

Hougham Village Hall Trust
Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registered Charity Number: 1181034
Trustees (Management Committee) Annual Report
1 July 2024– 30 June 2025

1. Resignation of Chairman, Co-options & Chairman's comments

1.1 It is with regret that we report the resignation of Alison Barker as Chairman on 19 September 2024. Elected as Chair in October 2022, Alison significantly contributed to the continued existence of the CIO, the revival of a "The Hougham Herald," and revamped our website. Despite efforts to sustain the newsletter in 2025, it was discontinued due to insufficient content and lack of interest. Peter Robinson assumed the role of Chairman on a caretaker basis from 17/09/24 until the AGM in October 2024 where he was formally elected. He remains willing to serve until a permanent replacement can be found.

1.2 Rozannah Ludlow was co-opted onto the committee on 17/9/24 with special responsibility for children and youths and duly elected at the AGM. Steve Oxenham was co-opted back on to the MC on 27/08/25 after a short absence but sadly resigned on 18/08/25 following an assault whilst carrying out his volunteer trustee duties.

1.3 This financial year has been a difficult one for the CIO. We have not been able to hold as many activities as we would have liked as we have experienced a lack of attendance or even response to scheduled events. There is currently a lack of engagement in the parish regarding the hall as a central hub, and the future remains uncertain, especially with the resignation of two trustees, Steve and Dianne Oxenham, who have served for nine years. Additionally, the chairman is expected to step down (after 7 years including a 2 year break) once a replacement is identified. The MC wishes to formally thank them for all their commitment and hard work.

1.4 While outside this report's focus, the assault on Steve Oxenham has greatly impacted both the CIO and Steve & Dianne. This incident, combined with the three-month hall closure from 6/05/25 to 5/08/25 for safety and contractual reasons, means that challenging decisions will be necessary.

2. Names of Trustees

Nominated	User Group/Office held	Date if not full year	Reason
Steve Green	Parish Council	-	-
Mary Pressnell	Parochial Church Council	-	-
Elected		Term of office	
Oliver Button	Trustee	-	Elected 22/10/22. Completed 3-year term.
Christine Care	Functions sub-group, 100 Club, Dover Lotto, Coffee morning organizer	-	Re-elected 22/10/22 Completed 3-year term. Standing again.
Colin Care	Functions sub-group, 100 Club, Dover Lotto, Coffee morning organizer.	-	Elected 15/10/23. Completed 2 of 3-year term of office.
Carole Haines	Trustee	-	Elected 15/10/23. Completed 2 of 3-year term of office.
Allen Maurice Jones	Trustee	-	Elected 17/10/24 Completed 1 year of 3-year term
Roz Ludlow	Trustee, children & young people		Elected 17/10/24 Completed 1 yr of 3-year term
Dianne Joyce Oxenham	Treasurer/Secretary, Building improvement & fundraising sub-group, Functions subgroup	Inaugural appointee*. 1/3 years	Elected 15/10/23. Completed 2 year of 2 nd term of office
Stephen Oxenham	Trustee Vice Chairman	Co-opted 27/02/25	Resigned 18/08/25
Peter William Robinson	Chairman & Minutes Secretary		Elected 17/10/24 Agreed to stand for 1 year only

Name of Employees

Job	Name	Date started	Date Ceased
Cleaner	Tina Jones	23/08/23	

3. Sources of advice and support

Villagers of the Parish of Hougham Without
 Alison Barker
 Hougham Without Parish Council
 Dover District Council
 Kent County Council
 Funding for All
 Mowll & Mowll Solicitors
 Dan Codrea, DC Architecture Ltd
 Streetz2Streetz

4. History

4.1 The Hall, then known as the 'Reading Room' passed into private hands from the Kent Coal Fields Syndicate on 27 July 1886. It was purchased by Arthur Evanson on 30 March 1920 and subsequently gifted to the two villages in remembrance of his son and other brave men of the parish who lost their lives in WW1. The original conveyance was drawn up in 1920, the Trust deed is dated 26 November 1935 and on 1 February 1972 a committee of management was appointed with the Trust formally entered on the Register of Charities on 30 September 1994 with the Registered charity number 1041193. In 2018 the Management Committee resolved to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation so Hougham Village Hall Trust was subsequently closed down and all assets, including the hall and land, were transferred to the CIO.

