

Arkenstall Village Centre (AVC)

Registered Charity No. 300394

Trustees' Annual Report

1st May 2023 – 30st April 2024

Secretary:

Sheila Waller

c/o Arkenstall Village Centre

7 Station Road

Haddenham

CB6 3XD

Names of Trustees (at the end of the reporting period)

Stuart Browse

Chair

Sheila Waller

Secretary

Cllr Gareth Wilson

Treasurer

Liz Dolman

Suzy Barker

Robert Bush

Lyndsey Goddard

Sources of advice and support

ACRE

Haddenham Parish Council

Governance

Conveyance and Declaration of Trust Dated 12 Jul 1971 as amended by Resolution dated 16 MAY 2017 as amended on 21 Feb 2023.

Formerly the Robert Arkenstall School, fundraising enabled the purchase of the former school in July 1971 as the new village hall. The Arkenstall Village Centre achieved Charity Status in 1971 and was opened in 1973 with the first meeting being that of the Women's Institute. The AVC is managed by a Board of Trustees under a constitution, which was updated and voted in at an EGM in February 2023.

Appointment of Trustees

The Trust Deed governs the appointment of Trustees (8 elected and 3 representative plus no more than 6 co-opted) and the management of the Charity.

Nine Trustees were elected at the Annual General Meeting held in May 2023. None were co-opted during the year.

Permanent Staff

Former caretaker Mr James Dun left on 31 July 2023 after 18 years' service and a new Facilities Manager Mr Martin Paul was welcomed to the AVC.

Policies and Procedures

To guide the Management Committee in exercising its duty of care to members, employees and users of the hall, the following policy statements have been adopted and revised this period:

- ☐ Constitution (Agreed at EGM in Feb 23)
- ☐ Health & Safety Policy
- ☐ Safeguarding Policy
- ☐ Data Protection & Data Privacy Policy
- ☐ Financial Controls Policy
- ☐ Equality and Diversity Policy
- ☐ CCTV Policy

Copies of these policies are available on the website.

Hiring Agreement

Use of the village hall is subject to a Hiring Agreement which must be signed by the hirer when booking. The hiring agreement sets out the conditions of hire and identifies the respective responsibilities of each party to the agreement.

Licences

The hall has a Premises Licence and occasionally applies for an alcohol licence. The hall is licensed by the Performing Rights Society for live and recorded music.

Risk Management

Insurance

The village hall is insured with respect to property damage and rebuilding costs (buildings insurance) for £2,363,270. It is insured with the same company with respect to contents up to

£73,980; public liability £10,000,000; employers' liability £10,000,000; business interruption £39,600; personal accident £25,000 and management liability £500,000.

The Management Committee recognises that it is under a legal obligation to protect the building, its users and employees through adequate and appropriate insurance.

Building Issues

- ☐ A building condition survey is undertaken at 5-year intervals by a qualified surveyor.
- ☐ Gas appliances and portable electrical appliances are tested by qualified personnel annually.
- ☐ The mains electrical installation is checked by a qualified engineer every 5 years.
- ☐ A Fire Safety Risk Assessment is updated annually by the Committee's own Fire Safety Officer as required by law.
- ☐ Fire fighting appliances are inspected annually under contract with the supplier.
- ☐ The Facilities Manager carries out other regular maintenance checks, there is a reporting book available for all users to report faults in the Kitchen.
- ☐ There is an Accidents reporting book available to comply with Health & Safety regulations to document any instances that occur during usage of the site location.

Objectives of the Charity

- ☐ Provision of the AVC for the benefit of the inhabitants of Haddenham without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, nationality, race or political, religious or other opinions.
- ☐ Use of the village facilities for meetings, lectures and classes or other forms of recreation and leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the social conditions of the life of the inhabitants.
- ☐ The Charity also sub-lets space to the volunteer village library.
- ☐ The Trustees consider these objectives to be consistent with Charity Commission guidance on providing for the public benefit and these objectives have been pursued in the activities of the Charity this year.

Principal Activities in pursuit of Objectives

- ☐ The hall is in use most days of the week for a variety of activities including over 60s lunch club, weight watchers, dance classes, music nights, pilates, yoga, youth club and village meetings.
- ☐ The hall and rooms are available for hire for private functions including children's parties, wedding receptions, funeral teas, village social functions and occasional fund-raising events.

Funding Strategy

It is the strategy of the Trustees to manage the revenue budget on a self-financing basis. This has necessitated revisions to the hiring charges and terms and conditions annually as at 1 February. The hiring charges paid by users of the hall are set to achieve this, but to be financially viable the Trustees have agreed that maintaining and increasing the usage of the facilities is required to cover rising costs.

