

St. Mary's Barnard Castle Parish Hall Association

(Registered Charity, number 1103536.)

Annual Report 2024

St. Mary's Barnard Castle Parish Hall Association
(Registered Charity, number 1103536.)

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Mrs Clare Trevett (Chair)

Mr John Blissett

Mr. John Trevett (Treasurer)

Mrs Viv Guy

Rev'd Alec Harding (Secretary)

Cllr Pauline Connelly

Mrs Helen Scott

Mrs Denise Dent

Staff: Mr Steven Rusling (Caretaker)

LIST OF MEMBERS

There are 19 Life members. 2 individual members, 4 group members

NAME OF BANKERS: NatWest Bank, formerly of 28, Market Place, Barnard Castle, DL12 8NB

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER: Mr. Michael Hanby

INTRODUCTION:

The St. Mary's Barnard Castle Parish Hall Association (PHA) came into existence in February 2004 and took over the management of the Parish Hall in August 2004.

Since its inception the PHA committee have sought to address the needs of a building that is 'showing its age' through making improvements in its décor and the general provision of the building.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

The PHA's objectives in 2024 were to renew the Guild Room:

This would be achieved by:

- Seeking out funding
- Engaging contractors and overseeing work.

The committee are pleased to report that, after months of hard work, the Guild Room refurbishment has been completed. This has brought this space back into use through the provision of improved storage, replacement windows, renewed lighting, a remodelled kitchenette, a replacement boiler, redecoration and carpeting. The result is a room that is more welcoming and better suited to social or educational use. A TV and stand have been purchased to provide the means for digital presentation when needed. Thanks go to all those involved in the work and to grant giving bodies (see accounts) who have met over £21,000 of the £25,000 cost.

(A launch event was held in January 2025)

The new boilers are controlled through the Google Nest learning system allowing for greater flexibility, responsiveness and control of costs.

Grant awards for the above work prompted the committee to enter discussions with the Church Council over extending the PHA's lease of the hall. This expires in 2034. The terms of such an extension are yet to be agreed.

Work in the hall has also been undertaken to replace the emergency lighting system.

Bookings of the hall are healthy with a number of new regular (and occasional) users.

The committee continue to work well to ensure that statutory responsibilities are carried out.

Thanks are offered to our caretaker, Mr Steven Rusling, for his work.

Clare Trevett (Chair)

CURRENT OBJECTIVES:

- a) Investigate the possibility of renewing the rear fire doors to both the Guild Room and the Main Hall.
- b) Renew attempts to replace the guttering on the hall.

STRATEGY:

Our aims will be reached through the careful assessment of costs and strategic use of funds.

COMMUNICATIONS:

The PHA issues an annual newsletter. Events have been advertised through the Teesdale Village Hall Consortium's publications and website and through the Parish newsletter. Occasional adverts are taken out in the local press to publicise events. Information about the hall and the hall timetable are available through the church website.

TRAINING:

The Committee keep abreast of training opportunities offered by the Teesdale Village Hall's Consortium and associated bodies.

ST MARY'S BARNARD CASTLE PARISH HALL ASSOCIATION TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

STATUS:

The Parish Hall Association is an unincorporated association constituted on 26 February 2004. It is a Registered Charity, number 1103536. The Registered Office address is The Vicarage, Parsons Lonnen, Newgate, Barnard Castle Co Durham, DL12 8ST.

OBJECTS:

- (a) to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Ecclesiastical United Parish of St. Mary's Barnard Castle with Whorlton in the Deanery of Barnard Castle in the Diocese of Durham and those Parishes immediately adjacent to it without distinction of sex or of political religious or other opinions in particular by associating the Diocesan Authorities, local authorities, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure-time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants;
- (b) to establish or to secure the establishment of a Community Building and to maintain and manage, or to co-operate with any local or statutory authority in the maintenance and management of such a Hall for activities promoted by the Association and its constituent bodies in furtherance of the above objects.
- (c) to promote such other charitable purposes as may from time to time be determined
- (d) The Association shall be non-party in politics and non-sectarian in religion.

MANAGEMENT:

The Association is managed by Trustees elected at the AGM as representatives of user groups, together with co-opted members from various local authorities and related organisations.

LIST OF TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR:

Mr John Trevett	Rev'd Alec Harding	Mrs Clare Trevett
Mrs Viv Guy	Mrs Helen Scott	Mr John Blissett

RESERVES POLICY:

It is the policy of the Trustees to endeavour to match income with fixed commitments. It is their aim to build up sufficient unrestricted reserves that will, under normal circumstances act as a buffer to allow for unforeseen events not covered by the committee's insurance policies. Since 2009 we have aimed to hold a reserve of £7,500.

