



2022

IMPACT REPORT



IMPACT REPORT 2022



A year of growth, collaboration and memorable moments!

It's always a pleasure to look back and reflect on achievements and learning as another year passes and 2022 certainly didn't disappoint!

It's been a privilege to witness the continued growth of The Shoebox Community and to see how every new member that pops through our doors, or attends a project, brings new passions and skills, as well as a desire to meet new people and connect with their communities. It's the little moments I enjoy the most, whether it's hearing about the latest trip self-organised by Shoebox members or the little conversation observed between two members at the bus stop who were strangers six months ago and now have a blossoming friendship. These moments have become a daily occurrence at The Shoebox and in the neighbourhoods we work in and it's a ray of hope against a backdrop of unprecedented challenges including the cost of living crisis and the state of mental health provision.



**Tom Gaskin, CEO
The Shoebox Enterprises CIC**

As a value we hold strongly, I truly believe that collaboration is the key to finding the solutions we need to overcome these difficult times and I'm proud that in 2022 we have continued to grow our partnership working. It's important that we raise awareness of the challenging circumstances that many are experiencing now whilst also not losing sight of all the amazing examples of how people and communities are still coming together, looking out for each and making a difference.

“ It has been an absolute delight to look back on how much our community grew in 2022. Members of our community have taken on volunteer roles, welcomed new members with open arms and created a warm and welcoming space.

Our team has done a brilliant job of developing new projects, empowering our community and giving a warm welcome to every person who walked through our doors. I could not be more proud to play a part in what we have achieved this year!



**Willow Farrell
Operations Manager**

Introduction

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Why

We believe life is better when we have meaningful connections, shared experiences and opportunities to discover, laugh and grow together.

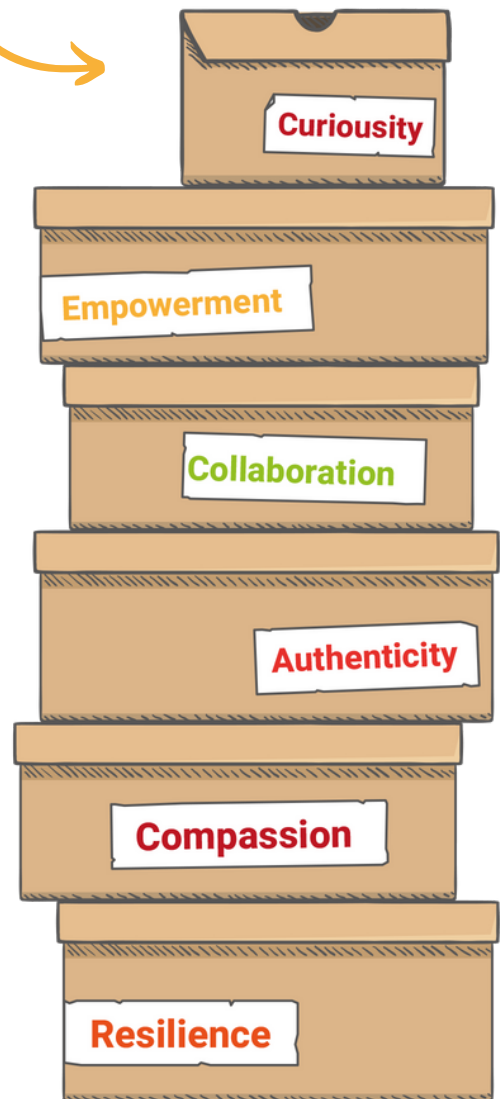
Vision

Leading the way in creating inspiring, supportive and entrepreneurial solutions to build resilient communities and empower local people to make their mark on the world.

Mission

Creating supportive environments for people to connect with each other and opportunities to find fulfilment.

Values



About us

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During 2022 The Shoebox Community Hub saw...



over
5800

hours spent in community
and peer support groups!

almost
3000

visits made to
community groups and
activities at The Shoebox!



over
260

community events and
activities hosted!



Projects

Our weekly Community Coffee Morning was the most attended group of 2022 with almost 650 visits!

This group is hosted by our wonderful Volunteer Hub Helper Shaun!



“ Willow at The Shoebox noticed something in me that I didn't recognise in myself. She said I was very welcoming and asked if I would like to host the weekly Community Coffee Morning. I wasn't sure at first, but it's given me a bit of responsibility and I like welcoming people.

If you're lonely and looking to make new friends, I would definitely recommend you come and join us at The Shoebox. You'll always get a warm drink and a warm welcome and, you never know, like me...it may change your life.

Shaun,
Shoebox Volunteer



Community Coffee Morning

Quotes from our Shoebox Community!

