

*The Year That  
Made the Hub*




# MELBOURN COMMUNITY HUB Annual Report 2019/20

Providing Services and Benefits to Everyone in Melbourn

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 The Hub - Melbourn





John Travis

# Chair's Report

I write this report reflecting on a year that has been incredibly challenging for all of us due to the global pandemic. This year the Hub has witnessed the distressing social impact of Covid and actively tried to do what it could to alleviate some of the difficulties. Public health restrictions led to the The Hub being closed during all or part of the months of March, April, May, June and November 2020, and again in January 2021 up to the date of this Report. However, against this unfavourable background the Hub has succeeded in a remarkable fashion despite the obstacles caused by the pandemic and government-imposed lockdowns.

## A difficult year

This Report includes the Hub financial position as at September 30th 2020 together with a general review and assessment of the Hub operations during this uniquely difficult year dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic. The achievements are briefly described here and illustrated in the pages that follow.

## Our Directors

Our Board of Directors has again remained unchanged compared to the previous year. This stability has enabled us to adapt as a team to rapidly changing circumstances. Planning and re-planning using videoconferencing quickly became the norm. Great credit is due to this multi-talented group in finding solutions to problems never imagined before. Similarly, the Staff and Volunteer Team were greatly affected, some unfortunately losing jobs, others spending long periods on furlough and many deciding to take a break from work to shield from the virus. A call for more volunteers was very successful. We offer our sincere thanks to all those who supported the Hub through this extraordinary and challenging time.

## What's changed?

Changed work practices were mandated due to the rules governing hospitality venues that protected against Covid-19 infection. A completely altered routine was needed to welcome customers to the building, seat them safely and serve them using Covid-secure procedures. A marquee was purchased and installed to offer better self-distancing. Purpose-built screening was erected around the kitchen space allowing our catering staff to successfully work in a protected 'bubble'. Hub staff, volunteers and customers reported no cases of Covid while the Hub was trading. This result is a great tribute to our staff members and volunteers' compliance to their training and perseverance while encumbered by PPE.

## The Library

Regrettably, some services were suspended, in particular the Library Access Point. Book returns were possible but the Covid social distancing and hygiene requirements forced the temporary closure of normal book lending. Room hire was also suspended for the same reasons.

## Investing in the future

Investments were made in the facilities and equipment, partly as forced adaptations needed for Covid safety but also as an investment in better more efficient operating practices. The marquee and kitchen screening have been mentioned above. A long-planned upgrade and improvement to the kitchen area layout and ventilation was also completed at well under the budgeted cost. A new electronic ordering system supporting table service was introduced, satisfying Covid-safety, while also improving the customer experience. We would like to thank the Melbourn Parish Council for supporting the Hub so well through



the pandemic. We were also able to extend the patio to accommodate more outside seating, introduce a marquee and a new PA system for when we are able to host events again.

### MCCR

The MCCR (Melbourn Coronavirus Community Response) was a stand out and extraordinary success that operated from the Hub throughout the spring and summer of 2020. This initiative is illustrated later in the report. Suffice to say that the MCCR was a highly significant service to vulnerable residents at a time of extreme need - a real milestone of community support that should be remembered for many years to come.

### Good trade

While trading, the Hub can be particularly proud of the results. The operating year up until the first lockdown date in March 2020 was in profit for the first time since the Hub opened in 2014. Again, after re-opening in July, the trading position was very favourable, partly due to the Eat-Out-To-Help-Out discount scheme producing record levels of daily takings. These successes must be weighed against many months of lockdown and the absence of room hire revenue.

### Emerging in good shape

Good financial management should be mentioned. The financial report shows that, before depreciation, the Hub was in profit over the year by £1,123. This result was achieved in spite of very adverse trading conditions during many months of the financial year. Government grants and furlough payments softened the business impact. Hub management was also able to secure other grants that in part supported the MCCR or were aimed at the wider alleviation of the most negative aspects of the pandemic. These, together with strict cost-saving measures, have meant the Hub has emerged from the pandemic in unexpectedly better shape than might have been predicted.

### Expansion plans

Future expansion of the Hub building became a reality this year. Planning consent was obtained almost three years ago and the project, while partly funded, required the balance of funding to allow it to commence. A £65,000 grant was obtained in 2020 from Cambridgeshire County Council allowing the build to go ahead to completion during 2021. We would like to thank County Councillor Susan van de Ven for her support with the funding process. This is a really exciting prospect and will make the Hub a better place to work and to visit as a customer. Revenue will also improve.

