COMMUNITY@NE66 CHARITABLE TRUST

CONDENSED ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024

ABOUT OUR CHARITABLE TRUST

Why we exist

At Community@NE66 Charitable Trust, we believe every child and family-regardless of circumstance-deserves a safe space to belong, grow, and thrive. We exist to challenge the deepening impact of rural deprivation and austerity, ensuring no one in our community is left behind.

How we do it

We place community need at the centre of all we do, shaping our strategic direction around real, lived experiences. Our work is guided by compassion, commitment, and a belief in grassroots action as a force for positive change.

What we do

We provide essential, inclusive spaces across Alnwick and North Northumberland where people of all ages can learn, play, and connect. Through youth work, family support, and community development, we strengthen local resilience and nurture hope.

Established in 20217 operating from the Alnwick Community Centre the charity has flourished over the years, increasing its turnover from £53,000 to over £130,000 annually to meet increasing community need and demand for services.

Our Mission is Twofold

1. To address social exclusion in Alnwick, particularly Clayport Ward, by preventing individuals from becoming marginalized, relieving the needs of those already excluded, and empowering them to reintegrate into society through targeted support.
2. To help young people, especially through leisure-time activities, develop their full capabilities and grow into mature individuals who are active, engaged members of society.

COMMUNITY@NE66'S IMPACT

OUTREACH PLAY
33 young people
HOT CHOCOLATE
in the PARK
37

PLAY!
46 children
48 sessions

#HAF24
116 children &
young people
32 sessions

School based
relationship & sex education
1,306
young people
74 workshops

9 + Universal
Youth Work
316
young people

Food & Hardship support
32 community
members
4 months project

Young volunteers
5 young
people

Saturday Youth Cafe
117 people

Tots & their
grown-ups
56 babies &
toddlers **+**
47 grown ups

Youth Work 1:1s
24 young people
333 sessions

C-Card
sessions
88 young
people

Advocacy & support
25 cases

Safeguarding
46 incidents/
concerns

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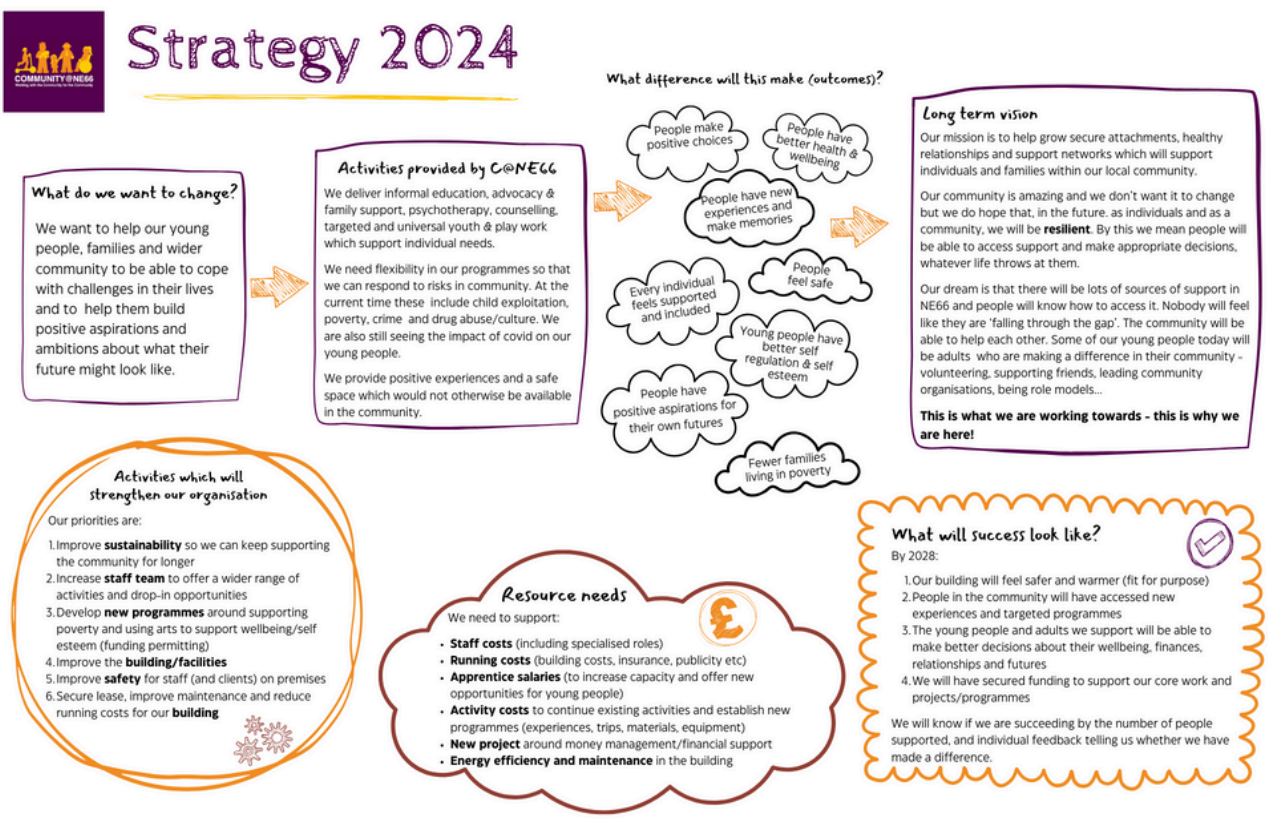
CHAIR'S REPORT 2024

