

THE PHOENIX FARM OPEN DOOR PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT 2019



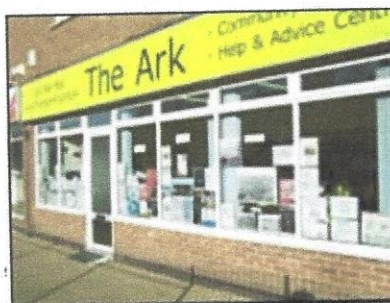
The Ark, 12 Wollaton Avenue, Gedling, Nottingham, NG4 4HX (0115) 8599556

Registered Charity: 1098333

Website: www.thearkgedling.org.uk Email: theark@thearkgedling.org.uk

It gives me much pleasure to report on what has been a very busy year in the life of the Ark. We now have two new members on the board of trustees; Esther who brings experience from the world of adult education with her work for Nottinghamshire Inspire and Andy who manages a community support resource in Coventry. A new development for trustees meetings has been the use of 'Skype' enabling Andy's virtual presence at meetings when he is unable to attend in person...Sharon, Lorraine and Joel continue to give sterling service along with Denise keeping our finances in order. New trustees benefited from a trustees training course recently, passing on their learning to other team members.

Our volunteers have supported The Ark brilliantly over the past year hosting the café and many other activities enabling the centre to be accessible to the community. We are always on the lookout for more help, so if you would like to find out more about opportunities either as a volunteer or trustee just ask! I am delighted to mention one of our more recent volunteers, Lindsay, who recently gave birth to twins. Joel and his wife Jemma have also introduced their bouncing baby son Ezekiel to the life of The Ark – three budding volunteers in the making maybe?



The Ark

The craft and friendship group continue to thrive, together with the newly formed garden group. All The Ark's activities are underpinned by the prayer group, meeting every month or so.

There are a number of exciting developments taking place at The Ark. The great work done by volunteers in giving the place a new lick of paint over in August last year has certainly brightened the place up. This work hopefully will be complimented by plans to refurbish the rooms with an additional interview office, more efficient lighting, flooring and outside toilet and washing facilities. These developments would enable training of volunteers to help with client issues and make for an even more welcoming place. We are presently awaiting the results of several funding bids, including one to the Nottinghamshire County Council Community Local Improvement Scheme to compliment a kind donation for capital work from Nottinghamshire Co-op. What is particularly impressive is the recent work done in the garden area, if you haven't done already, please take a look at the fantastic paved, grassed and planter spaces making for a valuable outdoor space.

Finally I would like to thank all those what have given time, donations and goodwill in order to keep the vital community support work of The Ark going. Most importantly without the Christian foundations that underpin The Ark, it would not thrive and I once again leave the last words to scripture:

'He has told you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?' (Micah 6:8)

John Tattersfield– Chair of Trustees

The Aims of the Ark

To increase the feeling of community in the area and decrease social isolation.

Enable people to take more control of their lives

Enable people to get employment.

The Activities at the Ark

Provide an advice service open to all.

Provide basic skills training

Provide a meeting place with café facilities with a safe friendly environment

Undertake social activities, and support activities of other organisations, to increase a sense of community.

Provide a base for other advice agencies that would contribute to a sense of community

Local Churches that support the Ark

Phoenix Farm
Methodist Church,
Wollaton Avenue,
Gedling

Gedling Road
Methodist Church,
Gedling Road,
Carlton

Westdale Lane
Baptist Church,
368 Westdale Lane

All Hallows Church
of England,
Rectory Drive,
Gedling

St James' Church of
England,
Marshall Hill Drive,
Mapperley

Project Manager's Report



If we went through newspaper cuttings of the last year we would be shocked at the amount of negative and terrible events that have occurred in our own nation. The Trussell Trust are reporting huge increases in food bank usage, homelessness is increasing, and MP's even discussed the need to appoint a "minister for hunger" and dare I even mention the calamity around "Brexit". We appear to be coming bad news Britain.

Sadly, turbulent and tempestuous times can affect societies most vulnerable more than anybody else. Many of the problems we hear about in the news are seen at the Ark affecting the lives of real people. The introduction of Universal Credit has seen some people I work with lose up to 50% of their weekly income. There have been reports of an increase in acquisitive crimes such as theft, burglary and shop lifting in Universal Credit areas. Many people are struggling so much they feel that there is no alternative but to steal for their next meal. It is families, self employed people and people with disabilities who suffer the most under this system. People need somewhere to turn to discuss their problems, find advice and be given hope that things will improve, the Ark is one of those places.

