



YDSWG AGM

Trustees Report

Saturday 25th October 2025

1. Attendees and absentees

Present. J Pridmore, S Wright, E Hopkins, , Steve Bostock, B Cowling, A Gudgeon, M Dalton, A Bailey M Jeffery, D Purvis

Apologies. J Garwell, D Garbutt, P Maynard, S Crane, P Targett, M Booth, D Leedale, S Grainger

2. Minutes of the 2022 AGM

These were reviewed by the Chairman. Steve Bostock proposed and Andy Gudgeon seconded these were accurate.

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matter arising and the minutes were unanimously passed.

4. PRESIDENTS COMMENTS

Bill Cowling congratulated the Guild on their continued progress. He thanked them for the work they do in supporting farming communities commenting on the sustainability and longevity of walls and their benefit to farms. He noted how the Guild still continued to be a driving force in the preservation of the craft

5. COURSE COORDINATORS REPORT

It was a good start to the season with the practice session at Castle Hill Huddersfield in April with a good number of members attending. The venue offers easy access for us West Yorkshire dwellers. This was followed throughout the year with some of the practice sessions attracting many more attendees than perhaps was expected. Let us hope a similar turnout takes place next year.

Courses have been extremely variable in numbers, our first of the year, and the first at Padside Cattery attracted only four participants. My reason for putting them first was to see if it would help increase attendance, and to replace Fountains Abbey, just down the road.

In contrast to Padside, places had to be increased for the last course of the year at Cropper Fold Farm at the end of September. They went up in two's and ended with 23 on the day. This pushed the completed wall length to 22m. At that rate, if we had kept going, we could probably have completed all walls at Jim & Megan's by 2136 (and no that is not the 24hour clock time either).

At the GYS we had several enquiries about our courses. The attraction was probably our new marquee. I thought that as with previous years I have managed courses, there would be little follow-up, but I was wrong. We had at least four who attended directly from the show.

The 2026 courses have been on the website since the 21st September. Within one day of posting, we had one taker for Winsbury House on Sept 22nd. A second order on the 18th October for Castle Bolton has also been booked. Let's hope Christmas is a time for gift orders and the order momentum keeps up.

John and I viewed a location near Cowling, Keighley to give us access to a fresh site and into an area we have no presence. There is quite an amount of walling to repair and have arranged to hold a course there in June...hopefully when the weather is fair to fine. Other courses are in the usual locations and run about one per month until October.

Practice sessions are presently being arranged and will be notified soon. I asked Craig at Low Belford if they were able to support our attendance there this year. Unfortunately they cannot.

We have had interest from schools and organisations, and one GP practice to wall for them and also train some of their volunteers, with some offering to pay. One request, and the most recent, is to train a number of volunteers to help rebuild the walls across areas of the North Yorkshire Moors. We need to look into the legality of all of these before putting it out to our members. One I have already excluded ourselves from after a site visit is the GP practice as there appears to be potential for rights of access issues.

As with previous years, your practice session attendance will be much appreciated. We expect at least three courses per year to be attended by each instructor, and your action to arrange a stand-in if you are unable to attend would be appreciated. Thank you.

6. CHAIR/SECRETARY REPORT

The 2025 has been another successful year with the Guild maintaining its strength

We are now a fully fledged Charity with everything now bedded in and working nicely. There are some suggestions regarding this status that we can pick up in AOB

Looking back over the year its been a busy and successful one. Financially we are slightly down on last years figures however we have significantly invested in the Guild which Gudge has covered off.

Courses were successful again and a major source of income. The cost was maintained at £130 per course and still seems to offer good value for money according to the feedback. The venues we all our usual ones however Fountains and Yate House were dropped mainly because we have now repaired all the derelict walls. On the courses I attended I had great fun instructing and the groups attending all seemed to enjoy themselves

Practice meets were on the whole very well attended again this year. We started the year with our collaboration with The Yorkshire Wildlife Trust at a venue near Huddersfield. Members from both organisations repaired various sections using flat, thin sandstone which is common to that area. Our meet at Healaugh included YouTuber Jack, the Northern Introvert filming all day to create a video on how walls are constructed (and promote what we do at the same time). Eds facial hair has now had 10M views and apparently, he now gets stopped in the street for selfies at home. Meets at Cloughton and Winsbury followed then our visit to Knab Farm where we completed a gap and a long run to a gatepost. The team had to crack on in the afternoon to get finished but the end result was a nice repair. Pete Maynard also managed to drive from Ravenscar mostly off road with some dodgy directions provided by Derrick. He made it eventually.

