

the alice cross centre



THE ALICE CROSS CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT

YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023



Company Registration Number 2338079
Charity Registration Number 800996

Trustees Statement

During this last year, The Alice Cross Centre has continued to provide and develop services of the highest quality covering a range of activities, events and support services that have further established our position as the “go to” community centre for Teignmouth and the surrounding area. We have seen the Centre open its doors to a much wider range of age groups, than the traditionally expected “elder” community of the Teignbridge area.

The centre now offers support and activities for all ages from Mother and toddlers visiting our Community Cafe through to elderly and infirm support meetings. In particular, our staff have welcomed children from local primary schools to interact with our Memory Café attendees, we have encouraged development of a youth choir and a youth drama group. These activities for the wider community are signposting new needs for which we plan to develop further services to support these communities.

We deservedly thank our Centre Manager, Jackie, and her team for their continued dedication to improve and develop the centre activities in line with the aims set out previously by the Trustees. We would also like to acknowledge the incredible work our volunteers do for the Centre and would like to thank them for their contribution to our services. Moving forward, the Trustees have supported the development of a medium-term plan for 2024 – 26, which will outline strategic objectives, priorities and the steps to be taken to meet targets set. The plan will clarify the Vision of The Alice Cross Centre to be the community centre of choice for improved health and wellbeing for all, with an updated Mission to maximise our contribution to the well-being of our community.

The Trustees have also encouraged the continued significant investment in the development of the Centre whilst supporting the key personnel and encouraging a steady development of the core services required by the community. The objectives set are based around four guiding pillars of Food, Community, Movement and Mind that will enable the Centre to grow as well as adapt to the needs of the wider community that it now represents.

As we continue to invest into the Centre and its growth, we do so whilst managing the risk of the charity and a risk register is used to document the risks identified, level of severity and probability, ownership and mitigation measures for each risk. Risks are logged with reference to impact and probability and risk appetite is identified by reference to the same criteria.

The Alice Cross Centre Board of Trustees and the Centre staff can only achieve further success with the continued support of our volunteers and clients and, in line with this new Medium-Term Plan, we shall continue to work with them all to reach new goals and further develop The Alice Cross Centre as Teignmouth’s “go to” Community Hub.

The Alice Cross Centre Board of Trustees

January 2024.

Our story

Alice Cross was driven by the idea that no-one in Teignmouth should feel lonely. From her early community work after World War One, Alice continually involved herself in helping others in the town. In 1978 The Alice Cross Centre was built as a meeting place and hub where she continued to work tirelessly until aged 97.

The Alice Cross Centre was set up as a charity and registered at Companies House in 1989, and now with a team of 6 full and part-time staff and a core group of 82 loyal and active volunteers, the charity continues to uphold the original vision of Alice Cross, to enhance health and wellbeing in the community of Teignmouth, Shaldon and District through a programme of activities and service provision.

“I volunteer here because I want to give something to the community. I enjoy the diversity of the service users. We gain as much from the service users as they gain from us.”

Volunteer at the Heat Café and Community Breakfast Café, age 72.



Centre Manager's Report

This has been my first full financial year at The Alice Cross Centre and I am pleased to report that we have seen many positive improvements during that time including a significant growth in income, the streamlining of operations using new technology and processes, premises improvements, most notably a new commercial kitchen funded by a Valenica Communities Fund grant of £48,000, and new projects, services and activities which have improved participation and impact and diversified our service users.

I continue to be passionate about the pillars of health that guide our services; food, community, movement, and the more recently added “mind” and we have worked hard this year to follow our vision to be “the community centre of choice for improved health and well-being for all”, with the updated mission “to maximise our contribution to the well-being of our community.”

Income has more than doubled since last financial year, due to new funding streams and donors, growth in our food offering, and more creative fundraising, resulting in a reduced deficit and a strong balance sheet.