The Ark has had to change and be creative in finding solutions to the myriad problems that are arising in society. We have promoted our social and community activities that are available here such as the groups that meet throughout the week for people to find support, neighbourliness and encouragement. We have a diverse and exceptional team of volunteers who are good at listening, empathetic, understanding, caring and kind. We have set up a community garden project which can become a place of tranquillity, reflection and inspiration and is open to all.



Joel Baldry - Project Manager

We can see that it will be necessary to expand the service we offer by building a second confidential space in our building, however this plan will be on hold until we receive the result of a funding application to Nottinghamshire county council's local improvement scheme.

As always, we are dependent on funding, and in these times, funding can be harder than ever to obtain. We are grateful for the amazing support from the local churches and their members who are full of compassion for those who are suffering hardship, poverty or ill-health. They have given to us generously as they can see the growing need in this community, and that the work that we do is a Christian response to injustice.

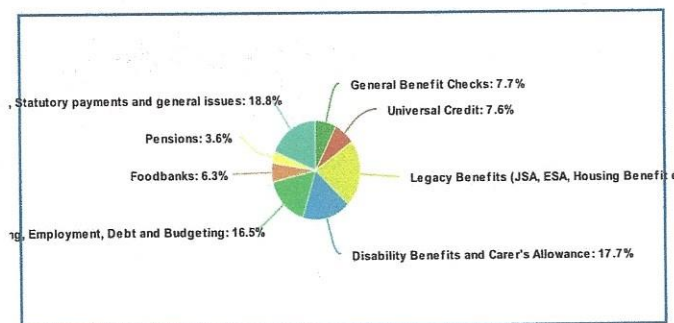
Alongside the support from churches, individual donors and donations to our cafe, we have made funding bids to numerous grant-making trusts and funding bodies and we are reliant upon the success of some of these bids for us to continue the work that we do. We have also had some suprising and inspiring donations come from people who support us, such as Debbie and Terry who performed a mammoth cycle ride to raise funds, and Maria and Sylvia who have organised a very succesful Christmas raffle and are due to draw the results of an Easter raffle very soon. I will be doing my bit by running my first half marathon in July to raise funds for our work.

I am a firm believer in the saying "a problem is an opportunity to do your best" and I also believe that it is often challenging circumstances and trying times that cause us to grow the most and our troubles can be used to transform us in positive ways. Personally, I have been astounded by the response of all representing the Ark to the difficulties that society is facing. Ultimately, the integrated working of our trustees, staff and volunteers combined with the support of churches, donors, grant making bodies and sponsors has allowed us to keep going day by day and free people from poverty and alleviate the suffering of people who face unthinkable difficulties. Through working together we are able to make a difference and overcome adversity.

We continue to be grateful for all the support given to us be it financial, prayerful, good will, encouragement or any other form of support so thank you to all who have supported us this year. We look forward to what next year could bring and how we can continue to improve the quality of life for people in this area in the near future. Thank you.

Joel Baldry, Project Manager

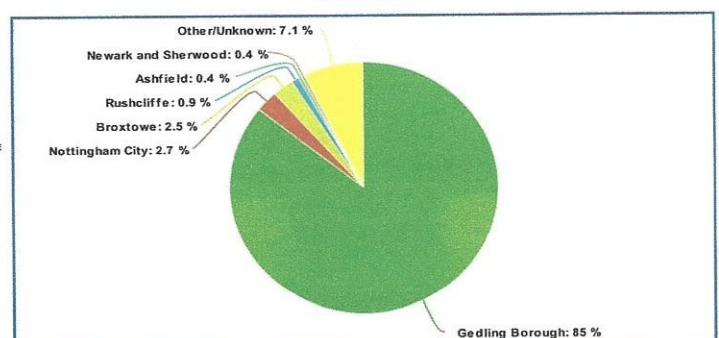
Appointment Types



General Benefit Checks Universal Credit
Legacy Benefits (JSA, ESA, Housing Benefit etc)
Disability Benefits and Carer's Allowance Housing, Employment, Debt and Budgeting
Foodbanks Pensions Council Tax, Statutory payments and general issues

meta-chart.com

Clients Residence



Gedling Borough Nottingham City Broxtowe Rushcliffe Ashfield
Newark and Sherwood Other/Unknown

meta-chart.com

The Ark



There are many activities undertaken on these premises, the provision of a community advice service is important but it is only one of the services provided. We wish to highlight some of these in the following article.