“It’s great to meet new people here, but it’s not just that. Coming here, I also learn about other events going on in and around Norwich, which is great. It’s like a network.

I did once attend a group for men-only, but I like it better here. We’re all ages from all backgrounds and it’s what makes the place so interesting. Everyone brings something different!

Michael



“I’m a great advocate of life-long learning and I do joke that school is wasted on the young. I learnt so much about the history of Norwich and met some very interesting people. We went to Stranger’s Hall and that was incredible. We also went to Dragon Hall. The trips we went on were so enjoyable. Now I tend to walk around the city looking upwards, as there are so many amazing buildings to see.

Josie



“The Sunshine and Showers group, in particular, has helped me so much. As far as I’m aware, there’s no other group just for people with bipolar in Norfolk. We chat and make connections, which is really important. I can see the changes it’s made to different people and I know I’ve changed a lot since I’ve been coming here. It’s just brilliant.

Before coming to the group, I’d never spoken to another person with bipolar before in my life and I now know there are others in the same position. Having the space here to meet each other for peer support makes such a difference!

Nicole



Shoebox Community

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Our Stuff Hub opened in May 2022. We store, maintain and lend equipment, tools and resources to individuals and community groups for free to enable them to host community events and activities, maintain the local area and even improve their homes, gardens and allotments!

Supported by Norwich City Council, items from our Stuff Hub have been used for :

- Litter picks
- Street parties
- Fundraisers
- Local markets
- Eco-network events
- Community garden open days
- Lord Mayor's event
- Queen's Jubilee celebrations
- and so much more!



Community picnic



over
350
items loaned in 2022!

Community litter pick!



Stuff Hub

Our team of Community Connectors have conversations with local residents in key neighbourhoods in Norwich to discover what matters to them, what they are passionate about and what they would like to do with others to help them flourish in community life!

Our Connectors work in Mile Cross, North Earlham and Norwich City Centre. The conversations take place in a range of settings such as cafes, outside local schools, at community events, door knocking and at The Shoebox.

Feedback from the conversations is shared with our partners including Norwich City Council and Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System and more widely with the community, local forums and colleagues to help shape services and approaches and inspire more community action.

Our friendly team of
Community Connectors
had **over 2,000**
conversations in 2022



...and hosted
20 pop up
events!

Community Connectors Project

Story of impact: Revitalising Mile Cross

How community conversations are helping to transform urban spaces

The Norfolk Wildlife Trust (NWT) is spearheading an inspiring project called Nextdoor Nature with a mission to support residents to create urban 'nature corridors' that benefit both wildlife and residents by enhancing outdoor spaces.



Our team of Community Connectors have played a crucial part in supporting the initial efforts to engage the Mile Cross community in the project. They have drawn on insights from their community conversations to help shape the project and the approaches taken to support residents to transform their neighbourhood into a greener, more engaging place to live.

NWT Community Officers were disappointed when turnout for the initial events was much lower than hoped but with the support of our Connectors that soon changed.

By investing more time in engaging with passionate gardeners within the blocks, including one of our Connectors residing there, a core group of around 10 people was formed. Together, they organised a pop-up event on the grass outside the flats, starting at 3pm. This event turned out to be an astounding success, drawing nearly 50 residents, many accompanied by their children.



The Connectors also introduced the NWT team to the Friends of Sloughbottom Park group, a relatively new group dedicated to enhancing the local park.

The two groups have agreed to organise a joint butterfly walk and picnic in Sloughbottom Park in 2023 which the Connectors are now helping to publicise!

Community Connectors Project

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A big thank you to our fantastic partners, Community Connectors and our wonderful Community Connector Coordinator Ruth!



NORWICH
City Council

Community Voices
Using your feedback to improve care



“ It has been only through the help of the Community Connectors that I have been able to get my project any way off the ground. Your team has always embraced new ideas and opportunities – and supported my work.”.

Lee
Nextdoor Nature



We asked the team 'What is your favourite thing about being a Community Connector?'

My favourite thing is **getting to know my community better** and to give them a voice!



Rainy

It would have to be the **variety. Every day and every story is different!**

Saskia

Meeting the most **amazing people who are so passionate about their communities** and who want to do a lot of good.



Chloe

Community Connectors Project

#DiscoverLaughGrowTogether

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Between March and May in 2022 The Shoebox took part in the 100 Day Challenge.

Our Baking for Wellbeing project offered free five week cooking and baking courses for people wanting to grow their confidence and support their communities with new skills!



“ It was brilliant to see people come together to develop their cooking and baking skills and hear the great ideas they had for using them in their communities!