The Trustees recognise that, with declining resources, we must work as efficiently and effectively as possible to meet the growing needs of our community. They remain fully committed to supporting the aims of the charity and would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to all our partners, service users, volunteers, and team members for their ongoing dedication and support. Community@NE66 continues to place respectful, compassionate safeguarding of our community at the heart of everything we do.

This year has given us the opportunity to take stock and revisit our strategic vision, following a substantial period of delivering complex safeguarding responses and intensive post-pandemic support services. In light of these challenges—and the ongoing impact of rural deprivation—our team came together for a full Strategy Day, facilitated by Katherine Williams. Through open, reflective discussion grounded in lived experience and frontline delivery, Community@NE66 identified four key strategic areas that will guide our focus going forward:

- Creating Safe and Supportive Spaces for All
- Building Resilience and Positive Futures
- Enriching Lives Through Connection and Experience
- Strengthening Community to Tackle Poverty and Inequality



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Strengthening Community to Tackle Poverty and Inequality

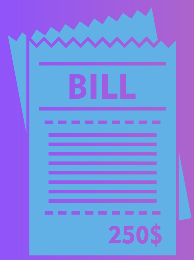
Surplus & Fresh Food Parcels

We are pleased to report a decline in food parcel demand for the year 2024 dropping to just 195 from 495 in 2023. The year started with us supporting 10 families which reduced to 6 at the end of May with a further reduction to a core base of 4 families from July to August when funding ended.

Numbers reduced as a result of some families regaining financial security whilst other clients, via the project's referral programme, successfully secured support from the Alnwick Food Bank, CAB, CAP and Northumberland Communities Together in advance of this projects funding expiration at the end of August.

Our thanks for funding are extended to Newcastle Building Society, Sainsbury's, Alnwick Town Council, Private Donors.

Advocacy



- In 2024 we supported **24 individual community cases** that required advocacy support, empowering and facilitating child for community members needing support with Mental Health Support | Loneliness/Isolation | Finances | Bullying & harassment | Divorce | Housing Issues, Homelessness, Addiciton
- Referrals: Early Help, Food Bank, Children's Services, Homelessness Team, Adult & Children's Services
- Working in partnership with : Housing Officers, Police, Universities/Colleges, Youth Justice Worker, Age Concern, EHCP, CAB, Social Workers

Reinforcing and Practising Foundation Skills

Saturday Morning Play: These weekly sessions provide children with an informal environment to engage with music, dance, building and construction, role play, arts and crafts, sensory play, environmental and community challenges, mindful activities like yoga and guided meditations, team games and challenges, and outdoor play.