We then moved onto Steves at Gammersgill where we tackled a wall that had been covered by trees and Brambles for many years. We all had a fun day playing with Steves cobbles!!!

We'll finish off next weekend at Cropper Fold then the Guild will go into its winter hibernation.

We attended our usual show at Duncomber, GYS and Ripley along with a new addition of the Ryedale Show. At the GYS we finished off the length we started last year reaching the road and topping off by Friday. It's a wall with seats cut into the length. Each section has been topped off in a different style to showcase the variety on methods available. Unlike last year this years show was in the middle of a heatwave with the temperatures peaking on Friday. Luckily we had our new snazzy gazebo to shelter from the sun. It's a great asset to the Guild and raises our profile at shows. Many thanks to all the attended to help out.

Id finally like to thank the trustees for helping to run The Guild this year. Special thanks go to Euan for looking after all the tech stuff, Ed who has run the courses with military precision and efficiency and to Andy who has got all the financial reporting into a good place since taking over with monthly updates and a real good handle on whats going on. Also to Sarah mainly for putting up with me for another year

Membership currently stands at 539 which is up from the previous year at 428. This figure will come down when we purge members that have not renewed for more than 2 years. The 539 is made up of 16 honorary, 33 life and 196 (217) paid members and 294 that have not renewed. 149 of those not renewing will now be purged from the database as they have not renewed for 2 years.

The website is our main portal into the wider world providing details of all our activity. Pictures from our events are uploaded along with all other important Guild information. We are lucky to have the services of Euan who maintains the website and sorts out any techie issues we have.

We are also active on Facebook and Instagram so please subscribe and follow our posts.

7. TREASURERS REPORT

Objectives and activities

The Guild's main activity is the preservation and promotion of the craft of dry-stone walling. It is a member organisation offering training courses, practice days and levels of accreditation. It is also involved in promoting the craft at country shows.

Policy on Reserves

Under the requirements of charity law, the Trustees are obliged to define the charity's policy for holding reserves. The policy will enable the charity to meet its legal obligations, provide confidence to donors seeking to give support to a prudently controlled charity and to ensure that the reserves are at a level sufficient to discharge all the charity's obligations in the event that it should cease its operations.

The Guild's principal financial assets are bank balances. In order to maintain liquidity to ensure that sufficient funds are available for ongoing and future requirements the Guild maintains a reasonable level of funds in an instant access account with Lloyds Bank. Any surplus funds not required for short-term working capital are invested in an instant access deposit account with Lloyds Bank and a Fixed Rate Bond with United Trust Bank. The bond earns 4.6%pa interest and matures on 31st December 2025. Consequently, the amount of interest earned on the bond investment is not shown in these accounts but will be declared in the accounts for 2025-26.

The Guild does not aim to make a profit on activities but to ensure that all costs are met and an adequate surplus is maintained to invest in future activities and new equipment required.

2025 Financial Review

For the year ended 30th September 2025 the Guild's expenditure (£18,660) exceeded the income (£17,073) by £1,587. Consequently, the cash balances held at year-end were £20,863 compared with £22,450 at the start of the financial year.

Income from Training Courses and Gift Certificates (which are effectively pre-payments for training courses) were £12,470, down from £16,200 the previous year. On the flip side, course costs totalled £9,500, down from £12,770 the previous year. Therefore, training courses contributed a net income of £4,530, compared with £3,430 in the previous year.

There were some significant one-off costs in the year which contributed towards the reduction in funds. Namely, a new printed marquee (£2,313), a First Aid course (£770), jackets for instructors (£767), new feather flags (£684) and a storyboard (£174). These exceptional one-off costs total £4,708.

In addition, the Guild purchased books for re-sale (£957) and safety glasses (£487) for course participants. The stock of books and glasses are held by the instructors.

In summary, taking into consideration the exceptional one-off costs, the Guild had a satisfactory financial year and is well placed to continue the good work going forward.

8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN- John Pridmore was elected as Chairman

SECRETARY- Sarah Wright was elected as secretary.

