

# Annual Return (AR30) form

## Section 1 – About this form

An Annual Return must be completed by all societies registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 ('the Act') (including any societies previously registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965) or the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act (Northern Ireland) 1969 ('the Act') (including any societies previously registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1969). The Annual Return must include:

- this form
- a set of the society's accounts; and
- where required, an audit report or report on the accounts.

A society must submit the Annual Return within 7 months of the end of the society's financial year. Failure to submit on time is a prosecutable offence.

Please note that this form, including any details provided on the form, will be made available to the public through the Mutuels Public Register <https://mutuals.fca.org.uk>.

For guidance on our registration function for societies under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, which includes guidance on the requirement to submit an Annual Return, please see here: <https://www.fca.org.uk/publication/finalised-guidance/fg15-12.pdf>

## Section 2 – About this application

<b>Society name</b>	Avon Dassett Community Benefit Society Limited
<b>Register number</b>	RS007489
<b>Registered address</b>	The Reading Room Avon Dassett Southam Warwickshire
<b>Postcode</b>	CV47 2AL

**2.1 What date did the financial year covered by these accounts end?**

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**Section 3 – People**

**3.1 Please provide the names of the people who were directors of the society during the financial year this return covers.** Some societies use the term 'committee member' or 'trustee' instead of 'director'. For ease of reference, we use 'director' throughout this form.

<b>Name of director</b>	<b>Month and year of birth</b>	
Trevor Barrie Gill	Dec	1950
Michael Blakeman	Nov	1948
Darrell Muffitt	Jun	1955
Elizabeth Hirst	Jan	1961
Janet Ferris	Jan	1965
Clive South	Feb	1956
Graham Fewster	Feb	1982
Peter Biddlestone	Oct	1949
Siobhan Woolley	Oct	1968
Michele Gill	Sep	1954

Continue on to a separate sheet if necessary.

**3.2 All directors must be 16 or older. Please confirm this is this case:**

All directors are aged 16 or over

**3.3 Societies are within the scope of the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 (CDDA). Please confirm that no director is disqualified under that Act:**

No director is disqualified

**3.4 Please state any close links which any of the directors has with any society, company or authority.** 'Close links' includes any directorships or senior positions held by directors of the society in other organisations.

None
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**3.5 Please provide the name of the person who was secretary at the end of the financial year this return covers.** Societies must have a secretary.

Name of secretary	Month and year of birth	
Michele Gill	September	1954

## Section 4 – Financial information

### 4.1 Please confirm that:

- accounts are being submitted with this form
- the accounts comply with relevant statutory and accounting requirements
- the accounts are signed by two members and the secretary (3 signatures in total)

**4.2 Based on the accounts, please provide the information requested below for the financial year covered by this return.**

Number of members	139
Turnover	23,148
Assets	575,919
Number of employees (if any)	0
Share capital	303,000
Highest rate of interest paid on shares (if any)	2.5

**4.3 What Standard Industrial Classification code best describes the society's main business?** Where more than one code applies, please select the code that you feel best describes the society's main business activity. You will find a full list of codes here: <http://resources.companieshouse.gov.uk/sic/>

68209 – Other letting and operating of own or leased real estate
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## Section 5 – Audit

Societies are required to appoint an auditor to audited unless they are small or have disapplied this requirement. For further guidance see chapter 7 of our guidance: <https://www.fca.org.uk/publication/finalised-guidance/fg15-12.pdf>

### 5.1 Please select the audit option the society has complied with:

- |                                  |                                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Full professional audit          | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Auditor's report on the accounts | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Lay audit                        | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| No audit                         | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

### 5.2 Please confirm the audit option used by the society is compliant with the society's own rules and the Act

We have complied with the audit requirements

### 5.3 Please confirm any audit report (where required) is being submitted with this Annual Return

Yes

Not applicable

The information below impacts the level of audit required of the society's accounts. Please provide answers to the following questions.