5. Constitution

5.1 The new constitution as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation dated 18 August 2018 was accepted and registered by the Charity Commission on 6 December 2018 as a new charity named "Hougham Village Hall Trust" with a new charity number 1181034.

5.2 The objects of the CIO are:-

"To establish and run a village hall and to promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of the parish of Hougham (area of benefit) without distinction of sex,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 the public at large in interests of social welfare and with the object of improving thrr conditions of life of said inhabitants."

5.3 The new constitution says there must always be a minimum of 3 charity trustees but does not specify a maximum. These appointments are by election by parishioners; all inhabitants of the area of benefit of 18 years an upwards are entitled to attend and vote and are for terms of 3 years. Trustees can also

be co-opted but must be appointed at a duly constituted meeting of the charity trustees.

5.4 Also, one trustee may be nominated from each of the accepted user groups i.e Parish Council and Parochial Church Council to serve a term of one year. Any new or existing user group may apply for representation on the committee and may be appointed subject to the agreement of a two thirds majority of the management committee.

5.5 On becoming a trustee a member must sign a declaration of acceptance and willingness to act in the sole interests of the charity.

5.6 At the first meeting after the AGM, the committee elects from amongst all the trustees the following office holders - Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and a Secretary.

5.7 Full details about AGMs, elections, accounting, rules and trustee responsibilities are in the CIO constitution a copy of which can be found on our website.

6. Policies and Procedures

6.1 To maintain quality standards and to guide the Management Committee in exercising its duty of care to members, contractors, and users of the hall we require a variety of policy documents. As well as a "Trustees Welcome Pack" we have 18 other policy documents ranging from "Administrative Policy & Procedures" to our "Safeguarding Policy" which is the latest to be added to the list.

7. Hiring agreement

7.1 Use of the Village Hall is covered by our "Hiring Policy" and subject to our "Conditions of Hire" and to completion of a "Booking Form" which must be signed by the hirer when booking. It sets out the conditions of hire and identifies the respective responsibilities of each party to the agreement. There is also an "information Sheet" for hirers which covers practical areas like safety, power, car parking etc.

2 Bookings should be made on-line via the hall's website; payment for the charges and deposit is made via the website. The rates are reviewed annually at the beginning of each year and the new charges come into operation on 1 April each year unless the need for an earlier review arises.

7.3 The hiring policy was recently revised as were all the relevant forms including application form, guides etc. The bands and charges are set to ensure we can meet our annual running costs and are: -

Band description	Amount of charge
Villagers	£15.00
Commercial	£20.00
Daily rate	Negotiable
Overnight rate	Negotiable
Deposit (refundable)	From £150, dependent upon type of Hall usage

7.4 Although outside the reporting period, a Trustee was assaulted on 10/08/25 while serving as Bookings Secretary but thankfully has fully recovered. The incident led to a review of hiring policies, prioritizing volunteer safety. The hall now closes at 23:00 (including cleanup), and at least two trustees must be present when interacting with hire parties. These changes may lower volunteer numbers and income, affecting the hall's future.

8. Licenses

8.1 The Hall has a premises license (not including alcohol) and is registered with Dover District Council for small society lotteries i.e., 100 Club, has a Performing Rights Society and Public Performance license for live and recorded music, a TV license and a broadband license.

9. Risk Management

Insurance

9.1 The Management Committee acknowledges that it is under a legal obligation to protect the building, its users and employees/ self-employed contractors through adequate and appropriate insurance.

9.2 The Village Hall is insured by Zurich Insurance with respect to property damage (buildings insurance), contents, public liability, employers' liability, and legal assistance. The current annual premium is £58.39 which is cheaper than our previous insurer.

