

**Worcester Community Trust Annual Review 2019/20**  
**Ruth Heywood - CEO**



## 1. Introduction

This report provides supporting information to the presentation shared at Communities Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of service delivery for the fiscal year 2019/20 and will highlight service delivery, charity growth and development, governance, finance and plans for the future. The end of year accounts will be available in August 2020.

## 2. Purpose of Worcester Community Trust

The charity purpose continues to focus on the following areas for benefit of the residents of Worcester City:

- Promoting benefits to the inhabitants of Worcester
- Advancing education
- Relieving poverty
- Providing facilities in the interest of social benefit, including leisure time and recreation
- Improving conditions of life

## 3. WCT Community Hubs

WCT's 6 community hubs and facilities continue to be utilised by various local, regional and national organisations, providing valuable focal point and resource for the local community. The hubs are available to a range of customers who run social and fitness activities, preschool nurseries, adult education classes, faith groups, after school clubs and sport at KGV. These activities are mainly for the local communities, but the hubs are also hired as meeting and training venues to local organisations. WCT have attracted small amounts of funding to improve the internal décor at centres. Lettings income in 2019/20 was £261,267 an increase of 1% although 11% behind business plan target. (2-week closure due to Coronavirus in March 2020). The charities aspiration for 2020/21 is to work closely with Worcester City Council Property Team to make sustainable improvements to our hubs, in line with the 2022 WCT Business Plan, to enhance facilities and reduce associated energy costs. Over the next financial year, the charity will also develop a plan to increase the capacity of the Building Block Skills and Construction Centre as we continue to observe an increase in demand for the services offered. The management team will develop a strategy to increase build hub hire which will include a review of pricing structures and marketing of hireable spaces.

## 4. Community Projects

This section will highlight service delivery and comparative impact from the previous year. WCT continues to measure projects outcomes in line with contractual obligations, implementing a range of qualitative and quantitative tools including Outcomes star, UCLA Loneliness Scale, The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scales – WEMWBS. WCT also conduct a number of Case Studies and regular consultations within each project that ensures service co-design.

### Youth work

Youth Services continue to deliver open access youth provision in partnership with Worcestershire County Council. Additional capacity and resources have been acquired from alternative sources of funding to enhance provision and opportunities for young people in Worcester. The youth service provides art, sport and cookery activities to engage with young people who are most in need of positive interaction. Complimentary to this, WCT Youth Workers host 1 to 1 sessions supporting young people who are facing more complex challenges and are most in need. During the year, WCT support 1116 young people and delivered 445 youth sessions. Our school holiday timetable for young people offers further opportunities for new experiences in partnership with a range of providers from across the City. Throughout 2020/21 WCT will respond to the needs of the most vulnerable, by delivering 1 to 1 support and provide mentoring opportunities. A range of funding has been applied for to deliver more targeted and bespoke detached youth work to identify those young people most at risk of exploitation and disengagement in structured activity.

### **KidzPlay**

The charities Ofsted regulated KidzPlay program offers children aged 5-10 years, an opportunity to access structured play activities from a range of experienced and skilled youth leaders. This provision is supported by a number of specialist providers offering young people new experiences including dance, drumming, art and day trips. The scheme continues to provide support and opportunities to young people across Worcester who may not otherwise get a chance to take part in structured Summer activities. Over the past 12 months, WCT have provided 34 sessions, supporting 334 young people serving 942 packed lunches!

### **After School clubs**

These clubs are in the second year of delivery, supported by Children In Need funding, offering 5-10 year olds a semi-structured mini youth club with an opportunity to cook healthy food. This year WCT have delivered 132 after school clubs (an increase of 19%), supporting 162 young people, resulting in 1693 attendances.

