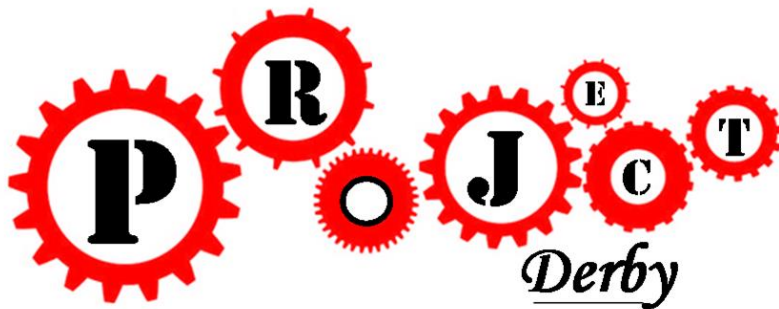


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# Project-Derby Annual Report 2023

Authored by: Cindy Carter-Foster



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## About Us

Project-Derby was established in January 2019 in partnership with Derby Homes. Its initial aim was to utilise the newly refurbished community room through the introduction of a coffee morning run by volunteers living locally.

Project-Derby members consist of those accessing the community room located at Tiintagel Close and/or living in the Arboretum ward of Derby City.

Project-Derby largely serves residents living in the immediate vicinity and includes Tintagel Close, Alexandra Gardens and Arthur Court which has combined household of 136 individual dwellings. This is not exclusive and members are welcomed from across the City to join our activities.

Households are mainly 1 bedroom flats, sheltered, social housing and, as with the community room, are predominantly managed by Derby-Homes. Many of the properties are adapted to aide mobility needs and elderly residents.

## Living With Covid-19

Project-Derby has developed a new Strategic Plan in light of the pandemic and the necessary adaptations to how we operate.

We heard from partners, volunteers, residents and members to get their thoughts, hopes and dreams as we looked at the issues of extended isolation and the pandemic's impact on people's financial, emotional and mental well-being.

The plan has three strategic priorities:

1. Connect with and be more accessible, inclusive for people accessing the service and/or living locally.
2. Build community capacity to advocate for the future of the residents in the Arboretum Ward.
3. Invest our time to support the sustainability and growth of the project.

These priorities focus on our neighbourhood generally as much as they're targeted to Project-Derby. In our work we recognise that in all that we do, we are here to serve the area in which we live. That includes working to ensure that we are using an anti-racist, justice, equality, diversity and inclusion in all our internal and external work.

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After a few years of rapid growth we have realized that we need to update and upgrade many of our systems and practices. We have already started that process and are committed to making many improvements to our policies over the next year.

## A Message From Project-Derby

It's been a heartwarming theme in this challenging year that people everywhere are engaging more closely with their communities in response to the pandemic.

Our approach has been energised by supporting the community and, as a project, we have reaffirmed our commitments as a committee, helping volunteers respond to changing needs.

The pandemic has exaggerated gaps in wealth and digital access. We recognise that sharing our skills is one way we can help address this important problem of social mobility. While lockdowns impacted face-to-face volunteering - and therefore our total community contribution - the proportion of volunteering hours increased to its highest yet. Existing inequalities in our catchment area were exacerbated, and many of those already likely to suffer poor physical and mental health because of poverty, old age, difficulty accessing employment or low English literacy, were unable to access vital information and support when they needed it most. The groups we work with are among the most vulnerable to Covid-19 so they needed our support more than ever. Many of our neighbours struggled to access online activities due to lack of training, lack of digital equipment and funds for mobile data.

Like other projects in the City, we adapted the way we delivered our projects to respond to the pandemic and meet the needs of the community. Where people were unable to access services online we offered regular telephone calls and also provided 1:1 good neighbour support continuing the support through helping them connect with their environment and stay in the present moment. Despite the many obstacles, we reached more people than ever before. In a year when loneliness and illness have affected more and more of our community, we helped replace isolation with connection, ease pain, and provide support not just to survive hard times, but to live well. We couldn't be more proud of the dedication, hard work and creativity shown by our volunteers, and are grateful for the responsiveness and flexibility this year demanded.

