



Annual Report

Trustees' Report | Finance Report

1st February 2024 – 31st January 2025

Approved by Trustees: 11th April 2025

Trustees' Report: Charity Overview

Charity Details

Name: **Drybrook & District Silver Band**

Registration Number: **1154033**

Contact: **Mr Hugh James**

Contact Address: **36 Swallow Road, HR9 7WS**

Trustee Names as of 31/01/25: **Jon Tibke (Chair), Hugh James (Sec), Lesley Harding (Treasurer), Elizabeth Forster, Hannah Macmillan, Georgina Motterham, Liz Sheridan.**

Activities & Objectives

The following are listed on the Charity Commission website...

Activities

- Provision of regular rehearsals, musical tuition and instrument hire in support of musical learning and enjoyment.
- Provision of concerts, local events and participation in contests for enjoyment of players and audiences.
- Active role in furthering local brass banding, through the organisation of an annual contest and summer concert series.

Objects

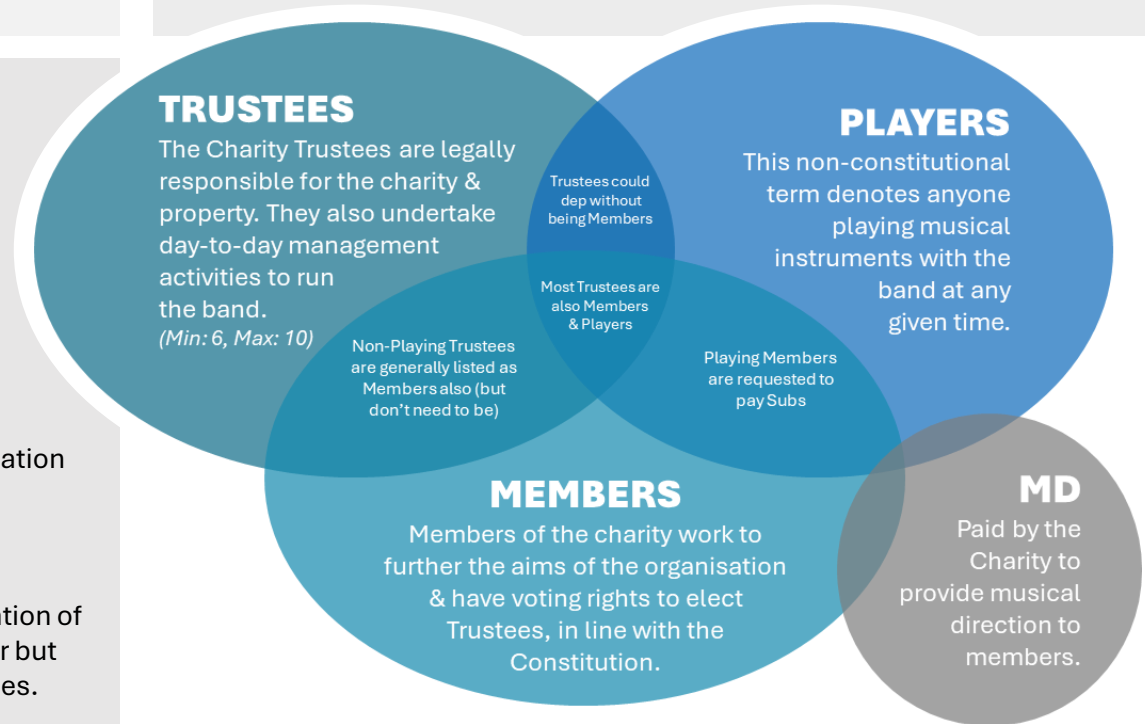
The objects of the CIO are to advance the education and appreciation of the public in the art and science of brass band music, in particular but not exclusively by the presentation of concerts and similar activities.

Structure & Management

Since 2013, the band has been registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with the Charity Commission.

The organisation's Constitution clearly denotes the roles of Trustees & Members. The terms 'players' and 'Musical Director' are also frequently used, though do not form part of the Constitution.

The Trustees use five Strategic Objectives to monitor performance of the organisation (as shown within this report).



Trustees' Report: Charity Performance against Strategic Objectives



WE ARE...FOCUSED ON SUCCESS

We engage in regular competition and work hard to win prizes through high-quality rehearsals and commitment from our players and Musical Director, supported by good facilities and equipment.