In 2024, 56 children attended our Play session. The intended impact of these activities are:

- Fine and gross motor, and coordination skill development.
- Development of emotional literacy
- Risk taking in play
- Complex cognitive and social development through role play
- Improving literacy and numeracy
- Supporting speech, language, and communication skills outside of a school setting

These sessions allow our team members and organisation to build positive attachments with younger children which remain with them as they progress to our Youth Work provision and preventative work. This in the greater context allows us to not just ‘firefight’ in our Youth Work provision.

Our thanks are extended to Sir James Knott and Northumberland Children’s Trust



Outreach Play

Tots Stay and Play: Our team members facilitated sessions in a safe and stimulating environment **offering a range of activities to 56 tots & 47 grown ups** including music and movement, story and rhyme, arts & crafts, sensory play, routine, repetition tasks, negotiation and sharing tasks. Through these sessions, we can support infants and toddlers in their development of physical play, literacy, language and communication and cognitive skills. These sessions have as much impact on the adult parent/carer as the social networks being built prevent isolation and promote information sharing and support. Our workers are available to check in with parents/carers. Those identified as needing additional support can be referred to the Early Help Family team, offered utility and food hardship support, and an active listening and counselling service.

Our thanks are extended to Sir James Knott for funding this work and to Alnwick Baptist Church for their excellent partnership delivery.

Enriching Lives Through Connection and Experience

Junior Girls/ Lads developed into Wednesday night drop-ins

Our young people identified that they no longer wanted to epxerience Youth Work in separate gendered groups and that they wanted mixed groups with smaller age ranges. Junior Lads and Girls, became our Wednesday night drop in for 9-12 yr olds which then became two separate drop ins for school years 5-6s and 7-9s. The young people felt the single spaces had met their objectives, all were feeling heard and ready to form, storm, norm and perform together in mixed spaces. 69 young people attended these sessions as they transformed and developed.

We extend our thanks to BBC Children in Need for funding this work.

Hot Chocolate in the Park

The building work to make our Centre more energy efficient wasn't going to stop us working with young people. We held hot chocolate sessions in the park, catching up with young people and running activities. This has subsequently development into outreach work, engaging with more young people and giving more opportunities to link to our school based RSE services, advice and information. 37 young people engaged.

Making Sure we Connect in Different Ways

Community@NE66 has always had quiet spaces to include young people who need them, this year we went a step further and with the support of the Scholfield Fund we have created a sensory room, with a wide range of resources for all abilities. This space is available for young people attending sessions but also any community members who may benefit.

Enriching Lives Through Connection and Experience

Winter, Easter & Summer: We continued to develop our #HAF provision in partnership with the Department of Education, Leading Link and Northumberland County Council. Together we provided holiday activities, free breakfast & lunch for children. Our activities are chosen and planned by children and young people.

In 2024 116 young people taking part in our HAF provision made new connections, created memories and enjoyed rewarding adventures.

Creating Safe and Supportive Spaces for All

Safeguarding: In this reporting year we had **46 individual safeguarding concerns**. The most frequent concerns we had related to: Child Exploitation, Child Mental Health, Adult Mental Health,Sexual Health, Experiencing Domestic Abuse.

Youth Work 1:1s

Our Youth Work 1:1s commissioned by BOOST for DCHS pupils work in tandem with our Centre-based 1:1s, supporting young people referred from partner agencies. **24 young people attended 333 sessions**, receiving active listening and wellbeing tools to support them in overcoming issues such as anxiety, sensory issues in puberty, contraception information, listening space for gender-exploring young people, and risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE).

Building Resilience and Positive Futures

Upskilling: The team had the opportunity to upskill in the following areas this year: Neurodiversity, Sexual Health, Drug Awareness and Peadiatric First Aid

Creating Safe and Supportive Spaces for All

“When we are safe we can aspire.”