Our service growth has been focused on projects that supported our clients through the cost-of-living crisis this year, in particular the Heat Café, a warm and welcoming community café with food available on a pay what you can basis, helping to alleviate both food and fuel poverty. We took on new meal delivery customers including more people who couldn't afford to pay, subsidised by our Lottery Community Fund grant and added in another meal delivery day for further support. We also delivered a successful slow cooker course to 50 students, teaching them how to make nutritious and inexpensive food, whilst saving money on their energy bills. They also received a free slow cooker and left with the ingredients to cook their first meal.

Our memory Café continues to grow and thrive, supporting 28 people with dementia and their families and carers. One of our highlights was when Teignmouth Primary School visited to sing for everybody and share their work, photo below.

It has been a very active year for the whole team, with a packed schedule of events to both raise awareness and funds, including charity days on the Den, St Michaels Flower Festival, Defibrillator Opening Ceremony, Teignmouth Carnival, Murder Mystery Evening, The Kings Coronation Celebrations, Quiz Nights, our legendary Christmas Lunch, Big Green Week, and the introduction of our Christmas and Easter market to name but a few. The events encourage our community to socialise, have fun and helps to alleviate social isolation, which has been proven to have a positive effect on well-being and mental health.



The Team

Our Trustees



Dan Hawkins



Deborah Minett



Sue Halfyard



Andy Longford



Liz Batson
Treasurer

Our Staff



Jackie O'Brien
General Manager



Alison Fenton
Centre Co-ordinator



Yvonne Lamond
Volunteer Co-ordinator



Peta Howell
Marketing & Admin Support



Sue Yates
Support Worker



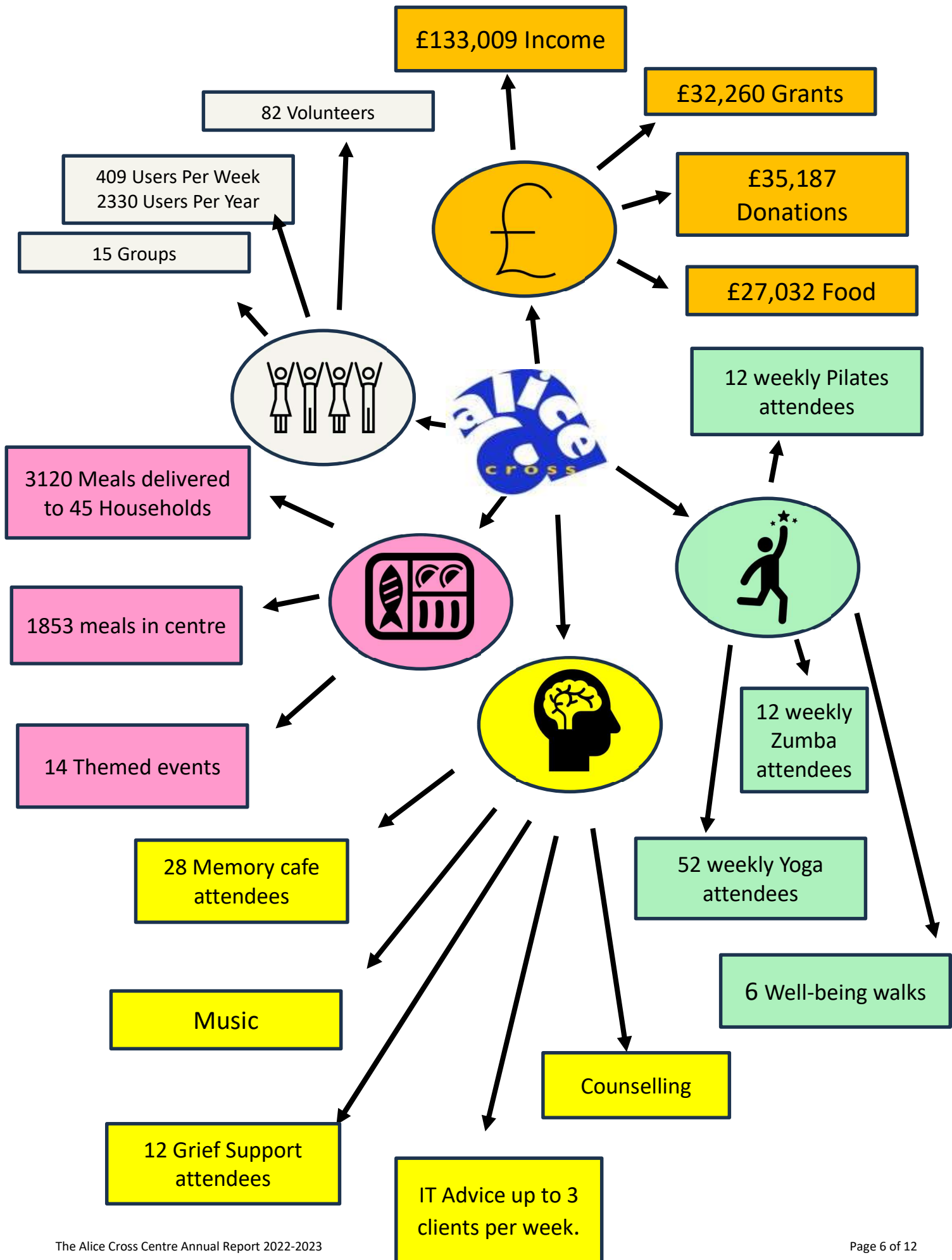
Dave Cook
Chef & F & B Manager

The Alice Cross had 5 trustees during the year, with Elizabeth Batson as Treasurer. The job of Chair is shared between the 5 trustees. Pat Henchie resigned as a trustee in July 2022 and Dan Hawkins joined as a trustee in September 2022. The Alice Cross Team would like to thank Pat for her important contribution to the governance and strategic direction of the centre during her time on the board.