Contesting

The band re-entered the top section for the first time since 1977 and achieved a respectable 8th place finish at the Regionals. Further contesting success followed in November, when the band attended the Wessex Own Choice contest, taking 2nd place in both March & Test Piece contest, with prizes for Best Instrumentalist, Best Euphonium, Best Horn Section, Best Bass Section.



MD Changes

The band continued to prioritise the funding of expert Musical Direction. July brought changes in personnel as long-standing MD Joshua Ruck relinquished his role. The band successfully appointed Neil Brownless who led the band temporarily through Autumn contesting and the Christmas period, and we were fortunate to retain Nigel Howard's services as Assistant MD.



Musical Instrument Purchases

In the last year the range of percussion equipment was improved with opportunistic purchases of a second-hand Vibraphone and Tubular Bells, the latter replacing our previous set which we were able to pass on for a small donation to a fellow Forest band.

Band Room Maintenance

Our facilities continued to be maintained and provided a high standard rehearsal space.

WE ARE...FOSTERING TALENT

We support efforts to bring new players into brass banding and encourage development. We ensure safety and security in our own settings & offer opportunities within our organisation for young players to perform.



Bailey Lane End Music Festival

This continued to be one of the most impactful events the band run each year, with a range of young and experienced players entering the 54th iteration of the competition across ten classes. We were able to offer adjudication from the accomplished player Owain Llewstyn.



54th Bailey Lane End Music Festival

Opportunities to Perform

Throughout the year, the band were keen to offer opportunities for younger local players and depts from the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama to rehearse & perform with us, across summer engagements and at contests. We were also pleased to re-sign one of our younger members permanently, strengthening the Cornet section.



Safeguarding

The band maintained its commitment to managing Safeguarding appropriately, with an appointed Safeguarding Officer and adherence to guidelines from Brass Bands England.

Trustees' Report: Charity Performance against Strategic Objectives



WE ARE...OPEN & FRIENDLY

We are a supportive and sociable organisation that players want to be a part of and want to suggest to others. We encourage our players to support neighbouring bands and offer opportunities for non-members to perform with us.

Welcoming Deps

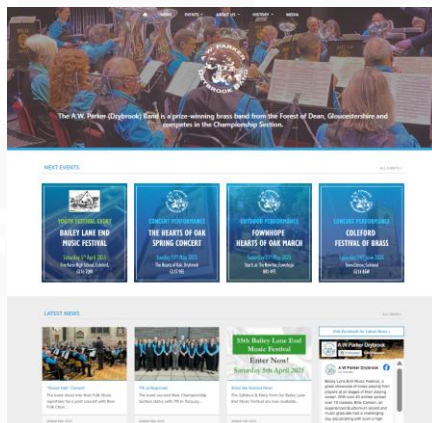
With several key departures from the band in 2024, it was more important than ever that the band embraced a culture of friendliness and openness. Throughout the period we welcomed many players, some of which subsequently joined as members, with many others open to helping in the future. This approach will continue to be important as the core band rebuilds. Thanks are recorded to everyone who has helped make this successful over the past 12 months, both in the band room and in a social context outside of the band room.

Supporting other Groups

Many of our players are members of multiple musical organisations and we remain sympathetic of this, as it builds a network of mutually supportive groups in the local region.

Website & Social Media

We continued to work hard to maintain our online presence and provide regular updates, to show the band in the best light possible and encourage players and supporters to engage with us.



WE ARE...VALUED BY OUR COMMUNITY

We are well known in our local communities, support local causes and engage with neighbouring musical organisations to sustain our musical heritage.



Local Performances

Alongside regular favourites such as the Fownhope Club Walk and Ross Bandstand, we were pleased to take part in Ruardean's D-Day Celebration and perform at Scarr Bandstand over the summer. We supported the Service of Remembrance at Forest Church in November. During December we took part in Light Switch-on events & carolling in Drybrook, Mitcheldean & Ruardean, finishing with our "Brass at Christmas" concert on May Hill.

Availability of Band Room

We continued to make our facilities available to the Drybrook & District Ladies Choir for regular rehearsals and it was also used as a Polling Station for elections.

Ross-on-Wye "Bands in the Park"

The band continued to manage the programme of concerts over fifteen Sundays in 2024, enabling a range of brass and big band/jazz groups to perform at this well-loved setting.

