**Chair’s Report 2016 – 2017**

Thank you all for coming to this year’s Annual General Meeting.

Trustees are still meeting weekly and have been joined by David Beckett who has created a business plan to help us focus on the next few years. Copies are available.

We have been negotiating the terms for our new lease, this has been a slow process but is almost complete. We are waiting for the results of a conditions survey that was undertook by the City Council at the beginning of the month. When this is complete we will be able to sign the new 24 year lease.

We have had several meetings with the Council to look at possible ways forward with the Asset Transfer. There are three options: option 1 Transfer the building as the asset – this will incur a raised rent of just under £10,000 per annum. Option 2 Purchase the freehold for the site the City Council has quoted £80,000 although this may be reduced in light of the conditions survey. Option 3 is to continue with our current lease which has a peppercorn rent. This option is the cheapest but has a risk associated with it as the Council could choose to sell on the freehold to a new landlord (who could put up the rent). We are still keen to pursue Asset Transfer so we can further improve the centre and will be able to consider building works and other improvements that will develop the centre for the community.

We have struggled to find/keep a caretaker this year but have just appointed Marion.

Celebrate Lottery Funding – Celebrating 25 years of Volunteering at the Centre. We have delivered the 3 celebration events. The first was a party to for our volunteers and their families to celebrate the hard work they do to keep the centre and its groups going, this was a fantastic day with 153 people coming along to celebrate. The second was a Centre Open Day which was very well attended and we felt it really reflected diversity of the community. This event was attended by 121 adults and 82 children. The third event was the summer fair which we feel was the best yet. It was attended by approx 180 adults and 110 children and we had 44 volunteers. The summer fair raised a staggering £1,471.06. We have had a stand at all three events to try and recruit new volunteers, we have signed up some new volunteers as a result of this.

The Activities and Volunteers Committee will continue to meet on the first Tuesday of each month and volunteers and residents are welcome to come along or get involved.

Volunteers have organised a wide range of events and groups including; Bingo, Over 50’s Group, Lunch & Laughs Club, Christmas Fete, Christmas Carol Concert, Summer Fair, Jumble Sales, and the new pop up shops.

We are still keen to recruit more volunteers and see a much wider use of the centre by the community.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers for all the roles they take on at the centre that give their time and enthusiasm running and maintaining the Centre.

Gloria Ball

Chairperson Swaythling Neighbourhood Centre