**5.4 Is this society accepted by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) as a charity for tax purposes?**

Yes

No

**5.5 If the society is registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) please provide your OSCR registration number.**

Not applicable

OSCR number:	
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**5.6 Is the society a housing association?**

No  Go to **section 6**

Yes  Go to question **5.7**

**5.7 Please confirm which housing regulator you are registered with, and provide the registration number they have given you:**

		Registration number
Homes and Communities Agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Scottish Housing Regulator	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The Welsh Ministers	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Department for Communities (Northern Ireland)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## Section 6 – Subsidiaries

### 6.1 Is the society a subsidiary of another society?

Yes

No

### 6.2 Does the society have one or more subsidiaries? (As defined in sections 100 and 101 of the Act)

Yes  Continue to question 6.3

No  Continue to Section 7

### 6.3 If the society has subsidiaries, please provide the names of them below (or attach an additional sheet)

Registration Number	Name

### 6.4 Please provide below (or on a separate sheet) the names of subsidiaries not dealt with in group accounts (if any) and reasons for exclusions: (the society must have written authority from us to exclude a subsidiary from group accounts)

Registration Number	Name	Reason for exclusion

## Section 7– Condition for registration

All societies are registered meeting one of two conditions for registration. These are that the society is either:

- a bona fide co-operative society ('co-operative society'); **or**
- are conducting business for the benefit of the community ('community benefit society').

A society must answer the questions set out in either Section 7A or Section 7B of this form, depending on which condition of registration it meets.

If you are not sure which condition for registration applies to the society please see chapters 4 and 5 of our guidance:

<https://www.fca.org.uk/publication/finalised-guidance/fg15-12.pdf>

## Section 7A - Co-operative societies

Co-operative societies must answer the following questions in relation to the financial year covered by this return.

**7A.1 What is the business of the society?** For example, did you provide housing, manufacture goods, develop IT systems etc.

**7A.2 Please describe the members' common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations.** In answering this question, please make sure it is clear what needs and aspirations members had in common.

**7A.3 How did the society's business meet those needs and aspirations?**

You have described the society's business answer to question 7A.1, and in question 7A.2 you have described the common needs and aspirations of members. Please now describe how during the year that business met those common needs and aspirations.

**7A.4 How did members democratically control the society?** For example, did the members elect a board at an annual general meeting; did all members collectively run the society.



**7A.5 What did the society do with any surplus or profit?** For instance, did you pay a dividend to members (and if so, on what basis); did money get reinvested in the business; put into reserves; used for some other purpose?

## Section 7B - Community benefit societies

Community benefit societies must answer the following questions in relation to the financial year covered by this return.

**7B.1 What is the business of the society?** For example, did you provide social housing, run an amateur sports club etc.

The Society purchased the local public house in July 2017 and has leased it to tenants for the financial year.

**7B.2 Please describe the benefits to the community the society delivered?** Here we are looking to see *what* the benefits to the community were. Community can be said to be the community at large. For example, did you relieve poverty or homelessness through the provision of social housing.

The freehold of The Yew Tree, Avon Dassett was purchased by the Benefit Society in July 2017 and was first opened in December 2017 and since then has been a focal point for, our very small village and the surrounding communities. It has provided a valuable meeting point for residents of Avon Dassett and neighbouring villages. It has also supported local businesses.

**7B.3 Please describe how the society's business delivered these benefits?** The business of the society must be conducted for the benefit of the community. Please describe *how* the society's business (as described in answer to question 7B.1) provided benefit to the community.

## **Introduction**

This is our sixth report of our progress against the items identified in our Social Impact Plan (SIP) which we prepared as a condition of our grant support and loan financing received.

The report covers the year from March 2022 to February 2023. Post Covid this was our first full year of uninterrupted trading and growth.

The year allowed us to review our plans and recover our stability as a Society at the heart of the village. Activities that had been suspended were able to re-establish themselves and grow support.

We are happy with the progress that we have made in delivering against our social impact objectives and confident that we have made plans to continue to achieve them.