GBBA Membership

The band maintained its membership of the Gloucestershire Brass Band Association, which organises events in the region and represents local bands on the West of England Council.

Coleford Festival of Brass

We have been a key organiser in the new venture being developed for 2025 which will see many of the local Forest bands descend on Coleford for a day of music.



Trustees' Report: **Charity Performance against Strategic Objectives**



WE ARE...FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE

We are financially secure due to prudent spending and the support of our players and local sponsors, who support our aims.

We are legally compliant and transparent in our management.

Good Governance

Though it was a complex year of change, the band maintained good governance. The Trustees were able to manage MD changes and continue the organisation of Ross Bands in the Park and the BLE Music Festival, in addition to core band management and legally required charity matters.

Particular thanks are noted to David Harding and Andrew Jones, who stepped down as Trustees after many years, and to Jon Tibke who took the Chair.

Sponsorship

The continued sponsorship from A. W. Parker Coal Merchants is a key enabler for the work of the band and we remain very thankful for their generosity over many years.

Gift Aid

The band continue to capitalise on the Gift Aid scheme to reclaim additional funds against Member Subscriptions and donations.

Fresh Opportunities for Income

The Trustees explored opportunities to increase fundraising, purchasing a Card Reader for use at carolling and concerts, and better utilising savings accounts.

Finance Report: **Headlines**

The Band ended FY24/25 with a deficit of £5,579, the third annual deficit in succession. This was primarily driven by instrument purchases and an increased reliance on deps for important engagements, which incurred expenses or professional fees. With these categories excluded, the Band would have seen a small surplus instead.

The Balance of Funds at the end of FY24/25 was £17,024. Similar annual deficits cannot be absorbed indefinitely in future.

Income Headlines

- Subscription income is down due to the reduced number of members.
- Gift Aid spiked in FY24/25 but this covered two years' worth of claims and will not repeat at this level.
- Christmas 2024 engagements saw £920 raised, a sharp increase on £614 and £345 from the previous two years.
- Ross Bands in the Park Concert Promotion income increased (as did expenditure).

Expenditure Headlines

- One-off Instrument purchases of £3,905 significantly increased expenditure.
- Musician Fees (deps) is a category that continues to grow and has been called out as a separate category for FY24/25, totalling £2,356. (In previous years this has been included in Contest Costs, it has not risen from nothing).
- Expenditure on Music increased, as we focused on refreshing our repertoire.
- BLE Music Festival costs increased as the alternative venue charged.
- Many of the new cost categories were previously held under Misc, making like for like comparisons with previous FYs difficult.

Look Ahead to FY25/26

- A reliance on deps will continue into the next FY. Combined with general inflationary pressures, this will cause another deficit unless additional cost controls can be implemented.
- The Trustees' have implemented more detailed forecasting to understand the challenge better.
- During FY24/25, the Trustees moved remaining reserves into Savings Accounts to generate Interest. While this had little impact in-year, this should generate ~£400 in FY25/26.
- Our primary levers for income are increased subs (more members) & increased performances without the need for paid deps – for this to work, good attendance continues to be required from our supportive members.
- Additional donations and secondary sponsorship would be welcome though are not within our gift to enact. Ways to legitimately increase Gift Aid claims will also be explored.
- Our primary levers to reduce regular expenditure are MD & Musician Fees, though these categories also impact performance, a balance the Trustees are very aware of, especially at important events such as Regionals.
- Sporadic expenditure on instruments has already been blocked and other costs will be managed as well as possible without impact to the core functions of the band.

***Explanatory Note - Adjusted R&P Categories** - We have revised the Receipts & Payments categories on the following page to better articulate the reasons for income & expenditure. Some have also been changed to better align with Charity Commission categories.*

Grant Income for General Costs has been split out but was previously part of Donations. Musician Fees was mainly included in Contest Costs previously. Many of the new categories under the Supporting Costs heading were either part of Instrument Purchases or Miscellaneous Costs previously.

