

Northumberland Archives Trust

**NORTHUMBERLAND ARCHIVES CHARITABLE TRUST  
ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**NORTHUMBERLAND ARCHIVES CHARITABLE TRUST**  
**LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

**Trustees:**

Stuart Bankier	(Term ends 31 December 2026)
Morag Boyes	(Term ends 31 December 2027)
William Browne-Swinburne	(Term ends 31 December 2027)
John Carr-Ellison	(Retired 31 December 2024)
Lesley Lee	(Appointed 17 April 2024, term ends 31 December 2027)
Flora Moxon	(Retired 13 May 2025)
Sue Shaw	(Term ends 31 December 2026)
Prof. Annie Tindley	(Term ends 31 December 2026)
John Webster	(Retired 31 December 2024)

**Charity Number:**

1188637

**Principal Address:**

c/o Northumberland Archives  
QEII Country Park  
Ashington  
Northumberland  
NE63 9YF

**Independent Examiner:**

Andrew Ayre

**Bankers:**

Unity Trust Bank  
PO Box 7193  
Planetary Road  
Willenhall  
WV1 9DG

# NORTHUMBERLAND ARCHIVES CHARITABLE TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT

For the Year ended 31 March 2025

### The Year Under Review

This is our fifth annual report since the Trust was registered on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020. 2024-25 has seen the Trust make progress in its core aims of raising funds to extend the work of Northumberland's Archive Service, and making the archives in its care more widely known and more accessible to more people. Although our annual turnover did not quite double in 2024-25, as it had in 2021-22 and 2022-23, it increased substantially to just over £80,000, in comparison with just under £50,000 in 2023-24. We have set ourselves a target of at least £100,000 in 2025-26.

The funds raised have enabled the Archive Service to pursue various of their projects, detailed later in this report.

In helping the Service to develop these projects, we continue to pursue our aim of widening access to the archives, particularly for hard-to-reach parts of the community. Some of the projects involve working closely with local schools and community groups, and may result in further material being added to the Service's online catalogue (CALM) or its digital LEARN platform (Learning and Educational Archive Resources from Northumberland), from where it is available to all.

### Our Objectives for 2024-25 and the Progress We Made

The Trust has adopted the practice of setting out at the start of each year its objectives for the year ahead and then at the end of the year measuring progress made towards achieving them. In 2024-25, we aimed to:

- Continue fundraising for cataloguing and other ad hoc projects, exploiting various sources, to reach at least the interim target of £100K needed to enable the Service to recruit an additional Archivist and Archives Assistant to clear the cataloguing backlog. *We made progress on this, with the cataloguing of two collections of estate papers completed during the year, but achieving sufficient funding to engage a suitable archivist on a short term contract has remained a challenge. However, a most generous offer by the Sir James Knott Trust to match other fundraising up to £30,000 can, we hope, be built upon to enable the recruitment of one additional archivist in 2025-26. A grant from the Foyle Foundation of £30,000, limited to the purchase of equipment, was used to buy a sophisticated book scanner for Woodhorn, particularly needed for digitising estate papers.*
- Continue to support the Service's relationship with schools and others. *Most of the projects involving the Trust have been concerned with education, mainly schools.*
- Attract one or more volunteers to work for the Trust. *Little progress with this so far.*

- Develop and increase the Trust's presence on social media. *Again, little progress so far.*
- Gradually increase the number of the Trust's supporters. *We have one new patron, but the number of members at £10 per year has fallen slightly. The membership scheme is under review.*
- Mount talks about the Trust to voluntary and other bodies. *One talk was delivered (to Berwick Civic Society) in January 2025. A number of others were booked for 2025 and 2026.*

The objectives set at the start of the year did not include a review of strategy, but this was begun and substantially completed in 2024/25.

More detail is given below.

## **Our Projects and what they Delivered**

Several of the projects either in progress or in preparation referred to in our 2024 Report are still ongoing, but all have progressed. More new projects are in development.

### Projects in Progress

#### *a) The Photocentre Collection – 'Everyday Life in North Northumberland'*

This project began in 2021 and, subject to funding availability, could continue for several more years, the current funding being due to run out in 2025.

The PhotoCentre Collection contains over one million photographic negatives documenting all aspects of life in North Northumberland and the Scottish Borders between 1951 and 2012. With funding generously provided by the Lough Fund through the Community Foundation North East, the Service has been able to employ a suitably qualified archival assistant to catalogue, preserve and digitise some of the contents of the Collection, so that they can be made available online and be used for exhibition and other outreach work.

