

Chair's Report

AGM 2022



14 NOVEMBER 2022

Todmorden Learning Centre and Community Hub
Burnley Rd, Todmorden OL14 7BX
HMRC Charity Exempt Reference EW89916

CONTEXT

Introduction

I'm pleased to be able to give another positive report of the year's activities. We have further grown our offering providing more facilities to the community and allowing more organisations to start and grow themselves. We are now delivering the third cohort of students through our Climate Challenge @Tod College and we are diversifying into other areas of education provision both as an extension to the green courses running and providing basic English and maths skills. Of course, many of our building users also provide practical and popular skills and education too.

We've done more with the building but the main transformation will come from the Town Deal funds.

We are currently able to cover our outgoings but there are risks ahead with the cost of living putting pressure on our hirers' funds, the ending of the Calderdale Council (CMBC) transfer grant and the anticipated increases to our energy bills. We have mitigations for these and we hope they will be sufficient.

Before we look at what's happened since the last AGM, a recap of the basics of our Strategy, Mission, and business model.

Strategy

Within our constitution, the two fundamentals of our strategy remain Community and Climate Challenge.

CLIMATE CHALLENGE

To:

Promote the sustainable use of land – Protect, enhance and rehabilitate the local farming environment

Promote the use of sustainable building methods - Become an internationally recognised centre of expertise in Natural Building

Promote low and zero-carbon options - Reduce our energy and resource needs and promote the same

Community

To:

Provide a Community Space – A welcoming, accessible and inclusive space for the whole community

Support Local Businesses - Provide working spaces for local businesses, start-ups and entrepreneurships

Support Local Youth - A welcoming space for young people to learn and be part of the community

Business Plan

Our Mission in our 2022 Business Plan was *“To provide national leadership on community-based climate action through the facilitation of education, support services, community action, and social enterprise.”*, which, as you'll hear later, we are successfully delivering. And we're doing that through our business model, the purpose of which in the 2022 Business Plan was defined as: *“... to provide facilities and space for delivery of education for a climate challenged future and to promote*



community cohesion through the provision of facilities for socially beneficial activities including courses, events, functions and sports.”

Review OF YEAR

PROGRESS

BUILDING

It is remarkable to realise that in last year’s report I was discussing the hope that the hall and gym works would be finished by December. That work, and all the original urgent building work discussed at the last AGM has been completed. Along with some unexpected items, such as the replacement of the domestic (and useless) basement flood pumps with industrial ones and the emergency fix to the worn-out main entrance door motors. On the positive side, the installation of building-wide WiFi and the replacement of most of the building’s lighting with LEDs, which has saved about a quarter of our electricity usage.

We have now settled into a cycle of ongoing maintenance, decoration and improvement. But all that is about to change with the Town Deal fund.

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

CLIMATE CHALLENGE @TOD COLLEGE (CCC)

The Climate Challenge @Tod College is key to TLCCH’s Environmental and Sustainability objectives.

In the academic year 2021-2022, the CCC delivered the Green Futures Course to two cohorts of students, with each full-time course lasting six months. Feedback from students throughout the courses led to continuous development and improvement of the learning programme.

We became a registered centre with ASDAN, who accredits the programme our team have written, and offers certificates to reward learners’ achievements.

The Hive, our classroom and study centre comprising workstations for students, library, kitchen and office has been further developed over the course of the year, as has the Workshop, now equipped with tools and workbenches.

We were hoping for 3–5-year funding for the project but this was not granted when the National Lottery judged that we didn’t meet all their criteria. Instead, we were given a further year’s funding. As well as financing the running of Green Futures for cohort 3 on a part time basis over the year from September 2022, this grant is funding the cost of a Development Worker who will explore and apply for other funding sources.

Meanwhile we have funding from Calderdale to employ an Engagement Officer, now in post, who will develop a range of activities in line with our aims including

- An after-school club for 11–15-year-olds offering Climate Science education
- A holiday play scheme for Primary School children
- Immersion days for older students
- CPD for teachers, educators and career advisers
- A Youth Climate Conference



We were approached by New Ground Housing association to provide training and development for their staff and tenants. This learning programme is being developed by our Strategy and Development Leader.

