



Bettridge Centre



Coastal Park
Newtonhill
Aberdeenshire
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Reg Charity No: SCO02063

Annual Review 2023

A centre for excellence

The Bettridge Centre is a wholly independent, community owned and run multi-purpose leisure centre in Newtonhill, Aberdeenshire.

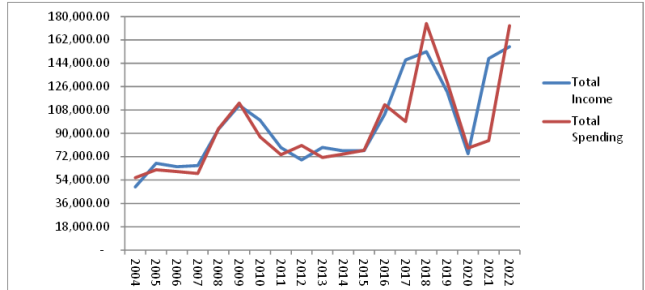
Our aim is to provide local people with the best sports, arts, social and community facilities in the NE of Scotland. We pride ourselves on providing a high quality, friendly, welcoming service at a price our customers can afford.

2022-23 – our 20th year

Income
£ 156,774

Grants
£28,372

Spending
£173,004



Summary - We celebrated our 20th birthday in March 2023. It's hard to believe so much time has gone by since the doors first opened, after so many years of fundraising and planning. We're delighted the centre is still going strong and still at the heart of the local community.

Having said that, 2022-23 has been a year of challenges. With the cost of living crisis hitting us hard, and a number of serious maintenance issues coming to a head; financially and logistically it's been a difficult few months. However bookings were up and we received grants to fund some very worthwhile projects, so all in all it has been a positive year.

Bookings - We've had a number of major bookings returning to the centre, including the Grampian Stage Dance Festival, Breakneck Comedy, several dog shows and pantomime. Party bookings in 2022 were the highest ever – with 91 booked at a value of £12,300.



Grants - We were very grateful to receive funding from **Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Partnership** to enable us to continue our ReActive8 programme of support to older people, from **Vattenfall Unlock Our Future Fund** to install equipment to further our Net Zero ambitions, and from **Tesco Groundworks** and **Meikle Carewe windfarm** to refurbish lounge toilet and install new flooring.

Staffing - Running a large centre which is open up to 12 hours a day, 7 days a week is a complex operation. The senior management team consists of Louise, the centre manager; Bridget, the administrator and development officer; and Lorraine, our lead leisure attendant and ReActive8 coordinator. We are supported by a team of 8 Leisure Attendants who look after the building and run events for us in the evenings and at weekends

Volunteers - We couldn't have got this far without the hard work of the volunteers who play such a crucial role in supporting the centre. Many thanks go to our management committee; John, Paul & Marty for their stalwart maintenance skills; Helen for her line dancing skills; Ray and her fellow ReActive8 members for their sewing, knitting and crocheting; Dave Johnston for his help during Storm Babet; James, Luke and Louise for their dishwashing skills at coffee mornings; Hazel Dalgarno's Community Payback Team for their help keeping the centre looking great indoors and out; and Claire Caskie's painting team from GSK Montrose. We've also just recruited some new volunteers to help us run the revived Friday Luncheon Club.



Fundraising - Many thanks to our energetic and enthusiastic management committee, who have run a number of events and raffles over the past 18 months, raising an incredible £13,000 since the start of 2022. This wouldn't have been possible without huge local support for the centre.



We're so very grateful to everyone who has bought raffle tickets, attended discos or coffee mornings, or came along to our Christmas Market, it's been very much appreciated.

REACTIVE8

We're now in year 2 of this 3-year funded project to develop a programme of social and physical activities which will help support local people's mental and physical health. Please see the enclosed leaflet for more information about this exciting project.

Challenges - A number of serious maintenance issues had to be dealt with in 2022, with some of the costs running into 2023.

- Main Hall floor needed to be completely replaced due to severe warping, This work was completed and paid for in March 2022, however there was a nerve-racking wait until the insurance finally paid out in June.
- Main Hall Fire escape was condemned because the steelwork was rotten. We worked with architects and the council's Planning Department to find an alternative solution to replacing the stairway –



this incurred costs of architects, building warrant, builder to brick up fire exit.

- Main Hall roof continued to have problems with water ingress, so a survey and remediation was required.
- Small Hall wooden floor needed to be resurfaced.
- IT System was upgraded and moved to the cloud.



- Work to maintain the centre's exterior was started in 2023, with more to come in 2024.

Running Costs

Utilities - increased from £7K in the comparable year of 2019 to £15K in 2022, despite being lucky enough to secure a good contract before the worst of the rate increases.

Wages – the National Minimum wage also increased by 7% in 2022, 10% this year & will be going up by a further 10% in 2024. This means increases across the board to maintain senior staff differentials.

Plans for the future - unfortunately we still have challenges to deal with – primarily financial. While we understand and welcome the increases to the Minimum Wage, they have had a huge impact on the centre’s profitability, especially at a time when utility costs have more than doubled. We’re working hard to find ways of increasing income and cutting costs, however some difficult decisions will have to be made to ensure the centre’s survival.

Short-term: In order to survive 2024, we need to increase our income and decrease our costs. We have implemented a 6% rent increase for 2024, which is less than we need, but we have to operate within the constraints of the local market. We’ll be doing our best to increase regular and one-off bookings by promoting the centre widely over the next few months.

In addition, we need to look very carefully at the centre’s running costs and find ways of minimising them.

Medium to long-term: we’ll be looking for funding to implement a major project to improve and extend the centre so we can both increase our rental income and lower our operating costs.

The project involves three main phases:

1. A knock through between the old building and the new extension on the ground floor, as per the original design, making the existing centre work much more efficiently and safely. Work will be funded by Developers Obligations plus the Area Committee’s Top Up Fund, and is scheduled to be completed before we close for the Christmas break.
2. Net Zero project - installing renewable technologies and energy efficiency measures to cut our utility bills. We’re investigating the funding opportunities for this with Social Investment Scotland’s Just Transition Fund, Local Energy Scotland etc.
3. Redeveloping the garage basement to accommodate a community gym and yoga/dance studio and meeting space. Work with architects is ongoing.

Thank you! We’ve been overwhelmed by all the support we’ve received during what has continued to be a difficult and stressful time for the centre, both personally and for the business. The local community has been so generous, our staff and volunteers have worked so hard and our regular groups have been so loyal and supportive - we couldn't have done it without you. Thank you.

Our aims for the coming year are to:

- Continue to provide first class local sports, arts, and community facilities at an affordable cost
- Continue maintaining the fabric of the building to ensure the centre remains an attractive, welcoming and safe place to be
- Increase the number of people who use the centre, the amount of time the centre is used and the variety of activities we offer
- Ensure the environmental and financial sustainability of the centre by taking a proactive approach to reducing our energy consumption
- Take an entrepreneurial approach to ensuring the centre continues to thrive sustainably into the future by re-developing the garage
- Recruit more volunteers to help us continue to develop
- Continue to build on our strong partnerships with local organisations
- Train and develop our staff to deliver the best possible service to our customers

We're very grateful for the support of the following organisations:

TESCO

Bags of Help



MAC
architects



VATTENFALL



Foundation
Scotland



Supported by
Co-op Members



Stonehaven
Community Sports Hub