### **DAWN**

The DAWN project supports women who have experienced or who are experiencing domestic abuse, providing individual bespoke support to enable women to make informed decisions and empower change. The demand for this service continues to increase and much work has been undertaken to enhance provision. From September 2019, DAWN was allocated funding from the Police and Crime Commissioners office, via South Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership, to fund a full-time worker. In addition, DAWN worked in partnership with the JOY Project to successfully deliver projects to support those who do not traditionally access domestic abuse support, funded by Worcestershire Community Foundation (Tampon Tax) and Worcestershire County Council Public Health. This enabled DAWN to support women across South Worcestershire, increase the skills and capacity of local community champions to raise awareness of and signposting to services available for those experiencing domestic abuse. In 2019/20, 157 women were supported to leave an abusive relationship. As a result of the DAWN intervention, 151 children had a reduction in their risk of serious harm. The DAWN project has supported 24% more women over the past 12 months, with 35% increase in women being classed as high risk. DAWN is anticipating receiving significantly more referrals during 2020/21 due to the impact of Covid-19. Short term emergency funding has been awarded, however DAWN is focusing on attracting longer term more sustainable funding to cope with an increased demand.

### **JOY**

The JOY project supports women to build their confidence and move towards training, volunteering and employment. The JOY project has delivered the first year of the second phase of delivery, which is an additional 3 years with a focus on building volunteers to support other women in the community. This project, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, continues to thrive supporting 141 women to build their skills and knowledge and gain certification. 139 women accessed new services. Peer led group support has been developed and led by volunteers, with 146 women evidencing an increase in self-reported confidence and 126 women accessing the group support. 131 women have been supported at crisis point, which has included women experiencing domestic abuse, mental health issues, housing, and debt. A newly awarded ESF contract has commencing with Worcestershire County Council Community Grants Program to support women who are furthest away from training and employment into positive outcomes including volunteering, training opportunities or employment.

### **Community Connectors**

The Connectors project delivered another year of positive outcomes, supporting people who are socially isolated and lack confidence in accessing services. Over the past 12 months, more local people accessing the service are presenting with complex needs including mental health issues, debt, illiteracy, drug and alcohol addiction and unhealthy relationships. We continue to deliver group support and develop volunteers; however, much work has been delivered to support our clients on a 121 basis with more complex needs. 223 local people have participated in Connect sessions, with 122 local services supporting our delivery offering clients doorstep access to support. With the support of the projects volunteer co-ordinator, an incredible 263 local people have taken on new roles and responsibilities, both within the project and externally. 197 local people have taken part in training and support to become community volunteers, sharing information about services that may benefit people in their neighbourhood. A submission for additional funding for a 4-year project, to the National Lottery Community Fund has been awarded to the value of over £450,000. The focus of this next phase will be mental health and isolation with support in developing community leaders to take additional responsibility for sessional delivery and peer mentoring.

### **Older people and wider community projects**

2331 'snack and chat' healthy lunches were served to older people showing an increase in access by 19% over the past 12 months. An additional 19 trips to local sights were successfully organised, giving local people with significant social mobility issues, an opportunity for new experiences within new social circles. The Reconnections project, led by Age UK, came to an end in March 2019. 62 lonely and isolated older people were supported to access local social activities. Due to the success of this project, Worcestershire County Council Public Health funding will deliver a new service for 'lonely' adults aged over 18 years old in Worcestershire. WCT will be working in partnership with Onside Advocacy to deliver this service as a sub-contractor partner in Worcester City. WCT were successful in gaining a strategic grant from the Peoples Health Trust to deliver a bespoke project in a small geographically defined area of Ronkswood for people over the aged of 50 years. The aspiration of this 12-month pilot is to build social connections and empower residents to shape local services. During the first 6 months of the project, 59% of the participants felt more of a companionship with others in their local neighbourhood. 15 local residents had formed a new steering group which is designed to funnel the views of local people around service design and delivery in the Ronkswood area, attracting 46 local people from identified lower super output areas to access the project. Weekly activities include line dancing, meet and eat and bingo.

### **The Building Block**

2019/20 has been a year of growth for the Building Block, seeing its first full year of accredited training delivery. The Skills and Construction Centre saw an increase in delivery of 20%. Staff have broadened their skills and certification, to allow for a wider breadth of accredited training to be delivered in the heart of the Warndon community for residents across the City and further afield. A strong partnership has been developed with Platform Housing Group (Property Care Team) to deliver accredited training to front line workers. In addition to this expanded delivery, there has been consistent evening delivery for non-accredited training. WCT projects have the opportunity to access the centre throughout the daytime, to build new skills and confidence. 63 WCT clients accessed support through the Building Block, which includes clients from DAWN, Youth and JOY. The Building Block Manager and Business administration support, continue to recruit, support, and build the skills of local volunteers which enable to centre to support a wider number of people. The Building Block attracted £32,000 income through activities and training that supports the work of the charity. Over the coming year, The Building Block will begin to explore development opportunities as demand for the services and array of courses build. Initial discussions have taken place with Worcester City Council.