By May 2025, more than 18,000 entries had been added to the electronic catalogue (an increase of 4,000 since June 2023) and over 2000 images had been digitised. A regular blog and other social media output had built an online following for the project of over 2,500 people. Images from the collection have been exhibited in Berwick-upon-Tweed and have been used for a number of outreach events including exhibitions at Heritage Open Days and work with groups including BorderLinks. Some can also be viewed on the project's dedicated website at <https://www.photocentreberwick.co.uk>

The project also widened its remit beyond the PhotoCentre Collection and looked at other photographic collections within the Berwick Archives, particularly those relating to outlying communities including Scremerston.

#### *b) Hospitals in the North*

Work on this project, funded by the Bright Trust, began in 2022 and involves volunteers at Woodhorn and Berwick. Together the volunteers are researching aspects of maternity care provision in the county prior to the establishment of the National Health Service. An article by Sue Wood, Head of Archives, and Lynne Riddell, project volunteer, published in the September 2025 issue of *Magna*, the Magazine of the Friends of the National Archives, records that at the time of writing trained volunteers had recorded sixteen oral histories of former patients and staff. The project is ongoing and a County Hall exhibition is planned in March 2026.

#### *c) Seaton Sluice to the Future*

This new project is a re-run in Seaton Sluice of the successful “Blyth to the Future” and “Ashington to the Future” projects run in 2022-23 and 2023-24, again funded by a generous grant from the Platten Family Fund through the Community Foundation North East. A grant was offered in January 2024 in the expectation that the project would run in the summer, but, by agreement with the funders, it was deferred until September due to staffing constraints.

#### *d) A Major Cataloguing Project*

This has again been the major focus of the Trust's fundraising efforts as in 2023-24.

Northumberland Archives holds a nationally important collection of estate records, one of the most comprehensive of any English county. These are the records of landed families and estates, some dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. They include environmental, economic, cultural and social records, extending to rich material on urban as well as rural life. Before central government took on such duties as welfare and education, estates carried out many of these functions, so their records cover a broad spectrum of society.

Many of these collections remain uncatalogued, their content largely unknown, and they cannot be made accessible to the public for security reasons. Cataloguing would unlock them for research, education, outreach and strengthening community ties, but it requires more staffing resource. However, as these are not public documents, the County Council is not under a legal duty to fund the work and there is no realistic prospect of it being able to do so in the current financial climate.

In most cases, the Archive Service is in contact with the descendants of the various families whose papers have been selected. Where this is so, the Trustees have contacted them and all have indicated their support. Some have made a financial contribution already, or indicated a willingness to do so.

After the failure of 3 out of 4 applications to large national funders in 2023-24, we decided on a change of tack, initially to apply to some of the larger local funders in the North East. A most generous offer by the Sir James Knott Trust to match other fundraising up to £30,000 can, we hope, be built upon to enable the recruitment of one additional archivist in 2025-26.

#### *e) The Phipps Collection*

The Trustees successfully applied to the EDF Renewables Barmoor Community Wind Farm Fund through the Community Foundation North East to enable the cataloguing of this Collection, 4 utterly disorganised boxes of papers that arrived in the Berwick Record Office in the early 1970s, deposited by the British Records Association from an unknown source. Samuel Phipps was a late eighteenth century barrister and reputed owner of the Barmoor estate. The collection includes evidence of the agricultural and other improvements he made to the estate. The cataloguing is

complete, subject to some individual document listing that can be done by volunteers. It is therefore now accessible, as the Archives' online catalogue is available to anyone in the world with computer access, and The National Archives Discovery Catalogue indicates the availability of the collection in Berwick.

f) *Atkinson and Marshall Papers*

From 1805, Northumbrian sheep farmers Atkinson and Marshall leased land, eventually more than 100,000 acres, on the Highland estate of the Countess of Sutherland. The introduction of large-scale sheep farming pioneered new agricultural methods, but resulted in the mass eviction of tenant crofters, now known as the Highland Clearances. The collection shows the Clearances from a different Northumbrian perspective and sets them in the context of developments in international trade. A successful application for a grant to the Strathmartine Trust, a Scottish academic fund, enabled the cataloguing of this collection, completed in 2024. Professor Annie Tindley gave a lecture at St. Andrews University on the findings that had emerged.

### **Protecting and Preserving the County's Archives**

There have been concerns for some time about the current storage arrangements for the archives in Berwick. A solution for the storage problem and new accommodation for the Berwick Record Office has been found in the redevelopment of the Berwick Barracks – a Grade 1 listed complex built to designs by Nicholas Hawksmoor between 1718 and 1721. The existing Mob Store, already upgraded and fitted out for a transitional year or two as the Maltings Cinema at Berwick Barracks, will provide safe and secure storage space for the archives, with a public search and reading room located adjacent to it within one of the Hawksmoor-designed barracks buildings.