The staff team remains the same as last year as shown above, with the addition of our part time cleaner Nicky Howarth.

We are also supported by a dedicated team of 82 volunteers who help in all aspects of running the centre. The Centre could not function without our loyal band of volunteers giving an estimated **7,500** hours a year – which would cost **£78,750**, if they were each paid £10.50 an hour. Without their help the Centre would find it almost impossible to function - so a huge thank you to all you wonderful volunteers and a big thank you to our dedicated team of trustees, and staff. The synergy of our committed team is what makes The Alice Cross Centre thrive and such a positive place to be.

Main Headlines



The Impact of our Charitable Work in 2022-23

- **The food delivery team** served up 3,120 hot meals to a total of 45 homes in the area four days a week offering social contact and a welfare check by both the food courier and telephone booking volunteers. We also served 1852 lunches in the centre plus meals served at our Heat Cafés. This is a vital part of our work and where appropriate we work collaboratively with other voluntary organisations.
- **Christmas Lunch** in December 2022 was our first one in three years, post pandemic. We fed 72 guests and 13 volunteers and it was a joyous day for all.
- The popular **Memory Café sessions** for people with dementia saw around 28 users per week, with carers also attending or taking time out knowing they don't have to worry about their loved one for a while.



The Heat Café, designed to offer a cosy space during the colder months was run on two afternoons a week, offering simple food on a 'pay-what-you-can-afford' basis and layered with services such as energy advice and our digital skills pop-in. This attracted up to 30 people per session. In warmer months we rebranded the sessions as the **Community Café**.

We introduced our popular Saturday Community Breakfast towards the end of the financial year and this is growing in visitor numbers weekly, with an average of over 30 people per session and is attracting a new audience to the centre. We also do markets and pre-loved sales on Saturday morning, enhanced by

breakfast being served.