### Outlook & the future

Our immediate future success is still dependent on the outcome of the continuing Covid crisis. However, the long-term picture is very optimistic. The Hub management team sincerely wishes all our customers, staff and volunteer helpers the very best of health during these uncertain times. We look forward with much anticipation to reopening the Hub to even greater success when the current emergency is over.

*John Travis*



# Thank you to staff and volunteers



The most important task is to sincerely thank our dedicated team of staff and volunteers without whom we would not have a Hub to talk about! We rely completely on the support of our staff and volunteers to run and operate the Hub. This covers everyone from the cleaners, the volunteers covering a multitude of roles through to the catering staff who prepare and serve food every day. Finally the Management Team who are also all volunteers! This year, more than ever before, we have needed flexibility and support.

When the reopening of the Hub was in our line of sight after the first lockdown it was clear that, to operate our new Covid-safe procedures, it would require extra volunteer support for our cafe. A call for help was met with much enthusiasm from the community and many signed up to take on the new roles created, such as greeting customers to carry out checks for safety and compliance with the guidelines, providing table service for customers and café hygienists who sanitised every table and chair after each use.

All of the volunteers undertook our thorough training programme and thanks to their incredible efforts and dedication, customers regularly fed back the belief that the Hub was "the safest place to eat out in the area"! We are sincerely grateful to our wonderful staff and volunteers as the Hub could not survive without them!

## Management Group

John Travis  
Jose Hales  
Jonathan Berks  
Jeannie Seers  
Emma Grant  
Nikki Cross  
Clive Porter  
Steve Kilmurray  
Stephanie Trayhurn

## CM Staff

Eva Rogers  
Frances Boyer

## Café staff

Deanna Gregerson  
Mia Henderson  
Hayley King  
Nicki Montgomery  
Hannah Springhall  
Robbie Dodsworth  
Theo Windred  
Evie Kyprianou  
Trudy Stanford  
Ash Morley  
Lucy Froggett  
Sophia Tucci  
Lizzy Simmons

## Cleaning Staff *(since late 2019)*

Sam Baker  
Joe Littlewood  
Sam Maloney  
Holly Maloney  
Adam Baker  
Toby Walker  
Penny Lowe

## Our Café Volunteers

Linda Samson  
Jean Brown  
Jane Kirby  
Carla Conceicao  
Barbara Clarke  
Arthur Alderton  
Carol Alderton  
Vicky DeVillie  
Sally Ann Hart  
Mike Buckley  
Chris Thomas  
John Cash  
Jane Cash  
Janet Molloy  
Diana White  
Christine Newton  
Jane Humphries  
Liz Haddon  
Jayne Briggs

Bridget Sumsion  
Wanda Allen  
David Rich  
Liz Chapman  
Betty Chisholm  
Gren Lewis  
Wendy Foulds  
Tessa Lomax  
Liz Edwards  
Pam Lambert  
Amanda Norton  
Amanda Ireland  
David Sansom  
David Keclik  
Annette Keclik  
Trudy Stanford  
Daphne Jones-Barrie

## Our Library Volunteers

Arthur Alderton  
Janet Backer  
Jane Brett  
Debby Brown  
Ann Dekkers  
Maxine Eagle  
Moirra Gamon  
Mandy Hanscombe  
Jane Hanson  
Pam Lambert  
Janet Malloy  
Julie Perry

Helen Poley  
Peter Saunders  
Maria Stapleton  
Mike Stapleton  
Jane Stevens  
Viv Alsop  
Vivienne Brown

## Other Volunteers

Keith Trigg  
Barry DeVille  
Ian Cross  
Brian Collingbourne  
Lynn Travis  
Mike Swann  
Bruce Huett  
Paul Ray  
Jenni Bartlett