### **BBO Job Coaches**

The Trust continues to deliver support for local people who are furthest away from education, training and employment with 2 full time BBO Job Coaches. The project is joint funded by ESF and the Big Lottery Community Fund and is administered across Worcestershire by Vestia. As a result of innovative thinking and delivery, over 100 local people have been supported, an increase of 18%. 29 people have been supported into training, 16 into job search and 26 into employment. WCT will host two additional Job Coaches in 2020/21.

### **Volunteers and Building Community Capacity**

WCT volunteers are an integral part of the charity, with over 5000 hours of volunteering seen over the past 12 months. WCT prides itself on empowering local people to be a part of their community, increasing cohesion, sense of pride and identity in their neighbourhood. Volunteering at WCT follows a structured program of recruitment, individual development plans with set goals. Volunteers are supported by members of staff, increasing people's knowledge, skills and wellbeing including increased confidence and reduced stress levels. The economic value of our WCT volunteers has been valued at over £60,000 in the past 12 months.

## **5. Charity Growth and Development**

During 2019/20, there was an increase in fundraising events and activities, with an inaugural WCT fun run raising £2,000. The appointment of a Business Development Manager in December replacing Ruth Heywood has seen a structured program of events and activities by building relationships with local businesses and donors. WCT were chosen as the Charity of the Year for Worcestershire Ambassadors, The Mayor of Worcester, and other smaller events, which attracted donations in excess of £20,000 to support the delivery of key services. Importantly, this gave WCT the opportunity to build relationships and raise awareness of the impact of the charities work. There has been a focus on our social platforms, showing a 20% increase in followers on Facebook, 104,137 Website hits and 101,900 impressions on twitter. Our income from activities has seen a growth of 43% to £142,836 (66% ahead of target) following diversification of activities in the Building Block and Training. The key focus for business development will be to develop a consistent calendar of fundraising events

across the year to raise awareness of and income to unrestricted funds. There will also be investment into digital platforms with a new website being developed.

## 6. Governance

Throughout 2019/20, there was a focus on Trustee Recruitment to fill the identified gaps in skillset including business development, finance, women's services and facilities/ property. The board has been enhanced by recruiting 4 new trustees; Philip Fowler, Gregg Scott, Dennis Evans and Ruth Jones.

Ruth Heywood was appointed as interim CEO from May 2019 and made the transition to CEO in September 2019. The management team consists of Operations Manager, Mark Steadman, Tracey Chance, Finance Officer and Christine Heywood, Hub Team Manager. Sarah Mackay also joined WCT management team in December 2019 as Business Development Manager.

Board Meetings are hosted on a quarterly basis with a number of sub-committee meetings hosted intermittently, including remuneration (bi-annual), finance and resources (quarterly) and Facilities (bi-annual) with Business Development to be introduced in 2020/21.

## 7. Finance – Please note this section is draft and the end of year accounts are yet to be signed off by the WCT Board of Trustees.

Please note that Section 7 is not for publication due to the commercial nature of information provided.

## 8. Future Plans

Based on the learning and development over the last financial year, the following areas will be prioritised for 2020/21:

### *Service Delivery –*

Expansion and more sustainable funding for the DAWN Project

Re-tender for Youth Services funded by WCC

Develop implementation plan for Community Connectors Phase 2

### *Asset Growth –*

Explore viability of Building Block expansion

Work with partners at Worcester City Council to invest in community hubs to reduce energy costs

### *Strategy Development –*

Draft and embed business development strategy to include Marketing and Communications Plan, Fundraising plan and Commercial Plan

Work with Pilotlight and Worcester City Council to develop and transition to new Business Plan

We will continue to manage the community hubs for the benefit of the local community and we will continue to provide services for children and families, young people, older people, the socially isolated and those needing support to access services, employment or through their experience of domestic abuse.

We will continue to be an umbrella for projects identified by our community members that will improve their health and wellbeing in general terms and where we can offer support that helps them to do more. We will be focusing on Mental Health support in this coming year, continuing our work addressing social isolation in Worcester and importantly – bringing people together.