We all remain highly motivated and focused on delivering quality provisions and activities. Our humble thanks also go out to Derby Homes and Food 4 Thought Alliance whose efforts are allowing us to remain in good health, and continue working with positivity.

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# Our Vision – Our Goal

Our vision for Project-Derby is to be a place full of life, laughter, diversity and harmony where everyone is supported to move forward as active citizens.

We aim to provide individuals and the community with innovative programme; helping them to thrive and achieve their full potential.

- ✓ **Involve local people in planning, decision making and all other processes effecting the local area.**
- ✓ **Secure funding to maintain and increase local facilities.**
- ✓ **Develop relevant and mutually beneficial partnerships.**
- ✓ **Promote community cohesion within the community to use the facilities and enjoy its full potential.**
- ✓ **Promote an atmosphere of mutual appreciation and respect.**
- ✓ **Encourage residents and members to organize public social activities.**

## Project-Derby Membership

Total registered membership during 2022 is 266 residents within the Arboretum Ward.

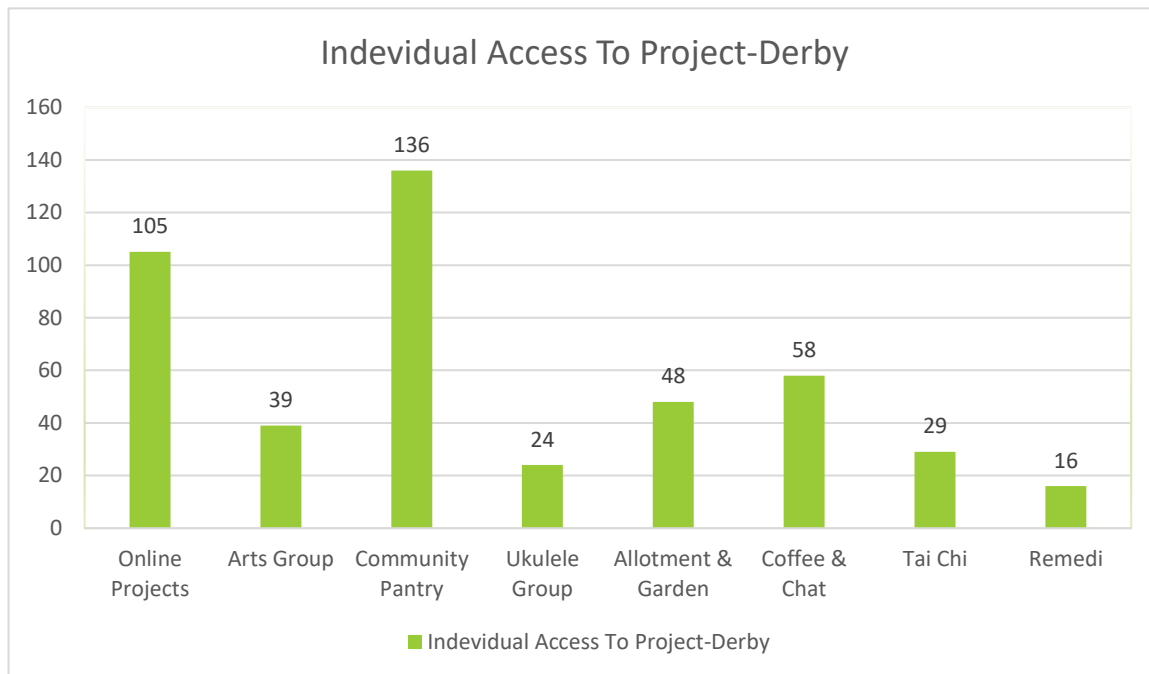
Membership details held by Project-Derby are: Full Name, Address, Date-of-Birth, Contact telephone number and email address (where available).

After restructuring the committee and with the introduction of the Community Pantry and Allotment, membership has been restored after the Centre closure during the pandemic. The now established online training programme has become an tool to increase engagement and membership. Project-Derby has increased its overall membership by 26 individuals engaging in centre-based activities and a further 32 online.





To increase membership over the next 12 months, Project-Derby aims to continue using online platforms to encourage participation and opportunities. We will utilise the garden for community events and hope to extend the Community Pantry opening hours. Project-Derby recognise that some local residents are housebound due to personal circumstance. We will continue to reach out to those most isolated. The new opportunities and community networking, highlighted in this report, will increase membership within the wider community.



**FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS = 259**





# Highlights OF 2022

*Volunteers have completed training in Food Hygiene, Mental Health, First Aid, Scrutiny and Personal Budgeting.*

*We launched the grand opening of the Community Pantry, Allotment & Gardens*

We were awarded the Lionel Massingham Award for our Community Partnerships



*We delivered over 2000 hours of voluntary support and activities*



We delivered over 1,300 individual food parcels

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# REMEDI

Remedi provide quality restorative justice, mentoring services and training to young people who have been involved in criminal activities and the court system.

Project-Derby have formed a service level partnership with the organisation to engage with young people in the local area. The young people allocated to the scheme can complete their community hours by working in the Community Pantry, Allotment & Garden and by helping with Coffee & Chat Mornings. Since the partnership began in April 2022, Project-Derby has engaged with 14 young people over the months, each bringing character, youth and new experiences to a community that is predominately elderly and/or disabled. The terms of service is specified by the judicial court. However, one young man is now registered as a volunteer and attends the project independent of the service requirements and 2 others have visited the groups by choice.



This partnership has given a new lease of life to our members. We are building genuine friendships. The challenges of working with young people engaged in the criminal system has also opened up new training opportunities for our volunteers. We very much look forward to increasing the hours and numbers of young people referred to the project in the coming months.



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# Community Pantry

The Community Pantry was launched in April 2022. Sponsored by the DACP and working in Partnership with Derby Homes and Derby Food 4 Thought Alliance, Project-Derby can now offer the community opportunity to buy produce at extremely discounted cost (approx. 10% of retail prices). In addition those that have previously access the Project for food parcels can go on to use the pantry. We have tried and tested the system many times and have evaluated that a single person can eat well for a week for £5.00 through using the Pantry. The project uses the £5.00 suggested donation to purchase fresh meat and items such as sugar, fresh milk, toiletries for less than 1/3 of retail. In particular the meat packs (suggested £2.50 donation) are substantial and provide enough fresh produce for up to a month.

As well as the pantry food, all members are invited to take bread (donated from Birds Bakery), fruit & vegetables (DF4T and the allotment) and many other produce donated from the White Horse public house, Fareshare and Costco.

On a Saturday, members are provided with a cooked meal. This is used as an opportunity to show people how the food from the pantry, combined with other available free produce and be transformed into a healthy tasty meal and has been evidenced that people are recreating the meals at home.

The discounted pantry and meat packs not only addresses the issues raised by the cost of living crisis but also provides individuals with choice, independence and dignity. Being able to pay a small and fixed amount for a weekly shop also assists the community in budgeting while all along supporting the Project-Derby sustainability.

The response from the community has been overwhelming and 100% positive - even residents who choose not to engage in any other activities are still positive about using the Pantry.

The generally running of the pantry is managed by 2 volunteers. With support from the community training scheme and project coordinator, volunteers and young people from the Remedi Programme undergo food hygiene training, learn to run the pantry, and assist with food deliveries and collection.

We really want to expand and open more days a week and we know that once Project-Derby has established the Pantry, it will be a way of ensuring our continuation and regeneration of stock.

*"I come to socialise and take advantage of the free support. Everyone's on their own round here. This moment in my life I'm trying to get myself straight. I never thought I'd be so low and poor. I need the Pantry. It helps stretch my benefits a bit further. With what's available in the Pantry I can always knock something up and the allotment food gives me the fresh stuff I need. There's always something fresh to eat. When I've got my flat sorted and I've got settled I'm definitely going to volunteer here and pay it forward like these guys have for me."*

(Tony Barrett)



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## 2022 Summer Activities Programme

Now in its 2nd year, Project-Derby has partnered with the Mandela Centre to provide a summer activity programme for children living in the local area.

Over a 6 week summer period, 2 afternoons a week, the children (aged 8-16) were able to learn about the allotment, contribute to the planting and growing and maintain the garden. They completed the process of growing mint and cress and were able to take allotment produce home. During arts and craft sessions they built Bug Hotels for the community garden and their own green spaces. The programme was celebrated with an end of summer BBQ and games session.



