	16,627
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A3 Payments

DCC	1,603	-	-	1,603	1,915
Gainsborough	12	-	-	12	200
Arabic Class	-	111	-	111	-
SYHA	-	-	-	-	500
St. Georges	-	-	-	-	730
AFCL	-	877	-	877	597
Brelms Trust	-	3,497	-	3,497	1,123
Laptop Fund	-	1,067	-	1,067	3,373
RAS Fund B Gillhan	-	-	-	-	240
Pathways to Emp	-	1,045	-	1,045	238
SYCF Covid 19	-	432	-	432	4,568
Southall Trust	-	-	-	-	153
XP School Bikes	-	450	-	450	776
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	1,615	7,479	-	9,094	14,414

A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)

None	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-

Total payments	1,615	7,479	-	9,094	14,414
Net of receipts/(payments)	2,022	3,735	-	5,757	2,213
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	2,364	7,176	-	9,540	7,327
Cash funds this year end	4,386	10,911	-	15,297	9,540

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	General Funds	4,386	-	-
	Restricted Funds	-	10,911	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	4,386	10,911	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	None	-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets	None		-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	None		-	-
B5 Liabilities	None		-	

Accounts approved by the Board on 30th September 2022 and signed on their behalf by

Alan Robinson

Alan Robinson (Chair)