

Blindcrake Village Hall CIO
Registered Charity no 1171226

Trustees' Annual Report for the period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

Treasurer: Rosalind Berry
Holm Farm, Blindcrake, Cockermouth, Cumbria CA13 0QP

1 Introduction: Chairman's report

The Village Hall has continued to remain more and more active following the total removal of Covid restrictions.

The renovation works are ongoing, but we are continuing to receive complimentary reviews about how much better and more user-friendly the Hall is now.

We have regular events such as the Evening Inn (during the winter months), the seniors' tea and the Harvest supper, together with frequent meetings for Pilates and Yoga. A religious group have recently become regular hirers.

We would still like the Hall to be used even more often for parties or special events, and the Committee is always on the lookout for new ideas and new ways to advertise what the Hall has to offer.

Marisa Soppitt has joined the Committee during the last twelve months, and I would like to thank her, and indeed all members of the Committee, for all the hard work and valuable input over the last year.

Neil Pilling, Chairman

2 Trustees

Our CIO constitution requires at least three charity trustees (committee members), of whom up to six may be elected at an AGM; up to nine appointed following nomination by a user body; and up to three co-opted at any meeting of the charity trustees. During 2021-22 our Trustees were:

Neil Pilling	Appointed	Chairman
Ros Berry	Appointed	Treasurer
Rachel Hecht (McConkey)	Elected	Bookings Secretary
Cathy Keough	Elected	Secretary
Helen Marrs	Elected	
Graeme Forrester	Appointed	
Marisa Soppitt	Co-opted	From 9 August 2022

3 Meetings

The Management Committee usually meets four to six times a year. We met on seven occasions during 2022-23, including the May AGM.

4 Sources of advice and support

Banking: Cumberland Building Society, Station Road Cockermouth

Architects: Day Cummins, Cockermouth

Charity: Action with Communities in Cumbria (ACT)

5 Objectives of the CIO

The objects of the CIO are to establish and run a village hall and to promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of the civil Parish of Blindcrake ("area of benefit") without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, nationality, race or political, religious or other opinions the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the conditions of life of the said inhabitants.

The Trustees consider these objectives to be consistent with Charity Commission guidance on providing for the public benefit, and these objectives have been pursued in the activities of the charity this year.

6 Structure, governance and lease

The Hall was converted from a row of three cottages and given by the Rev Sharpe, Vicar of Isel, to the Church of England Carlisle Diocesan Trust and Finance Association (now Board of Finance) by deed of indenture dated 5 July 1897.

Blindcrake Village Hall was established as a charity by a Trust Deed and Lease on 1 December 1988. It was registered as an unincorporated charity with the Charity Commission on 20 September 1993. The Lease of 1 December 1988 expired on 30 November 2016, and a new 50 year lease was signed on 12 June 2018. Land Registration was also completed.

The charity was converted to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with a new Governing Document and registration with the Charity Commission on 20 January 2017 and a formal merger of the two charities at our 2017 AGM. This is the fourth annual report of the CIO.

The building was professionally valued in 2016 as a community building by R J Smeaton MRICS at £10,000. The lease is a full repairing lease which means that, although only a peppercorn rent of £1.00 per annum is payable on demand, the Management Committee is responsible for keeping the building in a good state of repair.

7 Principal activities

The hall is normally in use most weeks for a variety of activities, including Pilates and yoga classes, meetings of the Parish Council, and local groups such as Isel Cricket Club, Wigton Motor Club and First Responders. It is used for coffee mornings, concerts, theatre performances, fundraising social events such as Burns' supper, Garden Safari,

Christmas carol concert and prize draw, and the Evening Inn quiz, and private hires such as children's parties and funeral teas.

After an expected dip in activity in the immediate post-Covid period, usage and hires have noticeably increased, helped by the building improvements.

8 Funding strategy

Whilst our objectives are to provide a village hall for the purpose of recreation of our inhabitants, the revenue budget needs to be managed on a self-financing basis. The hire fees and other contributions made by users of the hall, in addition to fundraising by the Management Committee, are set to achieve this.