# Financial summary

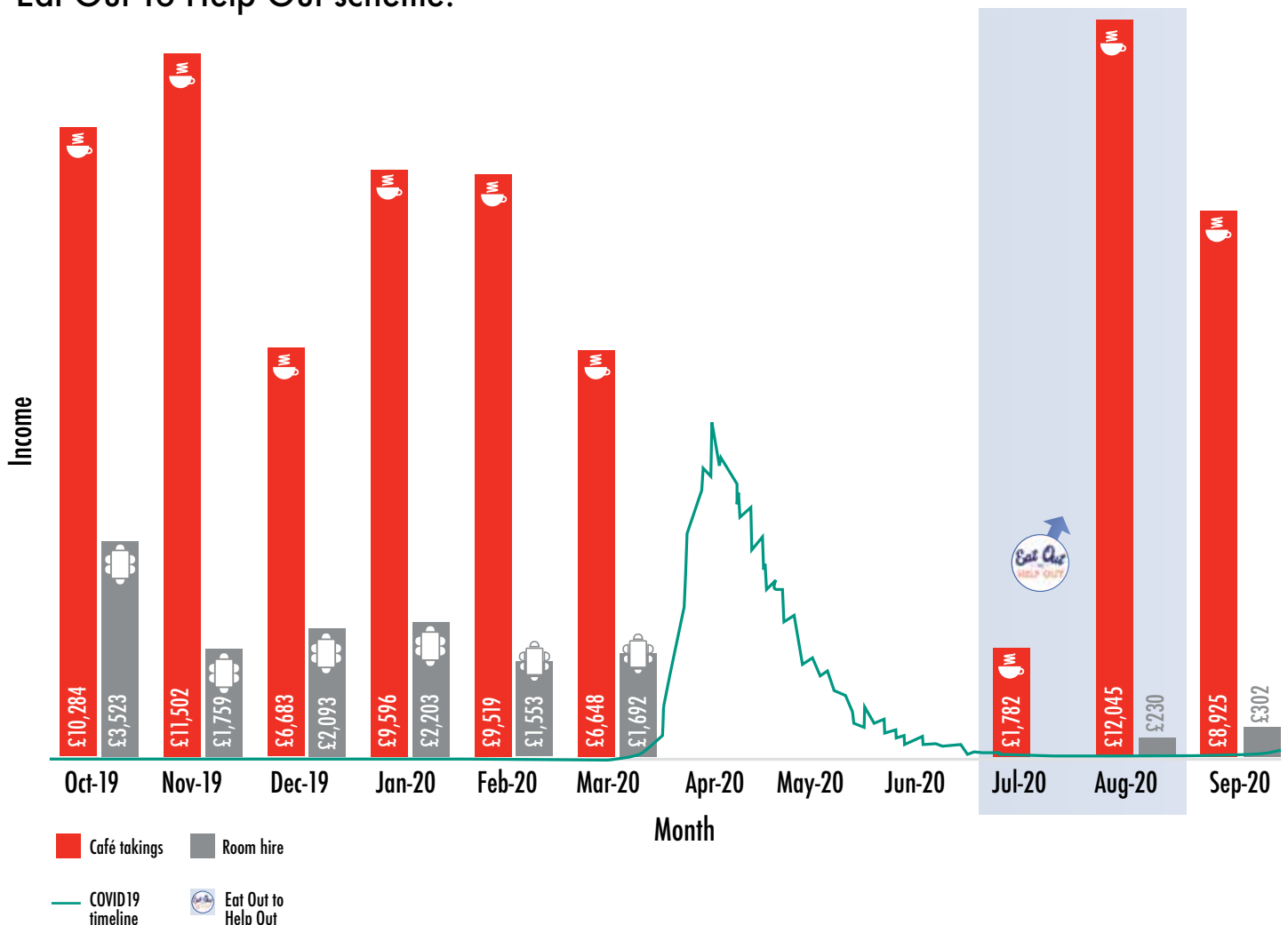
The summary table shows income and expenditure comparing financial years ending September 2019 and September 2020

The last year was severely impacted by the restrictions imposed by the coronavirus pandemic which forced the closure of both the cafe and room hire for four months, and the subsequent measures introduced in the remaining two months to protect customers and employees. However, the business performed strongly during the time that it was open, and the financial impact of the pandemic was lessened by government assistance including the reduction of VAT on food sales.

Income	Sept 2019	Sept 2020
Café sales	£101,486	£76,984
Room hire	£17,602	£13,354
MPC rent	£12,775	£12,775
Government grants	-	£10,000
Other income	£4,037	£1,106
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£135,900</b>	<b>£114,759</b>
<b>Expenditure (excl depreciation)</b>	<b>£146,003</b>	<b>£113,636</b>
<b>Trading profit/loss</b>	<b>-£10,103</b>	<b>£1,123</b>

Registered in England Company No: 08320569

Monthly income fluctuates with the opening and closing of the Hub due to forced public health closures and the introduction of the Government's Eat Out To Help Out scheme.



THANK  
YOU  
FOR  
YOUR  
SUPPORT  
AND  
PATIENCE!