Health & Safety/Building Issues

9.3 Gas appliances and portable electrical appliances are tested by qualified person annually. Fire-fighting appliances are inspected annually under contract with the supplier. Volunteers from the Committee carry out other maintenance checks. A Fire Safety Risk Assessment is updated annually by the Committee's own Fire Safety Officer as required by law.

9.4 A building condition survey was last carried out in 2011, but the refurbishment has allowed us to carry out a thorough review and a full survey is not now required until 2026.

9.5 We have a Safeguarding policy which closely follows that recommended by both the Charity Commission and ACRE to ensure the safety of vulnerable

adults and children, although we always ensure that a parent acts as a responsible adult for any event solely for children. Both Health & Safety & Safeguarding are standing items on the agenda for all Management Committee meetings.

Risk Assessment

9.6 Risk Assessments are carried out before any out-of-the-ordinary event.

10. Principle activities in pursuit of objectives

10.1 The Hall is normally available for hire for private functions including children's parties, wedding receptions, funeral wakes, village social functions and occasional fund-raising fayres. It is also used for meetings by Parochial Church Council, Parish Council, CIO and as a polling station.

11. Events

11.1 The following charts detail and summarise the use of the hall during the period of this report and total 153:365 days usage:-

Summary of Activities i.e Events, Private Hires & Classes

Events

Date	Name of event	Confirmed Yes
13.07.2024	Party in The Park	Yes
31.10.2024	Children's Halloween Party	Yes
02.11.2024	George Egg Comedy Evening	Yes
12.12.2024	Defib Training	Yes
15.12.2024	Wreath Making Class	Yes
20.12.2024	Children's Christmas Party	Yes
21.02.2025	Quiz Night	Yes
22.03.2025	Mother's Day Card Making	Yes
29.03.2025	Playpark Open Meeting	Yes
21.06.2025	Village Meeting	Yes
	Pop Up Pubs	8
	Parish Council Meetings	6
	Village Hall Meetings	4
	Working Party Meetings	2

Private Hires

Type	Number of events
Baby Shower	2
Private Parties	17
School Leavers Party	1
KCC Autistic Safe Club	2
Christenings	1
Weddings	2
Band Practice	1
Polling Station	2
Other	5

Fitness Classes

Type	Frequency	Number for year
Zumba/Keep Fit	Twice a week	40
Pilates & Chair Pilates	Once a Week	22
Dog Training	Once a Week	28

TENS

Number issued	Date
None	

12. Funding Strategy

12.1 It is the strategy of the Trustees to manage the revenue budget on a self-financing basis; hire charges are set to try to achieve this aim. Other out of course requirements are raised through grants and fundraising events. Our reserves policy which we adopted in July 2020 is used to ring fence any grants we receive for building improvements.

13. Volunteers' Effort

13.1 Management costs are kept to a minimum using volunteers wherever possible. A prime example of this policy is Allen Jones who cuts the grass and keeps the plot tidy. Other tasks which often go unnoticed are setting up the hall before and after events, supervising and arranging boiler servicing, gas safety and servicing, arranging insurance, licenses, grants etc. and often involve team effort.

Anyone else not mentioned, thank you!

13.2 In addition, Trustees give in the region of 60 hours a month for meetings and an incalculable number of hours per annum organizing and running events. Also, most if not all stationery, printing ink for documents, photocopying, laminating etc., is donated free of charge.

14. Achievements 2024/25

14.1 During 2024/25 attempts were made to raise funds to refurbish the driveway following the successful completion of the refurbishment of the Village Hall. These attempts are ongoing and although the Parish Council has offered to contribute £5,000 in matched funding the MC agreed to forgo the grant in favour of the same sum being put towards the Village Green playground extension fund. Future grants will be sought when the moment is right but in meantime 5 bags of gravel have been purchased to provide a temporary surface, two of which have been laid; the rest will be laid once some minor leveling work has been carried out.