- Two-weekly **music groups** regularly attracted up to 15 people, run by local musicians and our own volunteers who perform and host the ever-popular singalongs. The musicians encourage the audience to participate, for example one person brings his drum kit to play along and other people get the opportunity to take centre stage and sing with the band.
- A bi-monthly **bereavement support group** was attended by an average of 12 people. The group is run by experienced volunteers who are Cruse trained to provide bereavement support. It allows the attendees to share their feelings and emotions with people who are going through the same experience. We have many referrals from the local surgery for this group as NHS counselling takes so long to access and we have an excellent reputation for bereavement support.
- Devon County Council funded the weekly **Digital Skills Sessions** and this was used by a small group of over 65's, up to 3 per week.
- **Pilates and Zumba sessions** were hosted weekly. Subsidised by the Centre, they catered for over 50's with up to 12 per class.
- We have 4 **Yoga** classes a week for mixed abilities, with 52 people attending, run by an independent yoga teacher who hires our hall.
- A subsidised **Table Tennis group** met weekly, all attendees being over 65 years. They paid £2 per session and the group regularly attracted up to 12 players.
- We secured funding for a "**Chat and Chop**" **slow cooking course**, with each attendee being given a slow cooker for use at home. 50 people completed the course, spread over five sessions with 10 students each time.
- Our **Art and Craft Group** ran twice a month and was regularly attended by 15 people of mixed abilities including people with special educational needs and their carers.

WHAT'S ON AT THE ALICE CROSS?



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MONDAY

- 10.30 - 12pm Monday Music
- 10am - 12pm Monday Chat Club
- 1pm - 3.30pm Community Café
- 3.45pm - 4.30pm - Teignmouth Youth Choir

TUESDAY

- 10.15am - 11.45am Line dancing with Viv
 - 10.30am - 12.30pm Quilter's tea party
 - 12pm - 12.45 - NEW! Zumba Toning with Vicki
 - 2.30pm - 3.30 Chair Yoga with Lisa
 - 4.15pm - 5.15pm Mat yoga with Lisa
 - 5.30pm - 6.30pm Mat yoga with Lisa
- email: lisayogaforall@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY

- 9.30am - 10.15am Zumba Gold with Peta
- 10.30am - 12pm Grief Support Group
- 10.45am - 11.45am Seated Yoga with Lisa
- 2.30pm - 4.30pm Digital Skills 1:1
- 1.30pm - 3.30pm Table Tennis

THURSDAY

- 10am - 12pm Memory Cafe
- 12pm - 1pm Lunch Club
- 1 pm - 3pm TeignAid
- 1.30pm - 4pm - Community Café
- 7.30pm - 9.30pm World Ship Society

FRIDAY

- 10am - 11.30am The Teigns Rehearsal and Coffee
- Fish Friday! 12pm in the hall or delivered to the home
- 1pm - 3.30pm - Community Café
- 4.30pm - 9.30pm Dramatically Different Youth Drama