Finance Report: Receipts & Payments Summary

2024/25		2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
01 Feb 24 - 31 Jan 25		01 Feb 23 - 31 Jan 24	01 Feb 22 - 31 Jan 23	01 Feb 21 - 31 Jan 22	01 Feb 20 - 31 Jan 21	01 Feb 19 - 31 Jan 20
Receipts						
Donations & Legacies						
Sponsorship	£3,600.00	£3,600.00	£3,750.00	£3,600.00	£3,600.00	£3,600.00
Member Subscriptions	£3,420.00	£3,500.00	£4,610.00	£4,705.00	£4,890.00	£5,430.00
Donations	£475.00	£74.29	£2,998.44	£17,319.21	£11,334.00	£10.70
Gift Aid Claims	£2,152.75	£0.00	£1,355.49	£997.50	£1,357.03	£11,147.19
Grant Income for General Costs	£0.00	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW
Legacies	£0.00	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW
Charitable Activities						
Musical Performance Income	£1,400.00	£1,877.00	£1,247.60	£572.95	£250.00	£2,690.77
Contest Prizes	£0.00	£125.00	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£400.00
Concert Promotion Income	£6,800.00	£5,346.88	£5,346.88	£4,420.96	£0.00	£0.00
BLE Music Festival Income	£232.56	£227.84	£159.43	£0.00	£0.00	£234.45
Grant Income for Charitable Activities	£0.00	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW
Contest Logistics for Members Income	£0.00	£2,426.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,757.00	£3,260.00
Other Tradeable Activities						
Band Room Letting	£1,600.00	£1,320.00	£1,165.00	£1,300.00	£1,000.00	£1,920.00
Social & Fundraising Events	£392.50	£141.50	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£610.00
Instrument Sales	£50.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Investments						
Dividends	£0.00	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW
Interest	£17.70	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW
Other						
Miscellaneous Income	£0.00	£5.00	£0.00	£200.00	£0.00	£497.50
Total Receipts	£20,140.51	£18,643.51	£21,132.84	£33,115.62	£24,188.03	£19,800.61
Payments						
Donations						
Outgoing Grant Giving	£0.00	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW
Outgoing Charitable Donations	£0.00	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW
Charitable Activities						
Conductor Fees	£9,334.65	£9,475.00	£8,832.00	£6,625.00	£2,300.00	£6,060.00
Musician Fees	£2,355.58	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW
Concert Costs	£40.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£68.40
Contest Costs	£836.59	£3,341.36	£5,694.84	£995.00	£491.77	£2,910.00
Concert Promotion Costs	£4,150.00	£4,080.00	£3,750.00	£2,454.95	£0.00	£0.00
BLE Music Festival Costs	£264.91	£75.00	£227.50	£0.00	£0.00	£220.53
Contest Logistics for Members Costs	£0.00	£2,164.00	£750.00	£0.00	£1,785.00	£3,229.00
Supporting Costs						
Music Costs	£696.33	£527.39	£250.27	£368.60	£35.00	£800.30
Uniform Costs	£0.00	£58.69	£259.67	£171.76	£0.00	£132.73
Trophy Costs	£100.00	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW
Stands & Equipment Costs	£343.97	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW
Instrument Maintenance	£50.00	£35.00	£135.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,390.00
Instrument Purchases	£3,905.18	£624.80	£4,656.35	£1,028.99	£504.46	£1,885.06
Band Room Running Costs	£1,250.82	£1,183.41	£1,388.20	£664.76	£1,364.68	£1,276.06
Band Room Improvements	£0.00	£0.00	£365.78	£185.96	£6,632.00	£990.00
Insurance	£1,134.12	£1,135.32	£1,038.84	£720.26	£716.52	£676.52
Memberships & Licensing	£274.59	£447.12	£436.05	£194.40	£306.44	£100.11
Social & Fundraising Costs	£529.00	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW
Website & Media Costs	£224.00	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW
Safeguarding	£179.50	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW	NEW
Other						
Miscellaneous Costs	£50.00	£1,106.00	£2,767.50	£502.03	£51.02	£825.94
Total Payments	£25,719.24	£24,253.09	£30,552.00	£13,911.71	£14,186.89	£20,564.65
Surplus/Deficit for the Year		£5,609.58	£9,419.16	£19,203.91	£10,001.14	£764.04
Balance at the Start of the Year	£22,603.18	£28,212.76	£37,631.92	£18,428.01	£8,426.87	£9,190.91
Balance at the End of the Year	£17,024.45	£22,603.18	£28,212.76	£37,631.92	£18,428.01	£9,426.87