

# Trustees' Annual Report

**Houghton Racecourse Community Association**

Charity number: **507652**

Reporting period: **1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025**

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## 1. Reference and Administrative Details

**Registered charity name:** Houghton Racecourse Community Association

**Charity number:** 507652

**Address:** Burdon Avenue, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne & Wear, DH5 8EG

**Trustees serving during the year:**

Penelope White (Chair)

Ann Birkbeck (Treasurer)

Sandra Turns

Thomas Watson

Joyce Watson

Linda Ather

Robert Heron

Audrey Elizabeth Teasdale

Edna Firth

Jemma Jackson

**Management Committee / Officers:**

Chair: Penny White

Treasurer: Ann Birkbeck

Secretary: Sandra Turns

**Independent Examiner:**

Robert Miller & Co, Chartered Accountants, Houghton-le-Spring. DH4 4DJ.

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## 2. Structure, Governance and Management

### Governing document

The charity is governed by a constitution, most recently updated in July 2022.

### How the charity is run

Houghton Racecourse Community Association is managed by a volunteer Management Committee, whose members also act as trustees. The CA currently works in partnership



with Community Opportunities who provide an Executive and Management support service. The support is primarily to deliver governance, user engagement, fundraising and operational site support but will extend to representing HRCA in discussions with external partners such as Sunderland City Council. The Committee meets regularly to oversee activities, finances, building maintenance, health and safety, and compliance with charity law.

Trustees are drawn from the local community and appointed in line with the Constitution. All trustees give their time freely and receive no remuneration.

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### 3. Objects and Public Benefit

The objects of the charity are:

To promote the benefit of the inhabitants of Houghton and District, without distinction, by advancing education and providing facilities for social welfare, recreation and leisure-time activities, with the aim of improving the conditions of life.

The trustees have had due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The activities delivered during the year were open, inclusive and affordable, and designed to meet the needs of local residents, particularly older people, families and those at risk of social isolation.

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#### 3a. Policies and Procedures

To support good governance and the safe operation of the community centre, the trustees have adopted and regularly review a range of policies and procedures, including:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Financial controls and procedures
- Fire safety and emergency procedures
- Equality and inclusion principles
- Hiring and lettings conditions for hall users



These policies are reviewed periodically and are made available to trustees, volunteers and, where appropriate, to hall users.

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#### 4. Our Aims and Activities

Houghton Racecourse Community Association operates a long-established community centre, opened in 1957 and registered as a charity in 1978. The centre provides a safe, welcoming and accessible space for community-led activities and social events.

During the year, the centre hosted a wide range of regular activities including:

- Indoor carpet bowls and fun bowls sessions
- Craft and natter groups
- Tap dancing, line dancing and movement to music classes
- Digital and IT support drop-in sessions
- Family fitness and confidence-building activities
- School holiday activities
- Family cooking activities
- Bingo, beetle drives and social evenings
- Coffee mornings and community gatherings
- After-school and youth activities

The hall was also hired by local organisations and groups on an ad-hoc basis, helping to support community activity across the area.

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#### 5. Achievements and Performance

The charity continued to see strong community engagement throughout the year with good attendance across weekly activities and events.



Key achievements included:

- A successful Autumn Fair, supported by volunteers and local residents
- A well-attended Christmas lunch and Christmas party, helping to bring people together during the festive period
- Continued development of activities with support from Community Opportunities, particularly in promoting the centre and securing funding to deliver School Holiday activities and activities to reduce loneliness and isolation within the local and wider community
- Ongoing delivery of affordable social, wellbeing and fitness activities

The trustees wish to thank all volunteers, activity leaders, committee members and users of the centre for their ongoing commitment and support.

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## 6. Financial Review

### Overview

The accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 have been independently examined.

At the year end, the charity held total funds of £84,081 (2024: £83,193). The year resulted in a surplus of £888 (2024: deficit of £908). This reflects a year of increased activity, including significant grant income and planned investment in repairs and improvements to the community centre.