RISK MANAGEMENT:

The Trustees and Staff ensure that risks are monitored and assessed. Reviews of insurable risks are undertaken regularly and expert advice is taken where necessary.

TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES:

Charities Law requires the Trustees to keep proper books of account with respect of the affairs of the charity and to prepare a statement of account for each accounting period which gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs and surplus or deficit for the period. The Trustees confirm their responsibility to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statement on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the Trust will continue to meet its objectives

Signed on behalf of the Trustees

Chair

St Mary's Barnard Castle Parish Hall Association
Income and Expenditure Accounts for Year Ending 31/12/2024

Income		Expenditure	
Lettings	£19,487.34	Wages	£4,125.87
Solar Panel	£174.34	Rent	£1,088.32
Grants	£20,991.00	Insurance	£1,645.87
Refund	£16.50	Water	£587.00
		Electric	£1,016.34
CCLA Interest	£579.49	Gas	£2,222.36
Liquidity Manager	£431.00	Office	£38.49
		Domestic	£454.85
		Maint	£1,197.71
		Wifi	£328.24
		Sundry	£349.62
		Equipment	£0.00
		Guild Room Project	£25,086.28
		Surplus for Year	£3,538.72
Total	£41,679.67	Total	£41,679.67

Balances on 1/1/23

Nat West a/c	£11,504.15
CCLA	£13,046.91
Lettings Accr	£2,064.38
Surplus for	£3,538.72
	£30,154.16

Balances on 31/12/24

Nat West Current ac	£5,047.81
Nat West Liquidity Manager ac	£5,222.00
CCLA	£19,126.40
Lettings Accruals	£757.95
	£30,154.16

Examined and found

St Mary's Barnard Castle Parish Hall Association

Financial Report for 2024

2024 has been a busy and successful year for the Parish Hall Association. The demand to use the hall continues to grow. At least one of the rooms was booked for use on all but 56 days in the calendar year, and from the start of September to December 23rd, it was used every day.

There have been major investments in the fabric of the Hall, including the refurbishment of the Guild Room, replacement of the boiler, installation of a Nest heating system, and replacement of emergency lighting throughout the building. Part of this was funded by a grant of **£20,991**, with the remaining **£5,292.99** coming from reserves.

Whilst income from lettings was marginally lower in 2024 than 2023, the PHA still achieved a surplus of income over expenditure for the year of **£3,538.72**

Income

Due to a surplus of income over expenditure in 2023 of **£2472.97**, the PHA decided to keep prices unchanged for 2024 in order to maintain our competitiveness with other local providers. Income from lettings in 2024 was **£19,487.34**, a slight decrease from **£20,593.27** in 2023. However, the 2023 lettings figure was boosted by the one off letting of the committee room to Re-Gen for three months for **£3050**, so if this is excluded, it is evident that there has been an underlying increase in income from lettings over the year.

Much of our income is derived from regular bookings from Slimming World, Barnard Castle Christian Fellowship, Music Bugs, and Scottish Country Dancers. Slimming World have added an additional class on a Saturday morning. Whilst Adventure Babies no longer use the Hall, there is now a weekly exercise class in the Hall on a Friday morning. The U3A use the committee room for an art class each month. The Northern Dales Richard 3rd Society meet most months in the Hall and The Friends of the Richardson Hospital hold their monthly tabletop sales in the Hall from April to December. The Dales Pony Society, Yvonne Andrews, Jim Maguire and James Burneside all continue to use the hall.

From late August to November, the Castle Players hired the Guild Room for rehearsals for their play "Dickon", which was performed in the church. Teesdale Operatic Society also hired the main hall to stage a concert.