Volunteers' Efforts

Management costs are kept to a minimum through employment of a part time Facilities Manager with booking duties and a cleaner. Volunteers help with regular maintenance, covering absences of the caretaker and cleaning of the hall. On average 60 hours of volunteer time are given each week to cover routine tasks such as bookings management, cleaning, and maintenance. In addition, Trustees give 4 hours a month for meetings and 200 hours per annum in organising and running fund raising events.

Chairman's Annual Report 2022/23

I have looked forward so much more this year to drafting the annual report on behalf of the Trustees. 2023/24 has been a very successful year for the Arkenstall Village Centre. The strength has centred around an incredibly talented, dedicated group of Trustees who have provided the vital stability and unity of purpose required to progress the use of the Centre for the benefit of the local community. It is truly amazing what has been achieved by them with the help of a small band of volunteers.

The priority this year has been to place the Charity on a financially sustainable footing, against the backdrop of a post-COVID environment and a cost-of-living crisis, which have affected the Charity in different ways, but against the odds has been achieved. The Trustees have agreed some challenging financial income targets this year.

The Charity has continued to run regular fund-raising events - as diverse as Christmas Fairs, Health and Wellbeing Fairs, a village Garage Sale and Repair Cafes - with the joint objective of raising money and developing a sense of community in the village. Largely every month these

have helped create a sense of community in the village and critically have contributed to the financial future of the Centre.

The Trustees have also reached out to other village and community organisations to share income streams and best practice. The hugely successful 3-day Folk Festival across the AVC and The Haddenham Arts Centre and the 2-day Big Beady Weekend in the AVC and Baptist Church are good examples of this. The well-established Beer Festival decided to run a joint Winter Beer Festival event at the AVC which was also well attended with some amazing bands.

Robert Bush has not only run two successful repair cafes but has also supported a number of events run by other Trustees and he has also deputised for the Chairperson and has been the chief liaison with the Library Committee to develop a project to allow them to trial expansion into a larger part of the AVC premises.

Lyndsey Goddard has been responsible for the coordination, and in some instances running many of the monthly fund-raising events including a ceilidh. Her organizational skills and forward planning have contributed enormously to putting the Centre back on a financially sustainable footing, and her administration of the web services and email has moved us forward brilliantly this year. Along with Suzy Barker, who directed this year's successful panto Treasure Island, they have together contributed to this year's success of achieving our income targets.

In addition to being the liaison for the regular hirers that return week in and week out, Liz Dolman has been responsible for running many of the fund-raising events, she is a great organiser and benefits from a wide network of friendly volunteers to help at events. She has also taken the lead on social media and has established a footing on the Cambridgeshire Halls for Hire website which is paying dividends already in terms of our income from casual bookings.

Along with his other tasks as Treasurer, Cllr Gareth Wilson a long-time Trustee of the Charity has also applied for external funding for the Library in order to fund a Library expansion project and upgrade of the disabled toilets. He coordinates the management of budgets and forecasts and importantly this year the Trustees set a budget that they are managing to forecast an outturn within a very small percentage margin, and that variance largely due to an unannounced and unexpected reduction in council funding. This is a good indicator of sound financial practice, that the Trustees were able to reassess priorities and keep the Charity afloat financially.

Finally, all the Trustees are immensely grateful for the support and hard work of fellow Trustee, Sheila Waller. Sheila has proved to be the glue that holds it all together, she has for a further year guided the Trustees in the sometimes tricky, process and protocol of running a Charity for the benefit of the community. She always proves to be incredibly flexible and helpful, is discreet and forward thinking.

We must also pay tribute to our departing Trustee this year, Jim Collins who in his short time with us made such an impact in cutting our costs and making efficiencies. Leaving for personal reasons, he will be sorely missed.

The Trustees remain aware of and, where possible, aligned with Parish Council priorities. A key project has been driving forward the opportunity for the Community Library to trial a 6-month free expansion into Room 1 for at least part of the week to showcase new activities and opportunity for the local community. The necessary precursor to this is some minor building works to improve accessibility and is dependent on a grant from East Cambridgeshire District Council or elsewhere. Finally, one individual has made a significant contribution and difference to the running of the facility and that is Martin Paul the New Facilities Manager. Since his arrival in June last year, he has driven and delivered a series of infrastructure improvements to the Centre; has brought clarity and organisation to the administration of the Centre and has interacted brilliantly and empathetically with hirers - regular, new and casual hirers alike.

Looking ahead, whilst there have been some great successes this year, a leaking roof and a main hall floor that has reached the end of its design life mean the financial burden of running a successful Charity will not go away. The financial challenge of dealing with these inevitable costs will run to many thousands of pounds, but we are starting from a sound baseline.