### Income

Total income for the year increased significantly compared with the previous year, largely due to grant funding received during 2024–2025.

Income was generated from:

- Grants (£29,498)
- Hall hire (£4,982)
- Group activities and subscriptions (including craft group, bowls and bingo)
- Fundraising events such as the Autumn Fayre and Christmas party
- Coffee mornings, donations and bank interest

### Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year was £36,478 (2024: £6,708). This increase reflects planned spending to maintain and improve the building and to support delivery of activities.



Key areas of expenditure included:

- Major repairs and renewals (£20,955)
- Staffing costs (£7,500)
- Utilities, particularly electricity (£4,102)
- Insurance, water, telephone, internet and other general running costs

### Reserves policy

The trustees aim to maintain adequate reserves to meet ongoing running costs, manage unforeseen expenditure, and support the future maintenance and improvement of the community centre. Despite higher expenditure during the year, reserves remain at a healthy level.

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## 7. Plans for the Future

Over the coming year, the trustees plan to:

- Continue offering a varied programme of activities that meet local needs
- Attract new users, volunteers and trustees
- Maintain and improve the community centre building
- Seek grant funding to support activities and facility improvements
- Build on partnerships with local organisations

### Funding strategy

The trustees aim to operate the community centre on a sustainable basis through a combination of grant funding, hall hire income, subscriptions and fundraising activities. Hire charges and activity costs are kept under regular review to balance affordability with the need to cover running costs and maintain the building for future use.

Reducing social isolation, supporting wellbeing and improving accessibility remain key priorities.

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## 8. Risk Management

The trustees regularly review the main risks facing the charity, including financial sustainability, reliance on volunteers, compliance obligations and the condition of the



building. Risks are managed through regular monitoring, maintaining appropriate reserves, keeping policies up to date and ensuring suitable insurance is in place.

## Insurance

The charity maintains appropriate insurance cover to protect the building, its users, volunteers and trustees. This includes buildings and contents insurance, public liability insurance and, where applicable, employer's liability insurance. The trustees review insurance arrangements regularly to ensure adequate cover is maintained.

## Building safety and compliance

The trustees ensure that the community centre is maintained in a safe condition. Regular checks and inspections are carried out, including fire safety measures, alarm systems, emergency lighting and other statutory inspections as required. Any issues identified are addressed as a priority.

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## 9. Trustees' Responsibilities Statement

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (FRS 102).

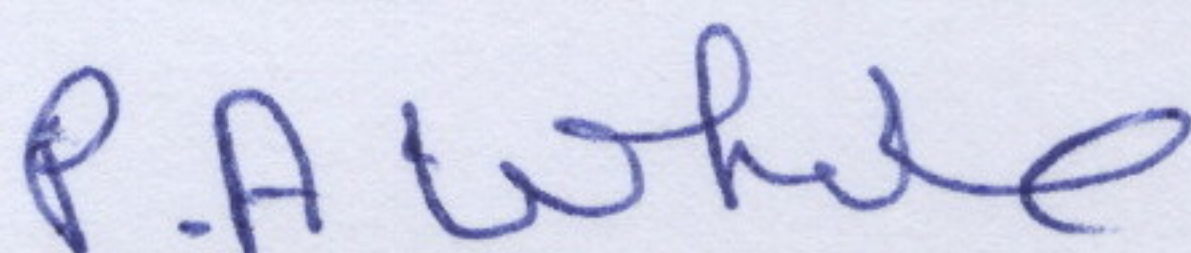
The trustees confirm that:

- The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis
- Suitable accounting policies have been selected and applied consistently
- Reasonable and prudent judgements and estimates have been made

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## 10. Approval

This report was approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf:

Signed:   
Name: Penelope White  
Role: Chair  
Date: 27-1-26

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## Charity Commission Short Version (Summary)

**What we do:** We run a community centre offering affordable social, wellbeing and recreational activities for local people of all ages.

**Who we help:** Local residents in Houghton and surrounding areas, with a focus on older people, **children**, families and those at risk of isolation.

