

Statement from the Chair

To make my annual report this year I am largely able to copy and paste my report from last year. This is not because we have achieved nothing, but rather we have continued to focus largely on similar mechanical works.

Our current operations remain legally correct in terms of our policies (primarily health and safety, and risk assessments) and insurance, and for the time being we continue an informal connection with Scripture Union. In the past year the Bus Project has made significant practical progress, with volunteers working on the refurbishment of our vehicle on Monday evenings throughout 2025 and on the last Saturday of the month, for 10 of 12 months, known as 'Progress Saturdays'. There remains further mechanical work to do, with the front and rear axle and gearbox, but we have replaced eight of eight air tanks and hoses serving the braking and air suspension systems, making steady progress with our stated aim to achieve an excellent mechanical standard of maintenance and refurbishment. While we have made small progress with bodywork, we have achieved good progress with the opening, inspection, cleaning and renovation of engine service parts. We are now ready to replace the engine oil, fill the cooling system and fire the engine.

We continue to communicate with our volunteer group weekly by email and more widely by posts on Facebook. We have had a small core of regular and reliable volunteers, mostly from one Church, for which we are grateful, but as before, we continue to look for other opportunities to broaden our appeal and achieve a wider engagement, particularly since some of our team are getting too old to be out in the colder months. Presently however, it continues to be difficult to work productively if we have more than 3-4 volunteers at each weekly Monday evening or monthly Saturday session, this due to space, equipment, and knowledge. The support of a professional HGV mechanic has still not materialised, and there are aspects of work and sign-off that we will shortly begin to struggle to complete without this expertise. We are vigilant however, to keep record of what needs to be done or reviewed professionally and we are not inviting risk by guesswork. To our benefit however, our knowledge has grown significantly and we have acquired a good level of equipment. Even so, we are unable to change the space in which we operate, and these facilities limit the project's attractiveness to professionals and volunteers alike.

Slowness in progress has in the past prevented us from making potentially serious mistakes, so while we desire faster progress, the old adage of more speed, less haste, generally holds good for the project. Within that we have this year made good progress with understanding function, stripping components and rebuilding the engine and systems that support it. This thorough process has led to the discovery of significant defects that with care and detailed maintenance we have managed to correct, often at minimal cost. It would be good to expedite progress further, but the base and facilities available are a constraint we need to work within. It also keeps us within the commitment to ensure that to the best of our ability we will return to the road a vehicle that is far less likely to experience mechanical breakdown. This best assurance of reliability is regarded as essential to maintaining the goodwill of volunteers, service users and the communities within which we will operate.

At the present rate of progress it is hoped we will be able to complete the mechanical refurbishment of the bus by the end of Summer 2026. We will then turn to the completion of the interior and preparation of bodywork. As previously reported when the bus can be moved under its own power to a commercial garage, any outstanding mechanical work will be completed, the vehicle MOT tested, and then taken for completion to a vinyl wrapper. As above we intend taking all prudent measures to reduce the risk of a breakdown when the bus is in service, and through our volunteers nurture a team with sufficient operational knowledge to be good stewards of the asset.

Since the beginning of the project we have received donations totalling £31,500 and we still believe our balance of funding to be at least sufficient to see us through the capital expenditure phase of the project. Our account balance at the end of November 2025 is £16,712.75, our expenditures in the past year relating primarily to replacement engine components, air tanks and hoses.

Our continued thanks to the Alston family for the provision of space to work on the vehicle, for which the Trust continues to pay £1.00 per day. As ever I am most thankful for the support of fellow trustees, volunteers and others who have kept faith with the vision for the Fusion Bus and helped in maintaining a momentum for the project.

Mark Bayliss – Chair of Fusion South Kerrier Trust

Fusion South Kerrier Trust

Accounts 2024-25

£

Income

Income 0

Expenditure

Bus repair 1,804

Health & Safety 209

Admin 106

Storage rent 365

2,484

Surplus for the year -2,484

Surplus brought forward 22,048

Surplus carried forward 19,564