SATURDAY

- 9am - 12pm Community Breakfast café

SUNDAY

- 12pm - 2pm Sunday Lunch (once a month)
- Booking Essential - 01626 778039



@thealicecross



@alicecrosscentre

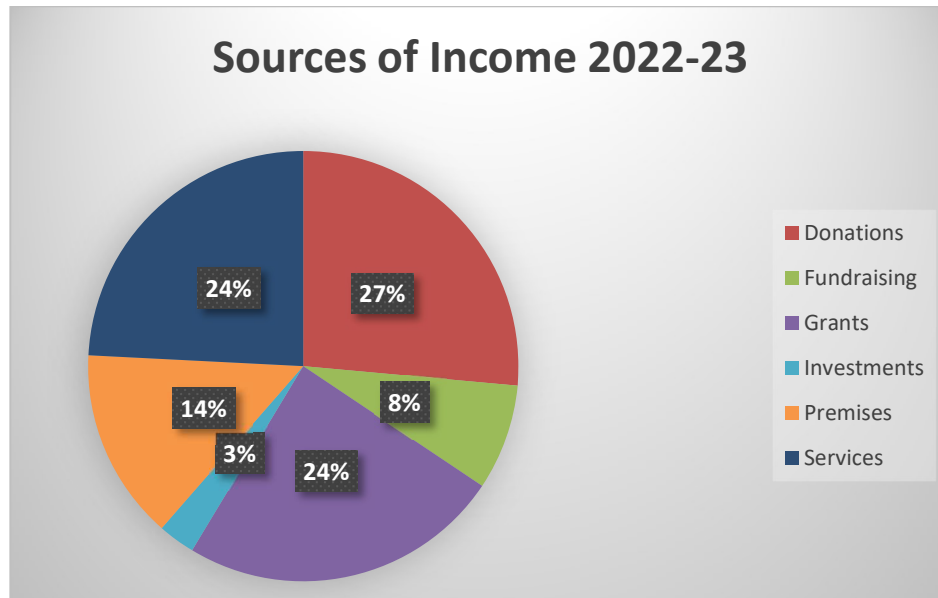
www.thealicecross.co.uk

Events and Catering

We were fortunate to be awarded a £48,000 grant from Valancia Communities Fund to install a new commercial kitchen, as our original kitchen was over 30 years old and no longer fit for purpose. The new kitchen was fitted in March 2023 and has been a game changer for the centre, enabling us to increase our meal capacity and reach more people. We are pleased to report we have achieved a 5 star rating again at a recent EHO inspection. We cater for events and parties and have had some good bookings this year, including three “big” birthdays celebrations, a Liberal Democrat party, four wakes and three children’s parties, plus poetry events. We had many more regular bookings for non-catered private events and parties, all an important source of income for us, whilst affordable for our local community. Our licensed bar is an important asset too.



Sources of Income 2022-23



Income was £133,009 (FY 2021-22 £64,634) and Expenditure £146,923 (FY2021-22 £93,529). We have moved closer to our goal of diversifying our income sources this financial year as demonstrated in the diagram. The split between the various income sources is nicely distributed across the income categories.

For the first time this year we incorporated a big challenge into our fundraising strategy with the aim being lots of people raising a little, whilst working towards a shared goal. We chose an inclusive walking challenge to “Walk and Mile a Day in March.” Twenty-three people signed up and we raised over £5280. Eric Crocker, an 81 year old ex-postman, took this challenge to heart and raised over £2,000 of the total, and highlighted what you can achieve when you put your mind to it.

Neil Howell, an ex-Chair of our Trustee Board, also did a big challenge by walking the Camino Way for The Alice Cross Heat Café. He raised £2491. A big thanks to Neil, Eric and the rest of our walking challenge team. Your efforts are truly appreciated.

Other Services

The centre continues to hold a regular podiatry clinic and delivers counselling and holistic therapies, including massage and reiki through independent practitioners. We continue to support Teignmouth Community School’s (TCS) enrichment programme by providing cooking sessions, running two courses this year due to popular demand. We take a student every year from TCS for a week’s work experience plus Duke of Edinburgh volunteers. We also host partner organisation Teign Aid who support people facing homelessness and with benefit queries.

Case Studies and Testimonials.

Our Grief Support group meets every two weeks and provides a telephone counselling service, group sessions or the opportunity to meet 1 – 1 in a café. Here are some recent testimonials:

- *“You have all been so great. I wouldn’t be where I am now without this group.”*
- *“I like coming to this group, because I can talk with people who understand”.*
- *“I was a bit worried about coming to the group but now I am so glad I did.”*

Mr C has our meal deliveries. He is disabled and finds it difficult to get out.

“It’s a joy having friendly volunteers delivering a delicious meal to your door, particularly when you are disabled. The quality of food is outstanding and the service a wonderful kindness.”

Ms M uses our Heat Café.

“I love the people in here, the friendly attitude and the way it is. I always feel comfortable and welcomed and never judged. A lot of people feel a bit funny about the scooter but you don’t. If I didn’t have The Alice, I would have nowhere else to go.”



“Feeding the community”

J is aged 75, partially sighted and lives alone. She was referred to The Alice Cross Centre by her doctor after lockdown. Her husband had died, and she was feeling lonely and isolated. She uses our meal delivery service as well as eating lunch in the centre. She attends Monday Music, the Memory Café, Thursday Heat Café and Saturday Community Breakfast. She has meals delivered on Friday and alternative Sundays. She says:

“I enjoy mixing with a variety of people, where there is no distinction between disability or able bodied, so it’s very nice. I never feel judged for my disability, and it is incredibly friendly here every time. I enjoy the people I meet.”