Finally, staff and committee members attended two sessions with Roisin Callaghan on Theory of Change. We came up with an overarching aim for the Climate Challenge College:

'The Local Community develop and sustains a mainstream green economy'

And six medium term aims towards achieving this:

1. *Local community has developed marketable and practical skills to enable them to work in the green economy.*
2. *Children are educated and engaged with green issues affecting their homes and families.*
3. *Local voluntary and community sector organisations and grassroots community groups promote climate justice in their work.*
4. *Local government develops and support a green economy strategy.*
5. *There is an increase in local green businesses, and they recruit workers to jobs. Existing businesses transition to green businesses.*
6. *Local consumers/customers understand the green economy and are motivated to buy from and use local green businesses.*

Our next task is to come up with activities to deliver these outcomes. We would like to know if TLCCH members agree with what we have drafted and will be arranging an opportunity to discuss our plans.

COMMUNITY

We are part of the community, supporting Todmorden and its surrounds and we do that by having diverse groups of people with different interests and backgrounds all made to feel welcome in the college. Community and belonging are enhanced when groups that would never normally come across each other mix and find they get on.

So, to enumerate the diverse groups and activities that draw people into the college:

SPORTS & WELLBEING

- Karate
- Judo
- Roller-skating
- Table Tennis
- U3A Walking Cricket
- Calderdale Community Club
- Netball
- Yoga
- Pilates

COMMUNITY GROUPS

- Incredible Edible Gardening Sundays
- Antiquarian Society
- U3A Novel Appreciation
- U3A Board Games club



- U3A Photo Group
- Makery
- Introduction to DIY
- Women's DIY
- Bike maintenance

SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

- Food Drop In
- Health holidays – Playschemes run by
 - Together We Grow
 - StoryMagic Theatre
 - Calderdale Community Coaching Trust
- Barnardo's Positive Identities Youth Group
- Domestic abuse support group
- Libra Support (Social Care), including:
 - The Place to Meet– activity and social group for people with learning disabilities
- Language Café – activity and social group for speakers of other languages
- Children's Centre
- Children's Centre Play groups
- Disability Support
- CYPs Contact Centre
- CAMHS - Open Minds
- New Ground
- Healthy Minds

EDUCATION

- Climate Challenge @Tod College cohort three
- Children's drama and dance classes
- Calderdale Adult Learning – Functional Skills English
- Calderdale Adult Learning – Functional Skills Maths
- U3A Creative writing
- School of Natural Building
- Prince's Trust
- Workers' Education Association
- Todmorden High School

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

- StoryMagic Theatre School
- Sewing Classes, dressmaking
- Creative Textiles
- Home Furnishing
- Life drawing
- Disability art class
- Painting
- Printmaking
- Experimental drawing



- Book making
- Printmaking
- Mixed media art classes
- Recreating historical art sessions
- Stained glass workshops
- Puppet making for the Lamplighter Festival
- Guitar making;

EVENTS

- NHS Away Day
- Todmorden Folk Festival
- Parasol Community Event
- Thai Afternoon
- Slow the Flow Exhibition
- Les Panards Dansants
- Winter Fair

LOCAL ECONOMY

We also support the local economy by providing affordable accommodation and have 13 tenancies, 24 regular room hires, 10 recurring occasional hires and a healthy pipeline of more, so as well as all the users above we should also mention:

- Calderdale Sound Network
- Sugar Free TV
- Well Beings (counselling company)
- Using Local builders for college works

PEOPLE

None of the above would have been possible without the efforts of our staff, volunteers, board and everyone who comes and uses this facility.

We have 10 paid members of staff who clean, manage, fix, and educate. They run the building, build and maintain relationships with users, manage contractors, make sure everything is working and the rooms are ready and ensure that the building is clean and welcoming. They also include the three educators who run the Climate Challenge College.

There are 11 regular reception volunteers who welcome and direct users of the building and without whom we would struggle to keep everything going. We also have many occasional volunteers who have helped with other ad hoc needs. We're grateful to everyone who volunteers, and we always would like more to join us.

There are 4 volunteer Climate Challenge @Tod College project committee members, who direct the operation of the CCC and are supported by approximately 35 volunteer members of the CCC Advisory Committee.

Finally, there are the volunteer board members, who direct the building's use, write the business plan, the budget, the strategy, the policies, and pitch-in to everything else that needs to be done.



Sadly, we have had two valuable members leave in the past year, one through ill health and another through pressure of work.

FUTURE

TAKING THE COLLEGE FORWARD

There are exciting new projects happening, of course, from our many users but we are now taking the lead on some things ourselves. We started the English Café, which has turned into a remarkable success and has given us the “proof” needed to persuade Calderdale Council and Calderdale Adult Learning that there is demand at this end of the valley for English as a second language, basic English skills and basic maths skills courses.

