

Mrs Julie Hartley, BA (Hons), IPFA, ILCA
Cottars Barn
Ellingham Glebe
Ellingham
Northumberland
NE67 5EU
27th January 2025

Dear Trustees

Ellingham Village Hall (Charity 1193462)

- 1) I have completed the independent review of the accounts for the year 1 November 2024 to 31 October 2024. This has included completion of the Charity Commission's recommended checklist for examiners, sample testing of expenditure and income, including verifying data to the bank statements.
- 2) It has also included preparing a simple set of expenditure and income accounts, for which I used an example from another village hall as my basis. The prior year accounts template was not appropriate, as, now the capital project is complete, income and expenditure has reduced sufficiently to fall beneath the Charity Commission de-minimis and accounts can now be prepared on a simple receipts and payments basis rather than the accruals basis used for the last two years. I have, however, included an assets and liabilities statement as it makes sense to recognise the outstanding loan position.
- 3) Overall findings from my independent review are positive and there are no matters identified which preclude me from signing the Accounts. As this is my first year as your independent examiner, I have listed below some areas of record keeping and processes that can be improved and hope you will find this of use in developing day to day operations. My recommendations are as follows:
 - a. It will be beneficial for the Trust to compile a register of assets, recording their value and depreciation amounts. Any new purchases or sales should be reflected on the register. This will assist in insurance renewal and Accounts preparation;
 - b. The minutes of the Trust should refer specifically and record the agreement of the Trustees to the appointment of an independent examiner. The minute should make it clear what the independent examiner is being appointed to do (examiners should not, strictly speaking prepare the accounts for you, but focus instead on verifying their contents). The minute should also record the reasoning behind the appointment (qualifications and independence from the Trustees being the main ones) as well as any remuneration agreed;
 - c. The minutes of the Trust should record the agreement of trustees to any expenditure items of more than £500 in value (this is specified in your Financial Procedures);
 - d. There needs to be clarity as to how the Trust ensures that two trustees authorise each expenditure item, especially those that are enacted on-line (this is specified in your Financial Procedures);
 - e. Minutes should be posted to the Trust's website, to contribute to openness and accountability.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Julie Hartley