The Future

We have recently finished a consultative process and drawn up a Medium-Term Business plan for 2024 – 2026. Our priorities are:

- Identifying stable, long- and medium-term sources of funding and diversify income sources.
- Increasing revenue from commercial activities.
- Minimising operating costs.
- Maximising use of our facilities.
- Increasing the number and diversity of users.
- Increasing the numbers and skills sets of volunteers.
- Widening the reach of the Centre for providing activities for new target audiences.
- Improving data management and performance reporting.
- Raising awareness of the Centre.
- Increasing range and use of food options and revenue.
- Identifying ways to assess impact.

We have recently received another grant from Valencia Communities Fund to refurbish our lift. Once this work has been completed it enables us to re-organise the space in our building to maximise its potential, subject to funding. We hope to create more meeting rooms, upgrade our therapy room and create a new community café meeting space that will be accessible when the main hall is in use.

We will still be continuing our valuable work to support older people, alongside developing services that are relevant for a wider age demographic to create a vibrant community centre that is attractive and feels relevant and welcoming no matter what your age.

Thank you

Finally, we would like to say a heartfelt thank you to all our donors, trustees, volunteers, staff and voluntary sector partners for the support you have given us during the year. Sincere thanks to the trusts, foundations and private individuals who prefer to remain anonymous for their support.

If you would like to sponsor an activity or event at Alice Cross, please do get in touch. Popular choices are sponsoring our Allotment, Grief Support Group, Memory Café, Meal Delivery Service or printing our Annual Report.

The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust	Melissa Middleton, The Whistle Stop Cafe
Age UK Devon	Mini Heaven Bakers
Alastair Sutherland	Morrisons Teignmouth
Cllr Andrew Henderson (DCC)	The National Lottery
Alice Cross Centre Events & Fundraising Team	Neil Howell
Assist Teignbridge	The Norman Family Charitable Trust
Browne Jacobson Solicitors	R.S. Brownless Charitable Trust
Citizens Advice Bureau	Shaldon Bakery
The Clare Milne Trust	South West Water
Co-op Community Fund	Teignbridge Community and Voluntary Services
Co-op Funeral Care Teignmouth	Teignbridge District Council
Co-op Teignmouth (Matt Hooper and team)	Teign Heritage Centre
Cost of Living Fund (DCC)	Teignbridge Lottery
Cllr David Cox (DCC)	Teignmouth Dementia Action Alliance group
Dawlish Community Transport	Teignmouth Rotary Club
Dawlish Rotary Club	Teignmouth Town Council
Devon Community Fund	Teignmouth Town Clerk
Devon Highwaymen Bikers	Teignmouth Traders Association
Devon Memory Café Consortium	Teign CVS
Diantha Coombes; Monday Music and more.	Teign Martime and Shanty Festival
Eric Crocker	Teignmouth & District u3a
The Elmgrant Trust	The Teigns - Monday Music and Fund Raising
FareShare	Tesco Newton Abbot
The Foyle Foundation	Tesco Teignmouth
Garfield Weston Foundation	Tozers Solicitors (including Will writing donations)
Greenwood Accountancy Ltd	Scott Richards Solicitors
Growing Communities Fund (DCC)	Valencia Communities Fund
Homeless in Teignmouth Support Foodbank (HITS)	Viscount Amory's Charitable Trust
Libraries Support Fund (DCC)	Volunteer Evening Bar Team: Dave, Sara, Vanda, Sue
Lottery, Awards for All Fund	Volunteering in Health
Lottery, Cost of Living Fund	Our Volunteers
The Mabel Cooper Charitable Trust	Weatherheads Web - Angie and Huw
The Marjorie and Geoffrey Jones Charitable Trust	Valencia Communities Fund
Matthews Wrightson Charity Trust	Cllr Cate Williams (DCC)
Malcolm and Martin – Monday Music	Viv Wilson MBE

Best Wishes,

Jackie

Jackie O'Brien – General Manager