The redevelopment of the Barracks will be a complex and lengthy process but the substantial funding allocated means that real progress is being made. The Trustees stand ready to offer what help they can in bringing to fruition these important plans for the Berwick Archives.

### **Our People**

a) Patrons and Supporters

The support of local people concerned to preserve their county's heritage is a critical ingredient in the Trust's continued success. We have introduced two levels of membership for our supporters, patrons donating at least £100 pa to the Trust and members donating £10 pa. During 2024-25 the overall number of members fell slightly, but 2 new members joined, one member upgraded to become a patron and we recruited one other additional patron.

As can be seen from the attached accounts, the expenses of running the Trust are small and the donations made by these committed supporters are sufficient to ensure that the money we receive in grants and the donations from casual donors visiting the Archives or via the Trust's website can be entirely spent on supporting the Archive Service. The Trustees are very grateful to all who support the Trust in this way.

We are working to improve our communications and other interactions with our regular supporters, while being conscious that there is a balance to be struck to avoid information overload. We plan

to develop a more regular pattern of contact with supporters in future, including social media, and also to update our website regularly.

In the last quarter of 2025, the Membership Secretary collaborated with the Archivists to implement a 'Sponsor a Box' scheme for 2026, with the aim of encouraging more support.

#### b) Volunteers

We value highly the efforts of those who volunteer to help the Archive Service. There has for many years been an established pattern of volunteers assisting in this way at Berwick Record Office. Volunteering has been less common at Woodhorn, but a small group of volunteers are helping there with *Hospitals in the North*.

#### c) Trustees

Those who currently serve as Trustees are listed at the beginning of this Report. They are all volunteers and come from a wide range of professional backgrounds, bringing a wealth of relevant experience to the task. 2024-25 again brought changes to the membership of the Trustee body, when John Carr-Ellison and John Webster both retired at the end of their terms. John Carr-Ellison was one of the four founding trustees. He gave us the benefit of his considerable experience as a charity trustee and played a substantial part in recruiting our patrons. John Webster took the lead in setting up digital aids, including our website and our member management tool, and began active fundraising at an early stage. We thank them both for all they have done for the Trust and wish them well for the future.

### **Our Funding and Financial Controls**

The Trust's Accounts for the year under review are attached to this report. We are most grateful to all those funding organisations and individuals who have enabled our support for projects undertaken by the Archive Service to increase in 2024-25. The accounts, which have been independently examined, confirm that the Trust continues to be adequately funded to meet its liabilities. The Trust wishes to record its grateful thanks to Andrew Ayre, who has acted as our Independent Examiner during the current year.

During the past year, Trustees reviewed the Trust's protocol for the authorisation of expenditure and approved a reserves policy. Regarding the former, Trustees confirmed the following statement:

*All expenditure must be authorised by two Trustees, at least one of whom must be either the Chairman or the Treasurer. Similarly, all bank payments must be authorised by two Trustees at least one of whom must be either the Chairman or the Treasurer. At each Trustees' meeting the Treasurer must circulate a detailed statement of income and expenditure for the current year and details of current reserves. At the end of each financial year, an Independent Examiner will be appointed, who will review the financial statements prepared by the Charity to ensure that they are a true reflection of the financial position of the Charity.*

Regarding reserves, the Trustees review them on an annual basis taking into consideration the inherent risk associated with running a small charity. The Trustees always take into consideration the wider economic environment and the potential impact that this can have on the results for the year. The balance of funds is reviewed taking into consideration operational and financial plans for

the year to ensure that the Trust has sufficient funding to meet its objectives on an on-going basis. We are satisfied that this remains the case.

Finally under this heading, the Trust's arrangements to enable those who use the Offices at Berwick and Woodhorn to make casual donations to the Trust in cash have again produced results. In 2024-25, cash donations totalled £1,700.40 (£1,545 in 2023-24).

### **Our Governance**

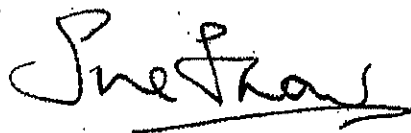
The Trust continued its practice of reviewing its suite of governance policies systematically at its December meeting. See above for changes to the Board of Trustees in December 2024.

Both continuing and newly appointed Trustees are encouraged to undertake relevant training (e.g. on fundraising and safeguarding) whenever this is necessary and/or appropriate.