14.2 Thanks to a volunteer the yew trees have been pruned but more husbandries will probably be required.

14.3 Our bid to Dover DC community grant scheme for £1,200 was successful and enabled us to purchase 3 industrial strength picnic tables one of which is accessible which will allow us to replace our old tables; Colin Care has already managed to refurbish 3 of them and hopes to salvage at least one extra table from those that have been replaced.

15. Financial report

See separate document

16. Communications-Newsletter & Website

Website

16.1 Our new website is provided by a local Folkestone company whitefishmarketing.co.uk and went live on 21/22 February 2024 at a cost of £720 which included a rebuild cost of £450 + VAT plus an annual web hosting cost of £240 + VAT. After a few teething troubles the website seems to be working well although a recent incident has caused us to reconsider our processes.

Website – wehoughamvillagehall.co.uk

Email: houghamvillagehall.dover@gmail.com

Newsletter

16.2 Although the Hougham Herald Newsletter was relaunched in October 2022 as hardcopy for the first three months thanks to a generous donation from Majestic Freight it was forced to continue solely as an electronic version uploaded onto the Hougham Village Hall website. Sadly, our Editor resigned from the post on 17/9/24 and the newsletter ceased publication. The Trustees wish to thank her for all her efforts in relaunching and ensuring regular monthly issues were made available up to September 2024. A new temporary editor managed to resurrect the electronic copy for 3 months earlier this year

but lack of copy and interest has forced us to conclude that we can no longer support a newsletter.

Facebook

16.3 Facebook posts are administered by Steve Oxenham on behalf of the CIO and have proved to be a very effective way of publicising the activities of the Hall and to communicate quickly with those who subscribe to posts, widening the number of people with whom the Hall communicates. This may include last minute information, including cancellations. Unfortunately, this latest incident has forced him to withdraw his support and we have closed our FB page.

Hall Noticeboard

16.4 The Noticeboard outside the Hall is an important source of information and everyone is encouraged to look at it when they pass by the Hall or are there for an event or activity. There are important notices, such as the announcement of the AGM, and also posters promoting activities and events at the Hall.

17. Future

17.1 Refurbishing the driveway and some tree surgeries are planned. It will probably be necessary to commission a building inspection survey in 2026 as it will be 6 years since the refurbishment took place.

21. Conclusion

The Trustees of Hougham Village Hall Trust CIO would like to thank everyone for their practical help and support throughout this reporting year. Without your active involvement we could not have done this, and we hope for your continued support.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the above report.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's trustees

Signature: Peter Robinson

Full name: Peter William Robinson

Position: Chairman

Date: 29 August 2025

	Date	Account	
Accounts 01.07.2024-30.06.2025			
Income			
Hires:		3980.25	
Lottery		683.00	
Donations		391.35	
Pop up Pub		172.00	
Events		3872.30	
Hougham 100 Club		638.00	
Miscellaneous		97.62	
Bank Interest		69.46	
Grants		1200.00	
Total		11103.98	
Expenses			0.00
Insurance		58.39	
Energy		1081.82	
Water Rates		226.64	
Business Rates		-172.17	
Boiler Service & Gas Certificate		150.00	
Fire Extinguisher Annual Service		86.40	
PRS/PPL Licence		188.54	
Lottery Licence		20.00	
Cleaning		1380.00	
Cleaning Materials		58.57	
PAT Testing		54.00	
TV Licence		174.70	
Misc		757.64	
ACRE Membership			
TENS Licence			
Repairs & Renewals		400.36	
Petty Cash			
Website		447.59	
Hougham 100 Club Winnings		325.00	
Refurbishment		2414.42	
Event Costs		2572.16	
V-Fast Wifi		314.76	
Total		10538.82	
Nett Profit/Loss		565.16	
Funds in Current Acc		£506.89	
Funds in Deposit Acc		£5,069.81	
Funds in P/Cash		£234.50	
Funds in Zumba Pot		£60.00	
Funds to Bank		£98.50	
Total		£5,969.70	