Avon Dassett remains a very small village located in rural south Warwickshire, with less than 100 houses, a population of 210, of whom 166 are of voting age. Nevertheless, the creation of our Community Benefit Society, which purchased the Yew Tree pub on behalf of the community, has established a focal point for the community to socialize and the impact is immeasurable. Without the pub the village would not function, and rural and social isolation and deprivation would become a reality.

## **Management Summary**

We were optimistic as we entered our fifth full year of owning the pub, with lockdown restrictions behind us and a stable tenant in place running the Yew Tree. In previous years our ability to make progress against our social impact objectives had been limited but this year allowed us to make good progress.

Our finances have fully recovered, and our previously established events, groups and activities returned. We paid interest on shares and prepared to invest in the premises.

Our commitment to the community, to local businesses and services continues and our tenant has benefitted from being served by locally provided goods and services.

Major events such as the Soapbox Derby, Open Gardens, The Dassett County Show and Pop- up Markets returned and were well supported, generating funds for charities, and attracting hundreds of visitors into the village.

We believe that we have established The Yew Tree as the hub at the heart of our village and have put in place arrangements that will keep it that way. There is still more progress to be made, but we are confident that with appropriate funding we will achieve our objectives.

## Detailed Report

This section of our report details the specific progress that we made to our year-end, February 2023, against the objectives that we set out in our SIP. For ease of understanding we cross refer to our Social Impact Matrix and repeat the context of each objective.

### **Item No 1 - The Avon (now The Yew Tree) as The Network for local employment and knowledge about village and nearby services. (Short Term).**

We aimed to create opportunities for networking for employment, and community businesses.

During the year we were able to resume our association with local tradespeople. We had two roofs repaired, guttering replaced, and repointing undertaken using local businesses.

Our tenants also use local farms and suppliers to source products for sale in the bars and restaurant.

The Community Notice Board remains prominent in the entrance lobby at the pub, in view of all entering and leaving the pub by the front door. It publicizes notices of events, advertises local clubs, societies, and businesses, and allows traders to display their business cards. We maintain a Social Impact Register which summarizes these activities.

We were able to reinstate the Pop-Up market events on a quarterly basis where local businesses and traders sell their products. Surplus proceeds were donated to local charities.

The beneficiaries of this service are residents in the local community who may be seeking a service as well as those in the local business community who generate contract opportunities directly from the advertising and referrals.

In the year we have new successes to report including:

- kitchen and bathroom installations have arisen after discussions in the pub with the principal of a local company, who is a regular customer,
- brickwork and pointing contracts have arisen from contacts made,
- the appointment of a local Tree Warden was facilitated through a relationship formed in the pub,
- roofing contracts have been awarded to regular customers,
- contracts for carpeting and flooring have arisen because of introductions made by customers using the pub,
- logs and kindling are supplied to customers from contacts made in the pub,
- Local producers of home-made desserts and ice-cream have continued to supply the pub,
- Local beer and cider suppliers have secured new contracts at the pub,
- A local farm shop now provides meat to the restaurant,

Objective achieved.

However, we continue to monitor progress through discussion and feedback generated at our Management Committee meetings.

**Item No 2 - The Avon (now the Yew Tree) as The Hub for village groups. (Short Term).**

We aimed to enable greater community cohesion through connecting better to existing groups and supporting the creation of new clubs e.g., Bridge Club; young mothers' group; walking group etc.

All our clubs successfully restarted their activities and were able to attract new members.

The walking group had an average of 10-12 regular attendees for its monthly outings with many more during the summer months. Each walk ended with lunch at the pub and others who were unable to join the walks were encouraged to attend. This led to new relationships being developed, closer ties with other villages and a joint initiative to maintain and restore footpaths, stiles, and bridges. The Sunday Morning dog walking group also continued to function but was depleted by a resident with two dogs moving out of the village.

The Bridge Club met fortnightly with around eight people meeting for cards followed by dinner.

The Book Club resumed its monthly meetings followed by lunch.

