



A Vibrant Place

Our recent **Open Day** was very well attended and showed what a vibrant place the Centre is becoming. The Day coincided with the annual Dog Show, organised by Dave and Jill Whitmore. Despite heavy rain, a good time was had by the dogs and their owners.



Meanwhile, inside the Centre, local groups had stalls where visitors could hear about their activities and sign up. Among those present were scouts and guides, Madeley White Star football academy, Darby and Joan, the U3A. Karen Leigh promoted her silversmithing course. Ali Orme was busy with her Majestic Nails business, and there were many more things going on.



Pepper Street performing arts (above) showcased the talents of both young and older members, who sang and danced for us. We are very lucky to have this sort of activity going on in the Centre and we urge more families and individuals to get involved. Room occupancy rates at the Centre have doubled to 60% since our **online booking system** was introduced in April. People can now access our website: www.madeleycentre.co.uk (select Room Hire) from their phones and tablets, find out when rooms are available and place a reservation directly from the comfort of their armchairs. This has brought a huge increase in the number of

people using the Centre, especially for family events such as birthdays, anniversaries and other celebrations.



Sunday Music at the Madeley Centre concerts are going from strength to strength. In the first three concerts, audiences have grown from 40 to 50 to 64 and we expect even more for Mat Walklate's Irish Band on 2nd December. Tickets are available now - £10 on the door, pay for 3 and get the 4th free, or £7.50 if you become a Friend of the Madeley Centre. You can book now for the 4 concerts in the Spring – programmes are available in the Centre and on our website.

The Darby and Joan Club, which has run for many years in the village, would welcome new members. You pay just £2 to join and £2 each meeting. The Club meets fortnightly on Tuesday afternoons for tea, a chat and a relaxed game of bingo. They plan regular coach outings for members. Further details from Renata Straka, 07490 263586.

Services in the Centre

Centre Office Hours: 10.30am to 4pm each day.
Centre contact number: 01782 751808

Post Office:

9.30-12.30 every Tuesday and Friday. A full range of postal services is on offer as well as banking and passport applications.

Police station:

PCSO Colin Hodgkinson 07812 967361

colin.hodgkinson@staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

Annual General Meeting

There was a very good turnout of members of the Madeley Centre charity for the AGM. They were told how the Centre has been badly affected by the government's austerity measures. First Staffordshire County Council withdrew funding for the Nursery in the Children's Centre and then Newcastle Borough cutbacks forced the closure of the Drop-in Centre, which allowed people to access many Council Services from the Madeley centre. The loss of well over £10,000 a year was a huge hit on the Centre's finances and its effect was building up year by year. Consequently, the reserves of the Centre fell from £59,000 to £21,500 by February of this year.

When the new Management Board took over at the end of February, the Centre was in serious financial jeopardy and it has required a concerted effort to turn the situation around.

Measures taken have included:

Income recovery: Restoring Feed-in-Tariffs for solar and fuel cell electricity bringing in an additional £10,000 and calling in a backlog of money owed to the Centre from unpaid room bookings.

Cost savings: arranging better deals with utilities, insurance, phone and internet companies, cutting legal bills, and accounting costs by carrying out accounting and payroll work in-house, cutting electricity consumption by switching off all appliances when they are not being used.

Essential spending: has been undertaken on repairs to the foyer ceiling and leaks in atrium windows, putting up sign boards to advertise events so that people can find out what is on when the Centre is closed, and making essential repairs to the unusable fuel cell (saving over £6,000 a year).

Income generating: raising room charges for commercial hirers and for the most popular Board Room but reducing the charges to £8 for activities for children and young people in the Children's Centre, bringing in Majestic Nails, silversmithing, meditation and healing, the Post Office and negotiating to bring a nursery back into the Centre.

Staff restructuring: Removing a level of management to have two job-share administrators and no overall manager, thus reducing staffing costs by over £15,000.

This has had its consequences. With only two part-time administrators, in future we will have to leave the bulk of event organisation to user groups.

Turning the corner: As a result of the above measures, in the first 6 months that the new Board has been in charge, the reserves have recovered from £21,500 to £39,000. However, these are still too low. The maintenance demands of the £1.4million Centre are high, so our aim is to build the reserve to a level of at least £75,000 so that we are in a position to meet demands for money for repairs to heating, roof, gutters and windows, and general repairs and maintenance.

What the Centre Offers

The Centre is open to everyone in the community. Are you taking advantage of the many things going on there for all age groups?

Mothers and babies: *Jiggle Tots, child development clinic.*

Children and teenagers: *Keikobasku Little Karate Warriors, Karate & Self-defence, Kung Fu, Table Tennis, Performing Arts: Pepper Street and Jill Clewes.*

Adults: *Pilates, Zumba, Yoga/Meditation, Kung Fu, Line Dancing, Choirs, Tea Dances, Slimming World, SOSA Fitness, Indoor Bowling, Knit and Natter, Community Bingo, Darby & Joan.*

The U3A (set up for retired and semi-retired but open to all. Membership £12.50 a year): *33 activities including: local walks, longer rambles, table tennis, painting and drawing, art appreciation, book groups, card and board games, sewing, patchwork and quilting, croquet, computers, discussions, family history, film and theatre visits, French, Spanish, Latin, local outings, natural history, music appreciation, philosophy, photography, T'ai Chi, poetry and tennis. There are also popular Quiz Nights, Monthly Talks and a lunch and dining club.*

Other events: *car boot sale, Madeley Police Surgery, Summer and Christmas Festivals, music nights and barn dances.*

Family bookings: *birthday parties, engagements, weddings, funerals and receptions.*

Corporate Events: *use by local firms for training, presentations and away days.*

If there is something you are interested in that the Centre is not offering then please talk to us and we will do our best to help you get it started.

Since the Madeley Centre opened there has been a huge increase in the range of opportunities on offer to local people. It offers far more activities than you would find in most communities of similar size, and we are hoping that even more people will take advantage of this unique facility.

Steve Hurd, Chair
Madeley Rural Community Charity (MRCC)

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