Project-Derby aims to provide an educational experience that supports our objectives while making the activities fun and interactive. The children and young people complete achievable



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tasks that highlight environmental awareness, community safety and respect. All children and young people are awarded for their participation. Project-Derby hopes to continue developing the summer activities programme as the allotment and garden grows. We hope to create our own resources and activity sheets and be able to offer more opportunity to the community over the summer months in 2023. Our established partnership with the Mandela Centre enables us to share resources, signpost residents to appropriate support and information but also, as evidenced through the summer programme, we can reach families who may not usually engage with Project-Derby.



## Community Allotment & Garden

Following over 12 months consultation exercise that consisted of surveys, focus groups, leafleting and community notices, we finally had full permissions necessary to begin a huge community transformation.



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In April 2022 Project-Derby held a grand opening of our Community Allotment & garden. What was previously a derelict basketball court was transformed through funding from Derby Homes and Disability Direct Plot to Plate scheme. Now showcased as a fully accessible community space the garden provides numerous bedding , seating, planting and activity areas as well as space for social events such as community BBQ's and summer activities. The area is fully accessible so we are able to open to the elderly and disabled members of our community who can engage in activities and enjoy the space as much as everyone else.



Since April the Garden has been used for summer BBQ's, Queens Jubilee Celebrations, Summer Activities Programme and Outdoor Martial Arts, as well as the general gardening activities. The area is predominantly managed by 2 volunteers who maintain the grounds, provide the generally guidance, knowledge and support residents to maintain the garden and grow produce for the community.

We have been successful in our first year in producing fruit and vegetables for local residents and now with the recent purchase of a poly-tunnel we will be able to grow produce throughout the year.



## 2022 Activities (Centre-Based)

Coffee & Chat  
FRIDAY, 10-12pm

Project-Derby Coffee & Chat is run by 3 committee members and focuses on the local residents. It is aimed to be a social activity but also a forum for consultation exercises and community organising. The coffee morning is thriving. With the introduction of the Community Allotment & Garden and the now established Community Pantry, the coffee and chat morning has become a place where those involved in the various projects can meet, plan and evaluate. It has become the heart of information and consultation as well as problem solving and planning.

*“3 years ago I was in debt, on a drug rehab program and alcohol dependent. In lock down I started using the centre for food parcels. Slowly I've got off the booze and completely dry of drugs.*

*Now I help out at the Pantry and the allotment. I love the people and how they've helped me. It gets me out the flat, helps with my mental health that I've always struggled with. Being here helps me when I'm helping others.*

*I can't thank everyone enough. Even my support workers have stopped the weekly checks because of the changes in my life. “*

(Wayne Cornell)



A membership fee of £2.00 per week has now been introduced and welcomed by residents. Through this we are able to offer all members free refreshments, hot snacks, fruit, vegetables and bread, subsidised meat parcels and weekly meals at very little extra cost. Over the year we have been visited by Derby Homes; Community Action; Mandela Centre; and Local Area Coordinators. All visiting organisations have provided information, support and/or activities for the group. All attendees are from the Arboretum ward. In 2022 coffee morning membership was 52 individuals with an average weekly attendance of 30 -35 residents and volunteers (figure includes 4 home visits).

**Community Training**  
**Tuesday, 9.30-2.30pm**

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Organised by the project coordinator and resident (Cindy Carter-Foster), the Community Training Programme was established in Feb 2020. Originally, training sessions were delivered in response to requests. In 2021 the programme was developed in order to provide quality training that would enhance volunteers skills and increase employability opportunities. During the year, 8 programmes were delivered online and 9 have been centre-based. Training opportunities currently include: Team Building; Inspirational Women; Equipped to Succeed; and Approaches to People. All training is delivered on a rolling programme and is offered to Project-Derby, community groups, local organisations and volunteers.

114 people have accessed the training during 2022.

We now have 3 volunteer facilitators and are currently working on a new programme to address equality and diversity.

**Tai Chi**  
**Wednesday, 5.30-7pm**

Gerald Tuckwood is a volunteer and local resident. He is also our resident Tai Chi and Martial Arts Sensei. The Tai Chi group, established in January 2019, continues to run both group and 1-1 weekly sessions.