We have funding from Calderdale to run a “World Dance Club” which will be starting soon as part of efforts to ensure full integration of people from other parts of the world who have recently arrived in the borough, not least those from Ukraine.

We are holding a conference for anyone interested in local food issues on November 22nd and have attracted significant interest in this.

As the winter fuel crisis hits those who are already the most vulnerable, we are planning to provide a “warm space” in our building for those who can’t afford to turn the heating on.

Of course, the biggest project for the next few years will be that delivered through the Town Deal funding. The expected £1.8m will be spent on:

Building Improvements and Energy Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved security and access doors to Workshop • New entrance for Children’s centre installed • Disabled access to mezzanine installed • Changing places disabled facility • Lobby and staircase refurbished • New toilet block and entrance to Hall completed • Living green wall to main road • Double or secondary glazing fitted • Revised heating system • Roof solar PV installed • Insulation, including roof repairs • Replacement of gym lighting with LED panels
Space Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storage areas e.g., for sewing machines, computers, foodbank etc. installed • Hot desk facilities installed, business incubator spaces upgrades, small conference spaces refurbished • Cookery room/community kitchen fully refurbished
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment for community groups e.g., projectors/screen, chairs and tables purchased and available • Practical skills workshop equipped • Artists’ studios equipped • Install new stage lights and sound system
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood prevention, steel emergency exit flood doors fitted • Alarm and security system upgraded • Upgrade of fire rating completed • Extra cameras for CCTV installed



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refurbish carpark markings, cleaned and tidied up completed. Electric charging points installed |
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NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS

We need more volunteers to keep us viable. Especially for being on the Reception Desk, we have some regular volunteers who do a fantastic job of meeting and greeting, answering the phone, directing people to the right place and keeping the place secure by having a presence “on the desk”. There’s usually plenty of time to “do your own thing” whilst there, be it reading, working on your laptop, painting, etc. as long as you engage with people coming in and out. We especially want people who are able to do evenings and weekends. Without volunteers to cover, we have to roster paid staff to be on the desk and this takes them away from doing the work we pay them for.

UPDATE TO STRATEGY

We will be updating strategy in the New Year and would like to involve members in that process of reviewing what we thought we would do before we took on the building against what we have delivered and what we should set as new goals and targets. Of course, the strategy will be within our Objects (see appendix).

BOARD STRUCTURE

As flagged up at last year’s AGM we have come forward with proposed changes to reflect the needed changes to the board structure which I hope you will vote for when we reach that part of the agenda. With major new projects coming up and the existing workload it’s become difficult to manage with only five of us. The new board structure will give us more resilience.

CONCLUSION

This year has been one of consolidation and organic growth, if economic conditions had remained stable, we would be looking at doing faster improvements and building up some reserves in our accounts. As it is, we are currently covering our costs but there are headwinds, our transfer grant from CMBC is winding down and our energy costs are about to balloon as we come off our current fixed tariffs. The mitigations for those are our planned drive to have more events in the hall and to put on conferences and similar. These have proved to be excellent revenue generators. And of course, the Town Deal improvements will make a dramatic difference to the facilities and the energy efficiency of the building, so that’s extremely positive.

Finally, I will be standing down as chair in March at the second anniversary of the asset transfer and my third as chair. So, next year there will be a new enthusiastic person writing this and telling you all about the fantastic changes that have happened.



Dave Wardell
14th November 2022
Chair & Data Protection Officer of
Todmorden Learning Centre and Community Hub



OBJECTS

Our Objects in our constitution are:

The objects of the Society shall be for the public benefit, to:

- (a) Promote sustainable development for the benefit of the public by advancing the education of the public in subjects relating to sustainable development and the protection, enhancement and rehabilitation of the environment and to promote study and research in the subjects of:
 - (i) the practical skills and science of building with natural materials and the renovation of historical buildings;*
 - (ii) the practical skills and science of small-scale agriculture and horticulture in order to live within and rehabilitate the natural environment;*
 - (iii) the practical skills and science of small-scale energy production; by means of practical teaching courses, seminars, conferences, and publications. Sustainable development means "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."**
- (b) The provision and maintenance of facilities for the use of the inhabitants of Todmorden without distinction of political, religious or other opinions, for educational and vocational training activities, including use for:
 - (i) meetings, lectures and classes, and*
 - (ii) other forms of recreation and leisure-time occupation, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the inhabitants.**
- (c) To help young people by education and training, especially but not exclusively through leisure time activities, so as to develop their capabilities that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society.*