The new lease allows the Church of England and the Binsey Team ministry to use the Hall free of charge for up to 21 days per annum. There has also been a long standing practice of not charging certain groups with a charitable purpose such as the First Responders for use of the hall.

Management costs are kept to a minimum by use of Trustees and volunteers to take bookings, ensure heating is set etc. However we do use the services of a self-employed cleaner, window cleaner and local tradespeople for repairs and maintenance.

The Hall incurs a number of ongoing costs such as insurance, heating, regardless of the level of income. We keep a reserve of £5,000 to cover annual running costs in case of emergencies.

9 Policies

The Village Hall has adopted a hiring policy. It has updated its Hiring Agreement, which is sent to the hirer by the Chairman when booking. The hiring agreement identifies the responsibilities of each party when booking the hall.

During 2019-20 we also adopted an Environmental Policy, an Equal Opportunities Statement of Intent and a Safeguarding Policy for Children and Vulnerable Adults. The Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed and updated.

10 Licences

The Hall has a Premises Licence for designated entertainments, including the sale of alcohol. The Hall is also licensed by the Performing Rights Society for live and recorded music. We continue to renew our lottery licence annually although we have not made use of it every year.

11 Insurance

The Hall is insured by Allied Westminster, underwritten by Aviva. We agreed a five year term policy in July 2020, our annual premium in 2022-23 was £874, up from £793 in 2021-22.

12 Reserves policy

Trustees have agreed to hold £5,000 in the bank as unrestricted reserves, this being equivalent to 100% average annual expenditure excluding cost of events. This cash is available for running costs in the event of being unable to raise income from our normal activities, and for unforeseen expenditure eg in relation to building maintenance or urgent furniture or equipment replacement.

13 Investments

The M&G Charifund has yielded useful dividends including £639 in 2022-23. This is an increase on last year's dividend of £574.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the value of our stocks reduced significantly, from £12,700 to £9,200. The valuation during 2021-22 recovered considerably to £12,094 but has since reduced, partly affected by the impact of the war in Ukraine, with the latest (December 2022) valuation standing at £11,251.

14 Bank accounts

As advised by ACT, in 2017 we opened a new building society deposit account for the CIO. This is now our only account; signatories are Ros Berry, Neil Pilling, Helen Marrs and Graeme Forrester.

An increasing number of payees request electronic payments, but the Cumberland Building Society only offer internet banking on business or personal accounts. It is possible to request the CBS branch to make electronic payments from our account. We are investigating options for opening an account with a bank which would offer us the facility to make internet payments with two signatories.

15 2022-23 activities

a) Building improvements

Although our Village Hall refurbishment was substantially complete by January 2021, a number of further improvements were carried out during 2022-23, notably the installation of new double glazed windows to the front façade; installation of broadband and an integrated audiovisual system; the latter benefited from a £2,000 grant contribution from Cumbria Community Foundation.

We still have a 2.5% retention on the main contract of £3,200 which will become payable when all works are completed.

Our BT broadband was finally installed in April 2022. Although the Communications Ombudsman did not formally uphold our complaint for technical reasons, they encouraged BT to agree a compensation package with us.

We continue to experience issues with our LPG-powered central heating system, and have commissioned A Muir to carry out an energy audit at the beginning of May.

b) Hiring and fundraising

Our regular income excluding grants and the costs of special events totalled £5,476, while our routine expenditure totalled £4,835, a small surplus of £641.

Our income from hires has reached its highest ever level at £2,000; over 2.5 times our historic level. We increased our hire fees slightly from October 2022 to reflect increased fuel costs and the extra amenities we now offer; we will keep rates under review.

We benefited from a generous £75 donation from Sue and Paul Eastman who held a sale of books.

We recommenced some of our previous fundraising activities: we held a Garden Safari at the end of June, which netted £1,065 despite very poor weather.

We combined our annual Christmas prize draw with a Christmas fair. As we didn't sell pre-printed raffle tickets our income was lower than usual at £233. Stallholders generously donated £50 over and above the standard hall hire.