Friday Night Senior’s Drop-in: This year, **182 young people aged 13-18** attended our Friday night safe space and linked detatched/outreach work which runs from 5:00pm-8:00 pm providing youth-led activities, a hot meal, information and support.

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Youth Cafe

At Community@NE66, we aim to provide safe, supportive spaces that foster resilience, empowerment, and social connections. Our Revision Café and Youth Café are prime examples of how we respond to the needs of young people facing barriers to education, food insecurity, and social isolation.

The Revision Café was created in response to young people’s struggles to find a quiet place to study at home. Over 13 sessions, six young people accessed a supportive environment to revise and complete schoolwork. Staff provided informal mentoring to help develop study habits, time management, and academic confidence. Alongside this, free lunches and warm refreshments were offered, reducing stress and providing much-needed stability.

Our Youth Café ran 31 Saturday sessions and six extended holiday sessions funded by HAF, to maximise support for children experiencing food poverty. Accessed by **96 children and 21 adults,** it provided a space for socialising, team-building, and peer support. Young people took responsibility for planning and delivering meals for their peers, developing essential life skills like teamwork, budgeting, and problem-solving. In addition to free meals, the café offered advice, information, and social opportunities, alongside competitive board games to build friendships and confidence.

The café also played an essential role in five community engagement events, catering for consultations on local play areas, interagency youth activity showcases, and our Christmas production. These events increased youth participation in decision-making and showcased the talents and ideas of young people in the community.

Senior Girls: **23 young people** attended our weekly Monday night group for those aged 13+ who wanted to attend a girls focussed space. This group allowed us to provide a quieter space for young women who are often not heard in high sensory mixed groups.
Our thanks are extended to the Catherine Cookson Foundation for supporting this work.

C-Card: We carried out our drop-in sessions at Alnwick Community Centre (**22 young people**) and Duchess's Community High School working in partnership with NHS Sexual Health Services (**66 young people)**, C-Card and the Chlamydia and Gonorrhea screening service. We educated, promoted healthy relationships and sexual health, and **safeguarded 88 13-25 year olds.**

RSE: In 204 we delivered **77 RSE sessions to 1,306 pupils.** This work was commissioned by Glendale Middle School and Duchess' Community High School and combines our learning from our 'face to face' sexual health support with the Statutory National Curriculum content.

Young Volunteers: This instrumental role of providing and learning in safe spaces is carried out by our young people volunteers. Their positive role modelling has helped younger children be braver, more confident and inquisitive. The Trust would like to take this opportunity to thank **Amelia, Paige, Liam, Elle and Tuleigha**

The Trust had the pleasure of offering paid work to former young volunteer Izzy and Elle as part of our HAF and play provision

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The Trust has also received support from adult volunteers special thanks to Micheal who ensures the Center was organised and safe in 2024.

Awards and Recognition for Our Community & Youth Work

The Trust would like to thank Her Grace, the Duchess of Northumberland, for inviting our Project Manager, Hannah Moeini, to the Lord Lieutenant's Garden Party in recognition of Community@NE66's Community and Youth Work.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the High Sheriff of Northumberland for awarding us £1,000 in support of our Youth Volunteering Project.

In addition, our team was honoured to be shortlisted for three categories at the NE Youth Awards: Trustee of the Year, Young Volunteer of the Year, and Project Manager of the Year.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank and recognise the following organisations with whom we have worked in partnership this year:

Aldi, Alnwick Alnwick District Food Bank **Alnwick Baptist Church**

Alnwick Playhouse Alnwick Town Counci **Bailiffgate Museum**

Barndale House School **BOOST** Clarty Commandos - outdoor learning for all

Co-Op Local Champions **Duchess' Community High School**

Dept. for Education **Early Help Families Team** Family Hubs

Glendale Community Middle School Gallery Youth

Ignite - Christians Together Katherine Williams Fundraising

Lidl, Alnwick Mind **Mind & Sole** M&S, Alnwick **My Life Productions**

Neighbourly **NE Youth** NHS One to one services **Northumbria Police**

St Michael's Church **Sainsbury's, Alnwick**

Shilbottle Community & Youth Project **Solidarity Farm** The Alnwick Gardens

2024 Accounts Summary

A full version of our accounts can be found on our website: community@ne66.co.uk
or via the Charities Commission website.