We received grant funding in the last quarter of the year from Warwickshire Rural Community Council, in partnership with Cadent Gas which allowed us to offer Warm Hub facilities at the pub from December 2022. The funding allowed us to offer free hot drinks, biscuits, soup, and a roll to guests of the warm hub on weekday lunchtimes when the kitchen was in operation. Volunteer hosts were recruited and joined a rota to ensure that there was always someone to welcome guests and to give advice and guidance about energy saving schemes and available support during the economic crisis. The funding and the scheme were scheduled to continue until 31 March 2023.

Objective achieved.

All of these village groups were organised by people from outside the Management Committee and require no funding to operate.

**Item No 3 - The Avon (now the Yew Tree) as The Café. (Short Term).**

We aimed to reduce social isolation by opening the pub in the mornings for residents to drop in for coffee, to use Wi-Fi and exchange books.

As previously reported, we abandoned the idea of morning openings some years ago, due to the costs of operating and the limited custom that was created. However, during

the summer months The Shack continues to be a destination. It operates outside normal pub opening hours and continued to be very popular in serving homemade ice-cream and refreshments to locals, cyclists, walkers, and other visitors.

Meetings and ad-hoc events once again started to be held at the pub. These included a Dogs for Good breakfast, pumpkin carving at Halloween, post event drinks linked to Remembrance Sunday and the Christmas Carol Service.

The renewal of the Soapbox Derby and Dasset Country Show also introduced a wide range of customers to the Yew Tree.

The pub played a major role in the weekend of activities related to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Objective achieved.

We are pleased to report that there have been no set up or running costs so far and we don't anticipate facing any in the foreseeable future.

**Item No 4 - The Avon (now the Yew Tree) as The Focus for visitors to the Area. (Short to Medium Term)**

We aim to grow community pride and involvement by bringing visitors to the area.

The Yew Tree is the only major meeting place in the village and it's the point to which visitors are naturally drawn. It is worth noting that:

- Meetings and ad-hoc events once again started to be held at the pub. These included a Dogs for Good breakfast, pumpkin carving at Halloween, post event drinks linked to Remembrance Sunday and the Christmas Carol Service.

The renewal of the Soapbox Derby and Dasset Country Show also introduced a wide range of customers to the Yew Tree.

The pub played a major role in the weekend of activities related to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Objective achieved. We are pleased to report that there have been no set up or running costs so far and we don't anticipate facing any in the foreseeable future.

**Item No 4 - The Avon (now the Yew Tree) as The Focus for visitors to the Area. (Short to Medium Term)**

We aim to grow community pride and involvement by bringing visitors to the area.

The Yew Tree is the only major meeting place in the village and it's the point to which visitors are naturally drawn. It is worth noting that:

- The Shack continues to draw in customers from far and wide,

- The Soapbox derby brings in hundreds of visitors to the village,
- Pop-Up markets attract many from outside the village,
- The pub is mentioned in the National Garden Scheme entry for the Avon Dassett Open Gardens, and this attracts visitors to the pub during the event,
- Visitors to the Dassett Country Show draws visitors to the pub.
- The outdoor stage allows music events to be held which attract visitors,
- Several local B&B businesses refer their clients to the pub,
- Charity events such the Dogs for Good breakfast and the Christmas Carol singalong attract a wider range of people to the pub.

In summary, the community identity remains strong and appears attractive to a wide range of customers.

Objective achieved.

To date there has been no cost to the Society resulting from the above activities and we do not anticipate facing any in the future.

**Item No 5 - Extend the Hub by setting up new community led groups/activities. (Short to Medium Term).**

The aim here is to reduce social isolation and encourage community interaction.

Once again, the pub is acting as the hub in the community. Events led by volunteers have returned and new groups started. In the year, there have been events held at the pub such as an Easter Egg hunt, Treasure Hunt, pumpkin carving at Halloween, the Christmas Carol Service, and the Warm Hub.

Well established groups like the Walking Group, the Strollers, the Book Club and the Bridge Club have continued to use the pub as a focal point. The Gardening Club holds its Christmas dinner at the pub as well as at least one 'social event' meeting during the year.

The tenant continues to host music nights, quiz nights, themed dinners such as Burns Night,

Objective achieved.