TREASURER- Andrew Gudgeon was elected as Treasurer

COURSE COORDINATOR- Ed Hopkin

The above were proposed by Steve Bostock and seconded by A Bailey. All attending voted in favour.

ELECTION OF CHARITY TRUSTEES

Stuart Grainger has stood down as a trustee

JP proposed Steve Crane as trustee. This were seconded by Andy Gudgeon and unanimously confirmed by all attending.

The following were elected as trustees of the Charity and voted in unanimously by all attending

Ed Hopkin

Sarah Wright

Andrew Gudgeon

John Pridmore

James Garwell

Mary Dalton

All members were voted in 'in block' unanimously by all attending

9. AOB

AG asked if we needed to audit the accounts he produces. JP mentioned he reviews every month so probably not needed.

EH Suggested using survey monkey to get stats from those attending courses so web can make improvements. The view was around 5 questions max. These questions have been submitted previously so EH to progress

SB asked about advertising in National Parks. JP advised that we already do however were going to miss a year as we have no way of knowing how successful the advert is.

DP suggested hooking up with the National Parks to advertise. Also to provide further contacts about providing more charitable work

MD suggested donating money to charity. The charity could be agreed at the AGM based on the previous years accounts. JP suggested donating half the surplus for the year & making an event of the donation if it is sufficient.

AG suggested maybe linking up with the mens shed to see if the Guild can do anything.

MD asked if the Guild could fund a portaloos as they have to provide one at their location. MD to get a quote then it can be picked up at the first trustees meeting

JP suggested doing Specialist courses at the GYS in the wood where the stone is stored. If needed we could get an additional delivery of stone. JP to check with Joe Leahy

JP mentioned there had been an enquiry from NY Moors National Park to provide some instruction to around 8 members. JP/EH to progress and communicate further

JP mentioned that Pete Targett and James Tittering Coleman will be coming on board as instructors.

JP suggested increasing instructors fees to £200 per day along with increasing the cost of courses to 135. All attending were in agreement.

Meeting Closed at 16.30PM

YORKSHIRE DRY STONE WALLING GUILD
Income and Expenditure YTD 1st Oct 24 to 30th September 2025

Account Balances at 30th September 2024	
Savings Account HSBC	19,161.77
Current Account Lloyds	3,289.07
	22,450.84

	Month-12	
Income for the period	Sep'25	YTD £
Book Sales	185.00	881.50
Clothing		126.00
Donations		18.00
Bank Interest	2.79	42.58
Membership/Taster Sessions	10.00	1,975.00
Gift Certificates		1,560.00
Training Courses (net of refunds)	1,170.00	12,470.00
	1,367.79	17,073.08
		39,523.92
Expenditure for the period		
AGM Refreshments		83.45
Accident Books		65.89
Advert in The Visitor magazine		324.00
Books		957.00
Breakfast Meet		223.00
Certification of documents		12.75
Clothing		135.00
Emergency First Aid Course (Watson Training Services)		770.00
Euan website Digital Newsletters		135.00
Euan website & Admin	33.60	353.95
Euan printing course attendance certificates		50.79
Examiners Costs		380.00
Feather Flags		684.00
Hire of Thirsk Town Hall		45.00
Insurance		235.20
Jackets for instructors - Foxstitch Ltd		766.80
New Printed Marquee		2,313.79
Postage		13.92
Printing & Stationery		10.00
Promotional Postcards		50.44
Safety Glasses		486.82
Squarespace Website (12-months to Dec 2025)		331.20
Storyboard (Signhub)		174.00
Striking-off fee for Limited Company		33.00
Stripe Fees	19.34	277.85
Training Course Costs	2,660.00	9,500.00
Travel Expenses	18.00	91.80
Zoom Licence 12 months		155.88
	2,730.94	18,660.53
Closing Balance for the period		20,863.39

Account Balances at 30 September 2025	
Current Account Lloyds	820.81
Commercial Instant Access Account Lloyds	5,042.58
United Trust Bank - One Year Fixed Rate Bond *	15,000.00
	20,863.39

NB - Payments are only recognised in the period they are received into the bank.

Any payments received in Stripe but not yet transferred are recognised in the next month's accounts.

* The Fixed Rate Bond earns 4.6%pa interest and matures on 30/12/25