# MCCR

The Melbourn Coronavirus Community Response (MCCR) volunteer group was set up in less than seven days at the Melbourn Hub, managed by Melbourn resident and Timebank coordinator Cath Sharman and supported closely by District Councillor Jose Hales, who is also a Hub volunteer and director.

The MCCR came about after Melbourn Hub's management group approached Cath and the Parish Council, to offer both the idea and the space to set up a community support centre for those needing help during the pandemic and to secure resources for the initiative. Thanks to the swift action of all involved, the MCCR was set up, funded and ready to support the community before the lockdown was declared on 23rd March. Numerous volunteers stepped forward and they were either tasked with staffing the 7 day a week MCCR control centre or delivering services to those local residents in need.

In total it is estimated that in excess of 2,500 hours were volunteered for the MCCR effort following its inception on 16th March 2020; this achieved an amazing array of help and support. The Hub also set up a food bank, plus in collaboration with Cambridge chef Liz Young, a weekly meal package for local families, delivered by volunteers.

The whole community, but particularly those households in self-isolation, were encouraged to use the MCCR for their prescription collection, preventing numerous different people visiting the Well pharmacy and the Orchard Surgery, thereby limiting footfall in those locations to a small nominated MCCR task force. This both minimised unnecessary exposure in the wider community and assisted the busy pharmacy and surgery, as an established system was put in place between Well, Orchard Surgery and the MCCR.

In April, County Councillor Susan van de Ven reported that

*precisely because of the overwhelming success of village schemes ... in South Cambs, the need for the Countywide Hub Volunteer pool, and probably the NHS Volunteers, is greatly diminished."*

With the support of existing key local organisations and individuals, Melbourn Timebank, Melbourn Hub, the Parish Council, the Melbourn Mobile Warden Scheme and the District Councillor for Melbourn, the MCCR successfully operated for 20 weeks combating the epidemic threat to vulnerable residents. The thank you cards from grateful residents were manyfold and a pleasure to receive (alongside the kind gifts of chocolates, cakes and biscuits!)



With  
**huge thanks**  
to all our **MCCR**  
**volunteers**

who gave their time.





# Key services & events

The original vision of the Hub was to provide a rich mix of services and events not just for residents, but also for local organisations, charities and the many businesses in the area. This vision has been fulfilled. The Hub is a registered charity itself, whose charter is simply to deliver benefits to the local area - not just Melbourn!

*Thank you for the coffee too*

## Our core

At a basic level, the Hub offers a destination to drink coffee or tea, or to have lunch with friends. More and more people are making this a regular part of the daily routine – footfall in the Bookmark Café increases steadily and doubled in the last three years prior to Covid. It is particularly satisfying to see the many people, old and young alike, who find the welcoming atmosphere just the lift they need. The Café serves home-cooked food from a Five Star rated kitchen every day except Sunday.

## Good for the mind, heart and everyone

Another benefit of the Hub is to promote and support a variety of services that would otherwise be absent or only available by travelling some distance. Among these are Relate, MIND, and Citizens Advice, all of which offer regular sessions that are accessible throughout the year by booking through the Hub Reception. And in 2019/20 we have been able to provide healthcare-related services in partnership with local GP surgeries and the NHS including flu vaccinations and drop-in health check clinics.

## We support you

We have continued to support many charities and local organisations who use the Hub for meetings and training, such as HomeStart, NSPCC, Mobile Wardens and the East of England Ambulance Service. Our special 'community' room hire terms are available for all local organisations that operate on a non-profit basis, and this aspect of the business has become central to our mission as a charity. Some Hub specific services of our own include the under 5s storytime, drop-in computer clinics and support for the Melbourn Timebank.

## Storytime

The Friday Storytime session has become a well-loved favourite, often with siblings joining one after another as they grow up! During the session the children sing songs and listen to rhymes and simple stories, together with a chance to dive into the instrument box and bang a drum or ring a bell. Storytime is also popular with parents and carers, giving them a chance to meet and chat, many staying afterwards to sample the Hub's refreshments.

## Room hire

The Hub offers a number of serviced rooms, some with air conditioning, which can be booked with catering and other business support. The demand for room hire has prompted Hub management to look for ways of expanding room capacity. We are hoping to make this aspiration a reality in 2021 with some much-needed improvements.

## Dementia Friends Café

Nurture of much-needed and missing aspects of social care support is something we are proud of. This can be seen by the Hub partnership with Dementia Friends, resulting in a now regular Dementia Friends Café event that was held once a month at the Hub in 2019/2020.