To date there has been no cost to the Society because of the above activities and, when we are able to reintroduce them, we do not anticipate their being any costs to us.

**Item No 6 - Extend the Hub by setting up new community led groups/activities. (Short to Medium Term).**

The aim here is to improve health and wellbeing.

Although some of the groups and activities that we envisaged did not materialise, we are pleased that the established groups continue to use the pub. Occasional events such as the ladies fashion show, meetings of the Northend Women's Group have

used the pub for events.

Objective achieved.

These activities are organised by members outside the Management Committee and at no cost to the Society.

**Item No 7 - Increase accessibility to The Building. (Medium Term).**

The aim here is to improve accessibility to the pub, for all.

We have established a sub-committee to focus on the development of the premises with increased access at the top of the agenda. We have prepared a Planning Application for the refurbishment of the toilets including disabled access. Once approved we will seek tenders, raise funds, and let a contract for the work.

Objective partially achieved.

**Item No 8 - Offer extra community benefits to increase The Services. (Medium Term).**

We aim to enable greater community cohesion through the provision of additional services.

During the year we established a Warm Hub facility to provide some support to people during the economic crisis.

Objective partially achieved.

**Item No 9 - Enhance the Services. (Long Term).**

Our outline plans to add a microbrewery and possibly other services in the outbuildings remain unaddressed.

As reported above, we have established a Vision sub-committee to consider the development of the premises. Through this group we have commissioned a site and building survey to provide a baseline understanding of the potential work that needs to be undertaken before major developments are considered.

In addition, we have in place a Finance sub-committee to work with the Vision group to consider the options for financing. We have also created a business development sub- committee which has been designed to work with external organisations which may look to the Community Benefit Society for the leadership of their projects.

These three groups are now part of the management infrastructure of the Society and have enabled us to be better equipped to take forward plans and projects in a structured manner.

Objective starting to be achieved.



**Item No 10 - Enhance the Services. (Long Term).**

Once again, as with item 9 above, we have made limited progress on this item.

Our tenant still aims to establish a B&B business, but this will depend upon detailed plans being approved, planning permission and the Society having the funds to develop the main building.

Objective starting to be achieved.

**Item No 11 - Market the pub to visitors. (Medium to Long Term).**

As previously reported this item is now merged with Item 4 above.

**Conclusion**

We have made good progress towards the achievement of our Social Impact objectives and have several established community groups, activities, and events. We are confident that these will continue, although the Management Committee will continue to monitor progress.

Our principal source of income continues to be from rent from our tenant and, after our financing costs, any surplus allows us to make progress against objectives that require financing, particularly the development of the premises.

We understand that we needed to put in place plans and arrangements to ensure that we were “more than a pub,” and believe that we have achieved this in a manner than can be sustained.

**7B.4 Did the society work with a specific community, and if so, please describe it here?** For instance, were the society’s activities confined to a specific location, or to a specific group of people? Please note that in serving the needs of any defined community, the society should not inhibit the benefit to the community at large.

Please see 7B.3 above

**7B.5 What did the society do with any surplus or profit?** For instance, did you donate the money; did money get reinvested in the business; put into reserves; used for some other purpose?


The profits are retained in the business and used for maintenance and improvements to the property.

**7B.6 Please state any significant commercial arrangements that the society has, or had, with any other organisation that could create, or be perceived as creating, a conflict of interest.** Please tell us how you ensured that any such conflict of interest did not prevent the society from acting for the benefit of the community.

None

## Section 8- Declaration

The secretary of the society must complete this section.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Michele Gill</b>
My signature below confirms that the information in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Position</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>21<sup>st</sup> June 2023</b>

## Section 9 - Submitting this form

Please submit a signed, scanned version of this form along with your accounts and any auditor's report by email to: [mutualsannrtns@fca.org.uk](mailto:mutualsannrtns@fca.org.uk).

Or you can post the form to:

Mutual Societies  
Financial Conduct Authority  
12 Endeavour Square  
London  
E20 1JN

This form is available on the Mutuals Society Portal:

<https://societyportal.fca.org.uk>

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