**What we achieved this year:** Regular weekly activities, successful community events, and continued strong local engagement.

**Financial position:** The charity remains financially stable with healthy reserves, despite increased running costs.

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*Prepared in line with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), proportionate for a small community charity.*



Houghton Racecourse Community Association

Accounts

as at

31 March 2025

Robert Miller & Co.  
Chartered Accountants  
Kings Hall  
4 Imperial Buildings  
Houghton le Spring  
Tyne and Wear

DH4 4DJ



Houghton Racecourse Community Association

Independent Examiner's Report

For The Year Ended 31 March 2025

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Houghton Racecourse Community Association.

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31 March 2025 which are set out on pages 2 to 4.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act, 1993 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 7 (b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention.

-1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act:  
and:
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act have not been met; or

-2 to which in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Jane Freeman  
Robert Miller & Co.  
Chartered Accountants  
Kings Hall  
Imperial Buildings  
Houghton le Spring  
Tyne and Wear  
DH4 4DJ

13th June 2025



Houghton Racecourse Community Association

Income and Expenditure Account

For The Year Ended 31 March 2025

	<u>2025</u>		<u>2024</u>	
	£	£	£	£
<u>Income</u>				
Subscriptions		102		110
Bowls		56		-
Canteen and coffee machine		147		165
Grants		29,498		2,038
Hire Of Hall		4982		1073
Ladies Group		672		465
Donations		22		53
Coffee Mornings		328		304
Interest Received		294		179
Craft Group		536		565
Coronation Celebration		-		110
Queen's Platinum Jubilee Party		-		-
Bingo		36		279
SAFA		-		-
Allotment Sales		-		-
MISC CASH		161		-
Autumn Fayre		284		244
Christmas Party		249		107
History Group		-		108
<u>Carried Forward</u>		37,366		5,800



Houghton Racecourse Community Association

Income and Expenditure Account

For The Year Ended 31 March 2025

	<u>2025</u>		<u>2024</u>	
	£	£	£	£
<u>Brought Forward</u>		37,366		5,800
<u>Less: Expenses</u>				
Accountants Fees	432		452	
Bank Charges	-		20	
Christmas Party and Other Party Expenses	-		-	
Council Tax and Rent	46		264	
Donation	825		-	
Electricity	4,102		3,659	
Performing Rights	-		46	
Find my Past Subscription	-		200	
Insurance	999		993	
Worker	7,500		-	
Cleaning	164		-	
Printing, Postage and Stationery	72		122	
Repairs and Renewals	20,955		112	
Telephone	461		121	
Water	651		524	
Sundry Expenses	<u>271</u>		<u>195</u>	
		<u>36,478</u>		<u>6,708</u>
<u>Excess of (Expenditure)/Income For The Year</u>		<u>888</u>		<u>(908)</u>



Houghton Racecourse Community Association

Balance Sheet

For The Year Ended 31 March 2025

	<u>2025</u>		<u>2024</u>	
	£	£	£	£
<u>Fixed Assets</u>				
At 1 April 2024	51,662		51,482	
Additions	<u>1,500</u>		<u>180</u>	
		53,162		51,662
<u>Current Assets</u>				
Debtors and Payments in Advance	18,053		339	
Cash At Bank	21,136		11,226	
Deposit Account	-		20,880	
Cash In Hand	501		312	
	<u>39,691</u>		<u>32,757</u>	
<u>Less: Current Liabilities</u>				
Creditors and Accruals	1,414		1,226	
Deferred Grants	<u>7,358</u>		<u>-</u>	
	<u>8,772</u>		<u>1,226</u>	
Net Current Assets		30,919		31,531
<u>Total Assets Less Liabilities</u>		<u>84,081</u>		<u>83,193</u>
<u>Represented By</u>				
<u>Accumulated Fund</u>				
At 1 April 2024	83,193		84,101	
Excess of (Expenditure)/Income for the year	<u>888</u>		<u>(908)</u>	
		<u>84,081</u>		<u>83,193</u>



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