Community Café

We provide a community café, staffed by volunteers which provides tea and coffee free of charge (taking only donations), and gives away a significant volume of biscuits each year. The main aim is to provide a warm and welcoming environment and by encouraging people to use the café we have a significant impact in overcoming social isolation for people. The Café is part of a national initiative known as "places of welcome" (www.placesofwelcome.org).



Visitors of all ages welcome

Friendship Group

We have a group that meets every Monday afternoon for friendship, games, laughter and learning. During these times the café area is a hubbub of activity and liveliness with many cakes and biscuits consumed as well as plenty of thoughtful conversation topics discussed and debated.

From time to time specialists in their field come to enlighten and inform the group. At other times the group will arrange for somebody to come and teach them a specific skill. It is open to all and everyone is welcome.



Craft Club

On a Thursday afternoon we are host to a craft club. This is a group where anyone is welcome to bring along their own craft activities and do it in conjunction and community with others. Nobody need craft alone. This is a popular group that has lots of fun and discussions as well as making excellent craft items like the one demonstrated by Sheila in the adjacent picture.

Community Garden

This is our most recent venture and one which we are all very excited about. For a long time there has been a small patch of land at the back of our building which would kindly have been called waste land. A team of volunteers, headed up by an enthusiastic landscape gardener, has transformed this space into a tranquil and picturesque community garden. Our desire is for the community to be able to use this space, whether it is schools learning about growing and planting, or green fingered people practicing their skills or to grow vegetables that could be donated on.



Foodbank

If a person comes to us in need we are able to assess their situation and give advice to help them in their situation. Occasionally people will come in complete state of emergency and will not be able to provide their next meal. We are referring agent for all the local foodbanks (as well as those further across Nottingham) and through this avenue we can meet their immediate need whilst helping them find more stability in the long term.

WEBSITE: www.thearkgedling.org.uk

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Just giving: Just giving is a quick and easy way of making donations towards the work of the Ark. Donations can be made as one off payments or set up as longer term standing orders. If you would like to make a donation by this method please visit:

<https://www.justgiving.com/phoenixfarmopendoorproject>

Thank you.

Finance — Account Statement



This is a summary version of our Accounts which are prepared and then examined by an independent examiner in accordance with our legal duties imposed by the Charity Commission.

Phoenix Farm Open Door Project Accounts for the Year Ending 31st December 2018

INCOME	TOTAL		EXPENDITURE		
	£	£		£	£
CHARITIES AND FOUNDATIONS	14495		RENT, UTILITIES, PHONE, INTERNET, INSURANCE	6501.62	
CHURCH DONATIONS/COLLECTIONS	6598.72		REPAIRS AND BUILDING COSTS	438.40	
REGULAR STANDING ORDERS	2166		EQUIPMENT /FIXTURES AND FITTINGS	749.98	
IRREGULAR INDIVIDUAL GIFTS	557.95		CONSUMABLES		
FUND RAISING	831.5		SALARIES AND PERSONNEL COSTS	19403.15	
NET SHOP TAKING	3379.63		SUNDRIES /transfers	1763.85	
SUNDRIES (GIFT AID REFUNDS)	3250.36		INSURANCES	773.56	
TOTAL		31299.16	TOTAL		29630.56

Treasurer Report

At the start of 2018 the balance of the Community account was £18072.19, ending on 31st December at £18221.82. The ringfenced amount of £5443.19 (£1500 for laptops and £3943.19 for building work) still needs to be spent, which meant that we would have been that amount in deficit.

During 2018 we had been successful in securing over £13000 in donations from our historical supporters like the original 5 churches, councilors, sponsors and individuals whose regular contributions enable us to continue the crucial work within the community. By far our biggest success story was securing £9750 from the National Lottery bid "Awards for All" enabling us to pay our Project Manager, Joel Baldry, for the last 6 months of the year. Gift Aid refunds for the years 2014-2016 gave us £2645 and shop taking reached in close to £3500 almost £1000 up on last year. However, a special thank you must go to our regular supporters, volunteers and Trustees who have gone out of their way to organize sponsored bike rides, raffles and focus services. Without these dedicated individuals we wouldn't be in the position we are today.

Going forward, we are continuing to apply for funds from charitable organisations, set up focus services to explain the importance of our work and generally concentrate on improving our services to continue to help those in need within the community.

Balance brought forward at 1 st January 2018			
	Opening balance		
Current Account		£18,072.79	
Business Premium account			
Deposit Account		£4263.79	
		Total	£22,336.58
Balance carried forward at 31 st December 2018			
	Closing Balance		
Current Account		£18,221.82	
Business Premium account		£1500.20	
Deposit Account		£4283.16	
		Total	£24,005.18