Weekly membership to the group is 14 local residents. There were an additional 24 participants attending weekly sessions as part of the summer activity programme.

Having Gerald as a resource on our doorstep has been invaluable. Being able to provide free expert tuition to the community breaks through barriers and assumptions that specialist extra-curricular activities are for the “elite”. Moreover, the Tai Chi classes provide exercise and movement to even our most limited (mobility) residents who can engage with the activity from their chairs.

**Arts & Crafts**  
**Thursday, 2-5.00pm**





While preparing for the official relaunch of the project after covid and the allotment grand opening, we restarted the Arts & Crafts group that was suspended during the Pandemic. The craft group has become a very supportive and calming session. Members can engage in creative activities, meet and socialise, as well as enjoying an afternoon snack and refreshments.

2022 has focused on garden decorations, dream catchers, knitting, friendship bracelets, and Christmas decorations, to mention a few.

We have faced particular challenges with this group due to the nature of the activity and lack of space. During the session the building is used for generally, which is welcomed, but it does limit what crafts we can complete - especially when working on large group projects.

The group aim to build up quality stock that can then be

sold in the Community Pantry and members will be able to attend local craft fares. Weekly sessions have been attended by 39 residents

#### 4 Strings Ukulele Group (Suspended)

The Guitar group has operated at the centre for 3 years. Sadly, in April 2022, the volunteer tutor left the project. As this requires a specific skilled person we were unable to continue without tuition. It was, therefore, decided that the group would be suspended while we attempted to find alternative possibilities. Due to the lack of funds available and other tutors asking for payment, we haven't been able to restart the programme. We were able to celebrate the end of the group with a dazzling performance from its members at the Allotment and Pantry grand opening. We are still looking at other musical groups to develop - one idea being a community choir that we're very interested in developing and that the project could fund once we have consulted with the community to assess interest and participation in the coming months. Between January and April 2022, 27 members accessed the ukulele group on a weekly basis.

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# The Food Bank

Project-Derby's food bank was initiated in April 2020. During 2022, we have continued to grow with more donations, supporters and food parcel requests.

The partnership with Derby Food 4 Thought Alliance Group (DF4T) and sponsorship from White Horse public house has been instrumental in both providing the service and receiving food donations. The DF4T not only coordinates the distribution and monitoring of food parcels but also offers invaluable support, training opportunities and access to additional funding. The partnership with Derby Homes and continued use of the community room has ensured its continuation as well as now housing appropriate storage for the produce.