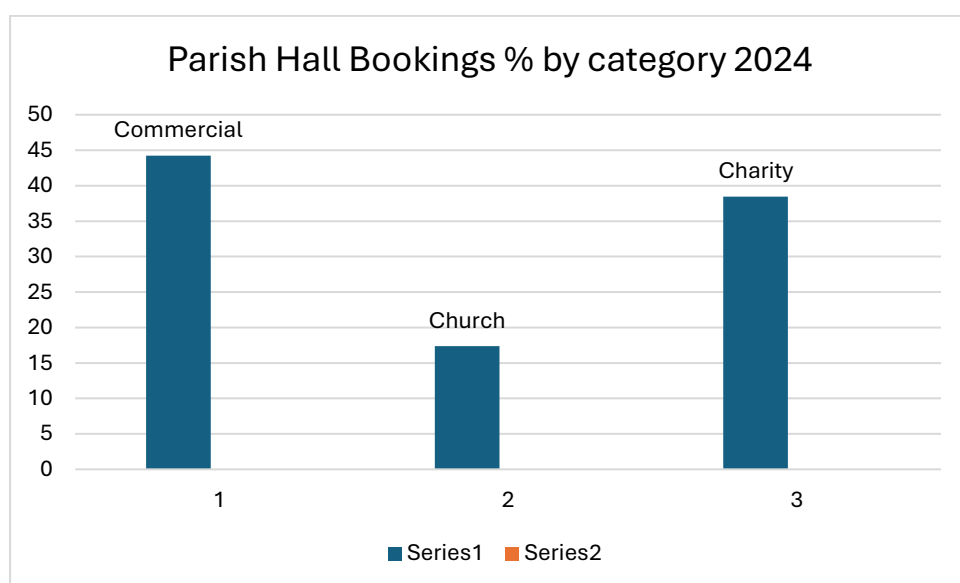
We have also benefited from the hall being used for private parties, a Yoga weekend, by County Durham WI and for charity events.

The refurbishment of the Guild Room was completed in November, and the early signs that this improved space will attract more use are encouraging. Church use

has increased. The Panthers group meet in the Guild Room weekly during term time, and other church groups, such as the PCC, Mothers Union and Flower Guild have used the room for meetings instead of the church. The Community Choir and Community Orchestra also continue to occasionally use the Main Hall for rehearsals in the winter months or when the church is unavailable. The Main Hall also continues to be used by all local churches for Advent and Lent lunches.

The room was booked by Cultura Trust in October, who are leading a project to redevelop the Nat West building in town, and indications are that it will be booked again as this project develops in the future. The NHS have booked the room for a series of sessions of a diabetes prevention course in 2025.

The chart below shows the breakdown of bookings between commercial, charity and church users for 2024.



Expenditure

With the Guild Room project and replacement of the emergency lighting, expenditure in 2024 was £38,140.95; a marked increase from 2023.

As already mentioned, **£20,991** of the expenditure of **£25,086.28** on the Guild Room project was offset through the receipt of grant funding, and PHA would like to acknowledge the financial support received from our local county councillors, Durham Community Action and the National Lottery.

One aspect of the Guild Room project was to replace the main central heating boiler in the Hall and install a hive system to allow the heating in the hall to be set remotely. This work cost **£6,196.00**. Whilst we have experienced a few teething problems with the new system we anticipate that these improvements will contribute to lower energy bills in the future.

Other works have included the creation of enclosed storage space, **£6,204.00**, installation and equipping a new kitchen area, **£2,717.62**, new lighting **£2,546.28**,

new windows, **£2,612.00**, re-carpeting, **£2,990.00** and redecoration **£1,495.74**. A wired boost to the Wifi has been installed to the Guild Room, and a TV stand and TV are to be purchased to complete the project.

The Parish Hall Association continues to use the Parish Buying Scheme for its gas and electricity. As anticipated the reduction in the gas standing charge in October 2023 has contributed to a reduction in spending on gas from **£3920.02 in 2023** to **£2,222.36 in 2024**. Spending on electricity also decreased, from **£1136.88 in 2023** to **£1,016.34 in 2024**. However, our spending on water has increased from **£282** in 2023, to **£587** in 2024. This is partly due to price increases, and an increase in the monthly direct debit payments to cover a debit balance.

Our spending on insurance for the Hall increased from **£1411.36 in 2023** to **£1,645.87 in 2024**. This was largely due to extending our cover to include hirer's liability cover.

Our main spending on maintenance in 2023 was to replace the emergency lighting throughout the hall at a cost of **£760.69**. However, due to an oversight we need a further light fitting in the committee room. Other maintenance work included repainting, servicing the fire extinguishers, and PAT testing.

The other main items of expenditure are the wages of our excellent caretaker **£4,125.87** and our rent to the PCC **£1,088.32**. Our rent again remained unchanged for 2024, and has not been reviewed for 5 years, so we are expecting an increase in the rent paid to the PCC in 2025.

Conclusion

The work of the PHA committee to improve and develop the hall as an asset to the church and wider community has continued in 2024.

The refurbishment of the Guild Room has created a comfortable and well-equipped space for training and meeting purposes which has already been recognised by external users. By installing new lighting, a new boiler and a hive system, the energy efficiency of the hall has been improved.

Whilst the PHA has invested in improvements to the Hall over the past few years; hall usage is increasing, and the income generated from lettings has once again exceeded expenditure, with a surplus of **£3,538.72** for the year.

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