This initiative has become very successful indeed, demonstrating the gap that exists in providing for those living with dementia and particularly those who are



# MEMORY CAFE



...Thanks again on behalf of both of us and I wish you may think of other afternoon activities like this one...

...What a lively, wonderful afternoon we had and what delicious cakes!

...it was an enjoyable and different way to spend our Saturday afternoon as winter days have become terribly shorter and boring especially when you don't have anything to look forward to...

carers. The benefits arising from the opportunity to informally meet in a safe environment, in common with others living through dementia, cannot be overstated.

Support for the elderly community is very important, with the regular weekly lunch club providing a safe space to enjoy a meal with friends and in a safe environment.

A big part of our mission is to be the local centre for many regular events that track the passage of each year, often with the help of the Melbourn Fête Committee. Unfortunately, we were not able to offer a summer event in 2020, but we hope to be back in 2021 all being well!

## Events

We like to offer seasonal activities and Halloween, high summer and Christmas provide excellent moments for us to put on an array of activities and special events for the local community. This included in the last year, musical entertainment and children's activities.

Regular Craft Fairs have featured at the end of 2019 into early 2020 and give an opportunity for the village to come together and enjoy a cup of something and mix with friends (when we were allowed to do that!)

The Hub continues to host other special

events seasonal and otherwise, but has also become a local concert and performance venue with appearances by award-winning folk duo Megson as part of their sell out tour and Keith James who brought us the 'Songs of Leonard Cohen'.

Turn on to Christmas was the place to be at the beginning of December to mark the holiday to come! The collaboration with the Melbourn Fete Committee now marks the arrival of Christmas into the village. Santa had an upgraded grotto in December 2019 and were able to welcome families and children from all around Melbourn and the surrounding villages to see Santa and receive a gift whilst parents and carers enjoyed mulled wine and mince pies.

And our 'spooky spectacular' is always a sell out performance, never failing to impress, in association with Melbourn Amateur Dramatics (MADS) and October 2019 was no different, we also partook in 'spooky bear bags' and cupcakes and decorations for customers in 2020, during one of the safe open periods for hospitality, with safe distancing observed.

Local artists were queuing up to exhibit at the Hub 2019/2020 with a new display every single month up until March 2020.

Other events that were very popular were our charity quiz nights.

March 2020 brought with it some difficulties for hospitality and we had

to close our doors, but that didn't stop the team from launching into the Melbourn Coronavirus Community Response support including meals for the vulnerable and were able to use the building to continue to support the local community in times of absolute need during the pandemic.

## Getting ready for summer

Getting ready to open in July 2020, following the government announcement that hospitality could open again, was a full-on mission which included re-training staff and volunteers, PPE equipment, a new payment and ordering process, cleaning routines and the addition of the outside marquee, making sure the Hub could open within the exacting government guidelines and keep our staff and customers as safe as possible.



Needless to say we didn't miss a step and were able to reopen with bumper takings thanks to support from Eat Out to Help Out.

## Life on 2 wheels

A great summer menu with the addition of milkshakes and salads plus a few one-off outside-only events including Dr Bike's pop up bike repair shop was topped off with a continuation of our breakfast meal events into the autumn too.



## Lockdown library

Until the Covid shutdown in March 2020 the library access point continued to be a popular service within the community, providing an excellent selection of titles for adults and children and the option for library members to order in many books not held on the shelves. The library is run entirely by volunteers who help and assist customers, check books in and out and also manage the library stock etc. The weekly Storytime for pre-school children is also run by one of the library service volunteers. This feature has steadily grown in popularity with the 'little ones' really engaged by the story-telling and interactive songs, encouraging children to experience the joy of the written and spoken word.

Unfortunately, due to Covid, the library service was suspended in March 2020. Later in the year the book ordering service was re-introduced for customers and a facility for returning books on loan. When lifting of current restrictions allow, we look forward to being able to offer the library access point at Melbourn Hub once more. Our sincere thanks to the library volunteers for so patiently suffering this long period of inactivity.

**We are looking forward to reopening again with an improved room and space for our customers to enjoy many more events in 2021 and beyond!**



# THANK YOU



A Huge Thank you  
to everyone who has helped and  
supported us in this difficult year.

We've had low cost supplies, free supplies and many  
professional services willingly volunteered,  
including this document design.

We are so proud that so many people  
have offered their support.  
**We are eternally grateful to you.**

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