There was no Burns supper this year but the six winter Evening Inn pub quiz nights raised £982. We have also experimented with hosting Arts Out West shows; these have paid for themselves and allowed the local community to see performers who we would not normally be able to afford.

c) Payments

We prepare our accounts as receipt and payment accounts, rather than accruals. We expect a final building contractor's bill of £3,200. Our main expenses have related to projects which were funded mainly from income carried over from the previous financial year: over £11,000 on the double glazing and the audio visual system.

We also refilled the LPG tank at a cost of £668; we continue to experience problems with the radiator pipework and despite work by a plumber to balance the system the problems have persisted. We await the outcome of the energy audit before deciding what course of action to take.

Our 22-23 accounts include two annual bills from Alan Mossop for routine gardening and maintenance, £800 for 2021-22 and £350 in 2022-23. Cleaning and window cleaning costs paid in 22-23 amounted to £760, including a payment of £225 relating to 21-22.

Fortunately we agreed a new 3 year contract for electricity from December 2021. Our new electricity charges are now 16.39p per KWH and 52.3p per day standing charge. Based on previous usage, the annual cost will increase to about £390 per year, however the smart meter stopped working around the beginning of December 2022 and we are at present only being charged the standing charge. The smart meter provider is unable to visit to inspect and replace the faulty meter until mid May.

16 Future plans

Thanks to the support of our funders, Covid relief grants, and volunteer help, we are in a healthy financial position with a current balance of £18,853. We are delighted with the increase in hall hires and hope to build on this.

Ros Berry, Treasurer

9 May 2023

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's Trustees

Signature

Full name

NEIL ROBERT PICCUS

Position on Management Committee

Chairman

Date

9.5.23

Blindcrake Village Hall
Blindcrake, Near Cockermouth
Cumbria CA13 0QP
Charity Commission Registered Number 1171226

Receipts and Payments Account Year Ending 31st March 2023

	2022-23 £	2021-22 £
Receipts		
Donations	145.00	105.00
Room Hire	2000.50	818.00
Interest received Charifund	639.28	574.20
Garden Safari inc float	1089.00	0.00
Burns Supper	0.00	0.00
Evening Inn	982.00	250.00
Special events	1216.50	506.50
Grant funding	2000.00	4220.00
Sundry	0.00	10667.00
Total Receipts	8072.28	17140.70
Payments		
Gas/heating	873.77	988.50
Electricity	294.96	384.75
Insurance	873.51	793.42
Repairs & maintenance	1441.65	0.00
Sundries	5958.86	7817.87
Cleaning	746.75	212.50
Special events expenses	451.11	269.15
Deposits returned	0.00	80.00
Professional expenses	165.00	2987.64
Contractor payments	5556.00	20941.76
Total Payments	16361.61	34475.59
Total Receipts less Payments	-8289.33	-17334.89
Movement of Reserves		
Balance brought forward	27143.01	44477.90
Total Receipts less payments for year ending 31/03/23	-8289.33	-17334.89
Transfer from/to reserves	-	-
	18853.68	27143.01
Statement as at year ending 31st March 2023		
Balance at Cumberland Building Society / Bank	18853.68	27143.01
M&G Investment Account brought forward	12094.31	11272.82
Transfers to current Account	639.28	574.20
Closing Value of Investment 31/12/22	11250.69	12094.31
Accumulated Fund	30104.37	39237.32

Ms R J Berry Treasurer
Holm Farm, Blindcrake
Cockermouth, CA13 0QP

Signed:

Date:

Reahd Berry
9 May 2023

Examined and found correct:

Signed:

Date:

A. J. Purvis
18 Sep 2023

Auditor



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Blindcrake Village Hall CIO

On accounts for the year
ended

31 March 2023

Charity no

1171226

Set out on pages

Page 8 of Trustees' Annual Report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/03/2023**.

Responsibilities and basis
of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's
statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

A. Young Purvis

Date:

18-SEP-2023

Name:

ALAN YOUNG PURVIS

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body (if
any):

Address:

BEECH FARM
SUNDERLAND
CA13 9SS

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of
any items that the
examiner wishes to
disclose.