1. SUMMARY OF INCOME

Grants	£125,064
Other Revenue	£6,598
Donations	£1,322
Fundraising Activities	£123
Total Income	**£133,107**

2024 saw a slight decline in Total Income of just 1.77% versus 2023 (£135,468 vs £133,107) despite a tougher grant giving landscape.

Notably, Grant Income, increased by just over 18% YOY and as a % share of total income, increased markedly from 75% to 94%. These figures demonstrate increased staff expertise and skill at securing funding and a commitment to the security of the project.

2. SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE

Charitable Activities	£102,734
Admin/operational costs	£24,901
Fundraising Costs	£0
Total Expenditure	**£127,638**

The Trust proved to be more profitable in 2024 with total expenditure down by 15% YOY. There were significant operational cost reductions in the areas of cleaning (staff undertaking cleaning duties), subscriptions & licenses (reduction in It packages) and just over a 30% reduction in Utility costs (condensed & restructured service, reduced number of rooms heated). However, insurance costs jumped by 39% YOY and staff and pensions costs increased by 20%.

Recent Government NI increases in 2025 are expected to drive staff costs higher highlighting the growing need for more Grant funding to be released to cover critical core costs. In 2023 Staff and NI costs accounted for 47.5% of total expenditure and in 2024 this increased to 60.4%.

Tight financial control in 2024 led to an operating profit and improvements to the energy efficency of the building of £5,469 in 2024 vs a deficit of -£11,777 in 2023.

3. RESERVES POSITION

Reserves Held 2023 - £29, 895 (of which **£8,309.67** unallocated, unrestricted reserves (Combined TAR & FInal Accounts))
Reserves Held 2024 - £8,294 of which **£6,516.85** unallocated, unrestricted reserves (Combined TAR & Final Accounts)

Year ending 2024 Community@NE66 did not meet its Reserves Policy target of £14,816.70.

4. STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL HEALTH

Surplus / Deficit

The charity ended the year in a surplus of £5,469.

Significant Changes vs 2023

There were significant changes vs. the prior years deficit of -£11,777. 2023's deficit was in part due to project funding secured in 2022 continuing into the financial year of 2023

Concerns

Rising Costs: Insurance / staff NI increase, staff recruitment, ongoing building repairs, securing funding for staffing and core costs.

5. KEY FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Major grants received:

- Children in Need £40,000
- Ballinger £15,000
- Bernicia £10,000
- Youth Cafe £9,827
- VCMS £8,662
- NCC £8,800 (HAF Summer)

Large Capital Expenditure

- **C**avity Wall and Loft Installation

6. LOOKING AHEAD

Financial Risks & Opportunities

- Utility solar cost savings / selling to the National Grid
- Wifi operated heating top room - cost savings
- Funding depletion
- Building repair costs

Funding 2025 - Secured (to end July 2025)

- VCMS (Solar panels/battery, insulation, fire door, LEDs) £16,023
- UK Youth (Pears) £12,000
- NCC HAF (Summer) £10,100
- NCC Poverty & Hardship Fund £10,000
- William Leech £8,000
- NCC HAF Young Leader £5,146
- MLIS £4,896 (wi-fi radiators & fire door)
- Catherine Cookson £3,500
- NCC HAF (Easter) £2,500
- Karbon Homes £3,000 (safeguarding /family support)

Total £75,165

Funding 2025 - Pending (to end July 2025):

- Barbour Foundation £9,195 (senior girls)
- Joicey Trust £4948 (boiler & flooring)
- Northumberland Estates £2615 (boiler & flooring)

Total £16,758

Commissioned Youth Work - Contracts Secured

- BOOST £5,000
- RSE provision £2,550

Total £7,550