Mark Ahier
Baking for Wellbeing Project Coordinator



Over
110
visits to
sessions

20
free sessions
hosted

Supported by
5
volunteers



100 Day Challenge

#DiscoverLaughGrowTogether

2022 also saw the start of our supportive work experience programme called Next Steps.

Recruitment and development began in August. Frances, our project coordinator, designed a six week programme where participants could set and work towards their own goals, grow their confidence and experience a supportive work space in the hospitality and tourism sector.

“ It has been a real privilege to see people develop, especially how far they have come in this safe environment. Seeing them create new connections and become part of The Shoebox Community has been great!



Frances Ridley
Next Steps Project Coordinator



Our first cohort started in September, 7 out of 8 participants completed the full programme. Of these 7, **100%** completed **over 20 hours of work experience**, said they **felt more confident** and **reached a personal goal!**

Kindly supported by:



JOHN LEWIS
FOUNDATION

In 2023 we will work with a further 22 participants, we can't wait to give you an update on Next Steps in our next impact report!

Next Steps

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In 2022 we worked with our community to co-create a new volunteer role which has become the 'Hub Helper' position!

We worked with both existing members of our Shoebox Community and people new to The Shoebox to create a flexible, fun and community-focused role.

Collectively we explored what the perfect 'Shoebox Welcome' looks like and worked collaboratively to create resources and deliver training that would help our volunteers give that experience to everyone who walks through our doors!



Our Hub Helpers have spoken passionately about feeling like they can give back to the community and also support their fellow members in a way that offered them flexibility not available in other volunteering positions.

This flexibility has allowed them to pursue other opportunities like training, work experience and taking on or pursuing paid work alongside their volunteer role with us. This has helped us to create a supportive and sustainable position within our organisation.



“ I always found it hard to know how to approach new people or even begin creating friendships. The Shoebox was different, it was easier here because I got a warm welcome and most people have had a similar experience to me. They've felt nervous too so they know what I'm going through.

As a Hub Helper, I have found that I like to be more interactive with more members of the community. It's always good to get others to open up more even if it's just by having a chat with them. If we can't help, we point them to a staff member who also helps in any way possible.



Sean, Hub Helper

Hub Helpers

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Throughout 2022 we have reviewed our environmental impact and found ways to have a positive impact on the world around us!

Our Shoebox Experiences all celebrate Norwich and we are a go to provider of fun, unique experiences for local customers alongside the tourists who visit us. In fact, **over 80% of our customers in 2022 booked with a Norfolk postcode!**

We are also collaborating with local businesses to champion buying local and showcase the brilliant suppliers, pubs and venues in our fine city!



All of our marketing materials and our souvenir guidebook are printed on recycled paper and use sustainable inks. We keep in-house printing to a minimum and print on recycled paper but as many members of our community have been digitally excluded elsewhere, we know that a real need to print some resources remains.



Hidden Street Tour
Souvenir Guide
Book

Chatty Bus event



We have built connections with the local bus company Konect Bus to give our community members a 25% discount when travelling to take part in community activities! In 2023 we plan to increase our collaborations and incentives for customers to travel to us car free.

We've also supported Konect's Chatty Bus initiative to increase connection and conversation on public transport!



Environmental impact

#DiscoverLaughGrowTogether

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Our core community offer is supported by profits from
The Shoebox Experiences.

Our range of experiences has continued to grow throughout 2022. We launched two new tours, developed a seasonal 'Meet the Weavers' experience and have seen our famous Hidden Street Tour and Secrets of the Tunnels escape game continue to thrive!

Lantern Light
Underground Tour



Norwich's
Hidden
Street Tour



The Tavern
Trail Tour



Meet the Weavers
experience



Secrets of the
Tunnels Escape
Game



“ Our Hidden Street Tour attracts and delights visitors from around the globe. Our Experience Hosts love seeing local guests' faces light up, as they discover secrets of the city they've lived in all their lives and never knew and also knowing that by buying their ticket they have supported our local community projects



Lisa Willett
Customer Experience Manager



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“ **Max-imum fun!** The Hidden Street Tour was a true pleasure! Max was a delight: deeply knowledgeable and genuinely funny! And the richness of the history below ground is a city secret that will make you want to say ‘Hey, did you know...?’ to everyone you know! Plus, your money funds social enterprise community work. **100% recommend!**”



Trip Advisor
review



We also had two new Experience Hosts join our team! Over the course of 2022, they gave a **warm welcome to over 10,000 guests!**

Lisa

Holly

Max

Frances



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Finally, we would like to say a massive **thank you** to our community members, customers, partners, supporters, funders, commissioners and anyone else who has helped us to make 2022 such a successful year!



Thank you!