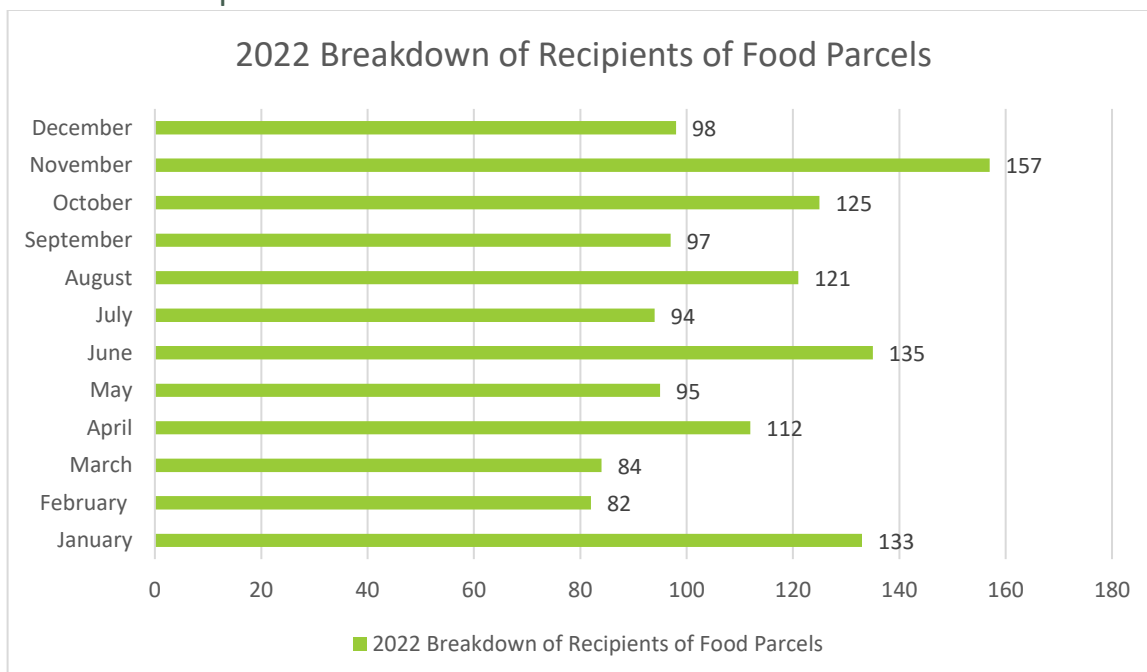


In addition to these established partners, Project-Derby now receive weekly donations from Costco and Fareshare. These donations offer fresh food that we are able to freeze and utilise for weekly community meals every Saturday lunchtime.

Project-Derby food bank, run by 4 volunteers, provide food parcels 3 days a week -1357 parcels in 2022 compared with 1248 in 2021. Rather than a decrease in need, which we had hoped for coming out of the Pandemic, the increase in food parcel requests can be explained due to the Cost of Living Crisis we are currently facing.

The food parcel recipients are identified due to a range of issues, this is not an exhaustive but includes; unemployment, self-isolation, mobility or health concerns, returning from hospital and not in receipt of benefits. Referrals can be made via our social media page and directly at the centre but are primarily through DF4T. One of the most distinctive trends is that those people who access the Food Bank later utilise the Community Pantry when they no longer qualify for free parcels. It is hoped that the Community Pantry will continue to grow and that during 2023 we will see a reduction of food parcel requests as residents utilise the Pantry more.

The graph below shows a breakdown of food parcels provided by Project-Derby during 2022 and includes parcels for families, couples and single recipients. A more detailed breakdown is available on request.



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# Consultation & Communication

Project-Derby prides itself on constant, ongoing consultation. Compliments, complaints and new ideas are welcomed and used to shape current and future activities.

During 2022 we have continued to consult with project members independently to gather community views that inform our practice and activities. There have also been many organised consultations regarding the Allotment & Garden and the introduction of the Community Pantry. With Derby Homes guidance and support, we have undergone door-to-door interviews, a snapshot survey and held regular committee meetings with the various involved parties to oversee development. Through social media, we are able to advertise the food bank, training & volunteer opportunities, group activities, services, buddy systems and helplines.

During 2022, with the focus on the new projects, our consultations having been very much needs-led. While assessing how individuals are able to use the Community Pantry we were able to use the information such as budgeting, life issues and mobility to signpost them to additional organisations and support. As a result, the general feedback informed Project-Derby what support the community is lacking and how to meet their individual needs more proactively.

During 2022 and in response to new responsibilities and challenges, the committee have reviewed and updated all of the policies and procedures connected with the project. These include risk assessments, complaints procedures, safe-guarding policy, code of conduct, accounting procedures and operational management. The new policies and procedures ensure the safety of the board members and protect the rights, accountability and responsibilities of all members. While there has always been a zero tolerance on all negative behaviours, the revised policies protect those enforcing them. Every member is now required to sign a basic contract of conduct and adhere to the equal opportunities policy and procedures.

*"I love the company. The people are really welcoming and I love the Pantry. It gives everyone something to look forward to. It helps my state of mind. It keeps me stable. I suffer with my mental health and being here keeps me focused and level. I get to know new people every week. Seeing it busy panics me sometimes but I see how much we need each other. No one can describe the benefits from Project-Derby. One minute I'm having a cup of tea the next minute I've got a budget plan. They literally help without me knowing. I always go home smiling. "*

(Kath Marley)

## Project-Derby Finances 2022

Project-Derby, in the main, is financially self-sufficient. There is a small donation taken for refreshments and activities that, in turn, replenishes our stock. Below is a overview of funds



received and how monies has been spent. A detailed review of the accounts is available upon request.

