

Annual report for Music at the Heart of Teesdale for the period 1/4/24 to 24/8/25.

Music at the Heart of Teesdale is a registered charity, with the Registered Charity Number 1207738. The registered address is Green Fell View, Bowes.

This is the first annual report since Music at the Heart of Teesdale became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 5/4/24.

Structure and how managed.

At its inception Music at the Heart of Teesdale had three trustees: Mike Bettison (treasurer), Rosie Bettison (secretary) and Patrick Langdon (chair). We have since recruited three more trustees; Mark Allen who approached Music at the Heart of Teesdale; and Rachel Todd, and Elizabeth Saunders who were both invited and agreed to be trustees, making six trustees in total. The Trustees feel there is a satisfactory balance in terms of age and gender.

Music at the Heart of Teesdale is managed by an operational team comprising chair, secretary, treasurer, creative director and assistant creative director. This team meets on a monthly basis. The meetings are in person or virtual or hybrid by arrangement between the team members. Every meeting always includes a report by the creative director on the past month's activities and plans for the future.

Objectives and activities.

The object of Music at the Heart of Teesdale is, "To advance education in the art of folk music in all its forms primarily amongst young people in southwest County Durham, by providing workshops, masterclasses and opportunities to perform and, for the public benefit, to promote knowledge and appreciation of folk music through performances, concerts and festivals."

In order to achieve this objective Music at the Heart of Teesdale has focused on the provision of weekly music workshops for young people aged 8-18 in two venues; Barnard Castle and Wolsingham. These have offered opportunities for young people to learn and play folk music in youth bands in Teesdale (Cream Tees) and Weardale (Wear'd Aliens). There is no audition needed to be a member of Cream Tees or Wear'd Aliens. The criteria for membership are simply that the young people should have an interest in folk music and sufficient musical ability to make a contribution and to derive some benefit.

Membership of the bands is reasonably stable at about 26 across the two bands, which suggests that the young people feel comfortable and want to attend the weekly practices.

Festival trips are a highlight of our annual programme. It is here that participants can place the music they play within the context of wider regional and national folk traditions; playing alongside professional musicians; with the opportunity to explore other music and dance styles through workshops & masterclasses.

Music at the Heart of Teesdale's programme also included workshops and public performances by the Yellow Rattle Band. This offered opportunities to young musicians aged 15 - 25 in the northeast who are preparing for a professional career in folk music. For their first performance the band shared the bill with Granny's Attic. The Yellow Rattle Band was enabled by specific funding from Youth Music which expired in December 2024. The project has now been wound up and a final report submitted to the funding body.

We have a trusted and growing pool of volunteers (many are parents, who come from teaching / youth work backgrounds), who support Music at the Heart of Teesdale during weekly sessions, and on residential visits. We ensure that all volunteers provide DBS checks and we encourage additional training for those that need it.

In the period covered by this report, 5/4/24 to 31/3/25, Music at the Heart of Teesdale has arranged festival performances for its young musicians at Whitby Folk Week and Saltburn Folk Festival. Music at the Heart of Teesdale provided transport, camping accommodation and food for the period of each festival, as well as ensuring appropriate pastoral care and supervision where acting in loco parentis.

Although Music at the Heart of Teesdale accesses funding to pay for these activities, and so the activities are much subsidised, we ask for a parental contribution. However, if any families would have difficulty paying the termly fees the fees are reduced or waived. Likewise, a charge is made toward the cost of attending the festivals. This charge is waived if families would struggle to pay. Music at the Heart of Teesdale has facilitated access to grants by some of our young people to enable them to buy instruments appropriate to their increasing abilities.

Achievements, performance, benefits

The benefits for the young people involved include the provision of a safe and welcoming environment to meet in a sparsely populated rural area; in which they can socialise and express themselves and where their views are sought and listened to and their opinions valued. Being valued by the adult world and playing a role in significant regional events enhances self-esteem. We see the young people grow in confidence during their time in the bands. Membership of Music at the Heart of Teesdale has been a significant factor in the personal development of the young people involved.

Instruments played by core participants include Accordion, Banjo, Cajon, Cello, Flute, Guitar, Saxophone, Trombone, Violin, Viola and Ukulele. Through our encouragement participants have also taken up: Bodhran, Mandolin, Melodeon, Saxophone and Spoons.

The performances at festivals and other public events give our participants the opportunity to meet, play alongside and network with nationally acclaimed musicians in the folk music world. This is a unique opportunity.

Music at the Heart of Teesdale's activities have provided a wider public benefit by supporting local events and regional cultural events.

Some Statistics

In the period covered by this report there were ten core participants in Cream Tees, seventeen core participants in Wear'd Aliens and five in the Yellow Rattle Band.

In the 2024 festival season 26 young people along with 11 family members (parents and siblings) attended [Whitby Folk Week](#) and [Saltburn Folk Festival](#). These two festivals attracted a combined audience of 1400 people.

Music at the Heart of Teesdale provided six bursaries in 2024-2025 to enable our young people to attend festivals.

Patrick Langdon, Chair, Music at the Heart of Teesdale, September 2025

Music at the Heart of Teesdale

Income and Expenditure Account for period commencing 5th April 2024 and ending 31st March 2025

	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Income		
Fees	4,245	
Grants	5,985	
Performances	4,737	
Donations	1,600	
Other	897	
		17,464
Expenses		
Staff	12,275	
Bands	2,114	
General	4,638	
		19,027
Excess of expenditure for the period		-1,563
Net Loss for the period		-1,563

I certify that the above accounts are in accordance with the books, information and explanations given to me.

S.J.Diegan BSc FCMA CGMA
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