### **Conclusion**

The Trust has enjoyed a fifth successful year. Where things have not gone so well, we have learnt lessons. As we hope this report shows, it is making good progress delivering on its objectives, in the public interest. We are ambitious to grow our support for the Northumberland Archive Service and to promote and increase the accessibility of the County's impressive archival heritage, and in so doing to bring its wider heritage (economic, political, industrial, cultural, social and environmental) vividly to life. An underlying aim is to regenerate pride in local communities and re-energise the North East.

Approved by the Trustees at their meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Sue Shaw (Chair)



Stuart Bankier (Treasurer)

Date: 16th January 2026

## Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Northumberland Archives Charitable Trust

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Northumberland Archives Charitable Trust (the Charity) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

### Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Charity, 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 Charity'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.

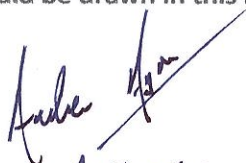
### Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do 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.

Signed:



Name:

ANDREW AYRE

Address:

MILL FARM, AWEEDMOUTH, BERTWICK.

12/1/2026.

**Northumberland Archives Charitable Trust**

**Accounts period 01/04/2024 to 31/03/2025**

**31 March  
2025**

**31 March  
2024**

**Income**

Patrons	1,405	1,508
Community Foundation Re Photocentre	10,000	10,000
Community Foundation re Phote Centre	3,420	0
Community Foundation re Phipps	6,670	0
NCC Repayment re Platten	4,777	0
Platten	11,124	0
Strathmartine Trust	5,000	0
Sir James Knott Trust	6,000	0
Foyle Trust	30,000	0
Donation re Bosanquet Papers	0	2,500
Donation re Gibson Papers	0	1,000
Lord Crewe Charity	0	6,000
Josephine Butler	0	2,000
Clayton of Chesters	0	3,372
NCC New Burdens	0	5,000
Community Foundation Re Ashington	0	15,602
Donations General	1,700	1,545
Memberships	95	155
Gift Aid claim from HMRC	0	700
Gift Aid claimed through Stewardship	25	94
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>80,216</b>	<b>49,476</b>

**Less Expenditure**

Website charges	(278)	(205)
Bank Charges	(71)	(72)
Information Commissioner	(40)	0
Artwork	0	(60)
Insurance	(278)	(248)
Strategy Day	(759)	0
Membermojo	(50)	0
Platten Project	0	(255)
VONNE Membership	(160)	(85)
Woodhorn re Phipps	(6,670)	0
Woodhorn re Foyle	(30,000)	0
Woodhorn re Seaton Sluice	(11,124)	0
Woodhorn re Photo Centre	(3,420)	0
Woodhorn re Photo Centre	(10,000)	(10,000)
Woodhorn re Sir James Knott Trust	(6,000)	0
Woodhorn re Platten repayment	(4,777)	0
Woodhorn re Strathmartine	(5,000)	0
Woodhorn re New Burdens	0	(5,000)
Woodhorn re Josephine Butler	0	(2,000)
Woodhorn re Clayton of Chesters	0	(3,372)
Woodhorn re Bosanquet	0	(2,500)
Woodhorn re Gibson papers	0	(1,000)
Woodhorn re Lord Crewe Charity	0	(6,000)
Community Foundation re Ashington	0	(15,602)
	(78,627)	(46,399)

**Excess on Income over Expenditure**

**1,589**

**3,077**

<b>Balance Sheet</b>	<b>31 March 2025</b>		<b>31 March 2024</b>	
Balance per bank		32,199		21,428
Debtors				
HMRC re Gift Aid claim	<u>0</u>	0	<u>700</u>	700
Less Creditors				
Kreative Technology	(208)		(145)	
Committed Expenditure:				
Woodhorn re Photo Centre Extra	(3,420)		0	
Woodhorn re Sir James Knott Trust	(6,000)		0	
Woodhorn re New Burdens	(5,000)		(5,000)	
Woodhorn re Bosanquet papers	(2,500)		(2,500)	
Woodhorn re Gibson papers	(1,000)		(1,000)	
Woodhorn re Photo Centre	<u>0</u>	(18,128)	<u>(1,000)</u>	(9,645)
<b>Net Assets at 31/03/2025</b>		<u><b>14,072</b></u>		<u><b>12,483</b></u>
<b>Represented by:</b>				
Reserves brought forward from prior years		12,483		9,406
Current year surplus to date		<u>1,589</u>		<u>3,077</u>
<b>Total Reserves at 31/03/2025</b>		<u><b>14,072</b></u>		<u><b>12,483</b></u>