There has been a net increase of five regular users this year. Whilst we were sad to say farewell to Tennis4Tots, we welcomed Lisa Nixon (2 classes), Lucy Hibbet (2 classes), Erin Dolan (2 classes), Haddenham Youth Club and Dave Cogan, all of whom provide a valuable service to our local community.

Reserves Policy

The Charity had £10,582 in the bank and COIF shares valued at £78,659 at the year end. This cash is available for unforeseen expenditure in relation to building maintenance or urgent furniture or equipment replacement.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance of the village hall and from time to time this involves major works far in excess of cash reserves held. On identifying such major works, fundraising is undertaken with the objective of meeting the costs in full (i.e. without needing a loan). Such funds would be restricted.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees

Signature(s)

Full name(s)

Position

Date

Stuart Browse

Chairman

30 April 2024

Independent examination of the accounts

Our income is below the income threshold above which an independent examination of the accounts is required by the Charity Commission. The draft end of year accounts is attached separately as a pdf.

Arkenstall Village Centre

Receipts & Payments for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st

	year to 31st March 2024	year to 31st March 2023
Receipts		
Room hire	- 27,273.72	16,877.80
Library Rent	- 3,200.00	3,200.00
Flat Rent	- 5,250.00	1,500.00
Flat rent deposit	- 1,153.00	
interest	- 120.07	231.89
Precept	- 2,500.00	2,500.00
Donation	- 1,955.14	7,026.23
Gift Aid tax	- 432.32	
Panto	- 3,966.53	2,837.12
Ceilidh	- 106.40	1,369.00
Christmas fair	- 330.00	
cake decoration	- 540.00	
Garage sale	- 613.00	
Fund raising	- 7,378.45	390.50
CCLA sale of units	- 1,956.13	
CCLA deposit account	- 400.00	
surplus on sale of COIF units	- 15,043.87	-
grant		
Total Receipts	- 72,218.63	35,932.54

Payments

Salaries	16,843.18	13,955.15
cost of fundraising	696.00	1,166.60
Telephone	693.39	1,048.82
IT	490.99	1,032.07
promotion	-	-
Cleaning materials	1,608.60	916.41
Rubbish collection	1,239.91	1,162.73
Building maintenance	413.37	1,585.16
Boiler maintenance	-	-
Equipment maintenance	7,615.14	150.00
Flat	17,566.68	-
Estate agent fee	690.00	
Gardening	230.00	420.00
Electricity	6,448.57	8,330.51
water	1,001.04	928.12
Heating Oil	2,452.17	3,392.27
Gas	313.90	-
Insurance	2,451.55	2,304.07
Licence	544.96	811.34
Sundry	537.15	550.37
Fire Alarm	346.70	-
Jubilee Event	-	149.32
subscription	80.00	60.00
deposit refund	2,187.25	366.00
disabled toilet		
Total spend	64,450.55	38,328.94
Surplus/ (Deficit)	7,768.08	(2,396.40)

Arkenstall Village Centre

Balance Sheet as at 31st Mar 2024

	31st March 2024	31st March 2023
Bank Balances at 31st March 2024		
COIF Shares at cost	9,261.78	11,217.90
COIF Charity Funds	141.91	421.84
Lloyds Account	10,582.84	4,087.83
Flat rent deposit	1,153.00	
Santander	0	-
	21,139.53	15,727.57
		-
		-
	21,139.53	15,727.57
		-
Bank balances at 1st April 2023		
COIF Shares at cost	11,217.90	11,363.76
COIF Charity Funds	421.84	68.58
Lloyds TSB Account	4,087.83	6,222.96
Santander	-	493.16
	15,727.57	17,568.40
Surplus/(Deficit) for period	7,768.08 (2,396.40)
transfer of funds	- 1,956.13	
transfer of funds	- 400.00	
	21,139.53	15,172.00
Represented by		
Restricted reserves		
Salaries reserve	3,000.00	3,000.00
Repairs reserve	2,000.00	2,000.00
Bookings reserve	3,300.00	3,300.00
Flat rent deposit	1,153.00	
	9,453.00	8,300.00
Unrestricted reserves	11,686.53	6,872.00
	21,139.53	15,172.00
Value of COIF shares at 31st		
December 2023		78,659.48
Decrease from 31st March 2022 of	(8,029.42)

Gareth Wilson

31-Mar-24



CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
Arkenstall Village Centre

On accounts for the year
ended

31st March 2024

Charity no
(if any)

300394

Set out on pages

1 & 2

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD/MM/YYYY.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed 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 (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

AL

Date:

24/1/25

Name:

ANDREW LANT

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

CIMA

Address:

29 ASPEN WAY, SOHAM, ELY, CB7 52Q

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.