2022	Coffee & Chat	Community Pantry	DF4T	DACP	White Horse	Total
January	£50.36					£50.36
February	£88.61					£88.61
March	£61.67		£500.00			£561.67
April	£62.50				£300.00	£362.50
May	£54.00					£54.00
June	£42.50	£215.21				£257.71
July	£67.03	£134.05				£201.08
August	£72.01	£290.55				£362.56
September	£76.00	£401.15				£477.15
October	£79.79	£293.04				£372.83
November	£64.00	£224.50		£2,800.00		£3,088.50
December	£58.00	£339.27			£220.55	£617.82
TOTAL	£776.42	£1,683.1	£500.00	£2,800.00	£735.76	£6,494.79

The figures shown above include some donations that were specifically awarded to activities or project development where monies were immediately allocated. It should also be noted that not all support from other groups and organisations comes with finances. DF4T have provided items such as slow cookers, shopping vouchers, training and ongoing support. Derby Homes contributed substantially to the development and launch of the Community Allotment and continue to support us in numerous activities as well as just being a much needed sounding-board. White Horse Derby provide on-going fundraising opportunities. All of the above and more would be at cost to the project if we weren't donated those resources.

The most dramatic income and expenditure change has been the introduction of the Community Pantry. Members using the Pantry will donate to the Coffee & Chat mornings and vice-versa. As you observe in the following chart, we are then able to purchase resources, fund events and offer services back to the members.

A significant expenditure has been the development of the Allotment, Garden and Community Pantry. A single expense that, now resourced, will decrease drastically and therefore offer opportunities to build a financial resource for the coming year. What is the most relevant is that the highest expenditure are those funds that go directly back into the community and for its benefit—whether that be to increase activities and projects or to resource those that currently exist. The agreement with Derby Homes that we now have use of the office space at the community room required some financial input but now means that we can centralise and

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be accountable for our documentation and records that are now available to our members as opposed to previously having to store them in people private dwelling. This means we are even more transparent and open to challenge and development. Finances obtained during 2022 have been costed and then funding has been sort out for specific expenses.

## Treasurer's Report

Project-Derby is supported by Derby Homes, DACP, Food 4 Thought and Community Action. As a part of that support we are guided to funding opportunities. While Project-Derby was physically closed during the Pandemic there were no Coffee Mornings held which generated approximately 50% of our income. There was also no opportunity to gather public support through our own fund raising. This meant that once the centre reopened we had a zero balance and had to rely on public donations and fund raising to generate resources. As with previous years, the pressure on the project to retain volunteers has proved difficult without the ability to pay travel expenses. The Food Bank has been the main concern because we rely on the food being collected in order to provide the service and petrol expenses have been a concern. Moreover, when the service is providing essential food the issue is magnified. Food 4 Thought has given £80.00 one-off donation towards travel and the remaining has been generated by the income during Coffee Mornings. We are, however, very aware that the bulk of travel expenses is still very much to the cost of the volunteer. There is hope that future funding will also provide the project with basic equipment such as laptops, printers, photocopying and stationary. This is again currently being provided at the cost of the volunteers and needs to be allocated into the running costs. Appropriate equipment will see the introduction of online services and consultation exercises, secure financial and personal data storage, and ensure that online groups can continue uninterrupted. In the main, we consider the project to be fortunate and self-financing with sufficient access to free resources and support to deliver our vision. We are all looking forward to a bright, active and welcoming 2023.

## In Our Thoughts...

We continue to sadly miss a huge character in Harry due to ill health. At the beginning of the year Harry was admitted to hospital and later it was determined that he would be best cared for in a nursing home where he will remain. He is in our thoughts because of his love for life and his community. Ages now at 98 years old, we still miss

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his vibrant energy and his addictive smile. We wish him the very best in the coming year and send our love to his friends and family.

The father of our Chair Person and a friend to Project-Derby, we met Eddie in early 2022. He sadly passed away just a few months later. Eddie was immediately drawn to the project and was very proud of what we had achieved. The members of Project-Derby donated a tree in Eddie's name to the community garden and we welcome his family to continue to join us. Hopefully, the community and informal support we provide goes some way to relieving the pressures and loss.

We thank every volunteer, donator, sponsor and partner. There have been many challenges and logistical difficulties throughout 2022 and with limited resources we have needed volunteers more than ever. Every person, group and organisation supporting Project-Derby has been invaluable to its success.

## Contact Us

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