

# Cotherstone Village Hall

**Moor Road, Cotherstone, Barnard Castle, Co Durham, DL12 9PH**



## **ANNUAL REPORT AND DRAFT ACCOUNTS FOR 2024**

### **Mission Statement:**

**To provide all the people of Cotherstone and area  
with a community resource of excellence**



**Registered Charity Number 523335**

# A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Spring 2025

Hello everyone

Another busy year, with a wide variety of groups meeting and Teesdale Players and Highlights providing the community with excellent entertainment.

As with everybody, energy costs increased drastically. In the hopes of reducing these costs, new windows have been fitted in the Middle Room and the Main Hall. We have also had work done to improve the air circulation in the roof space between the two back rooms in the hopes of alleviating the damp. Additional insulation was also put in.

A number of fundraising events have taken place: Murder Mystery evenings provided by Teesdale Players, Peter and Karen Kirkman arranged for the popular band "Another Crisis" to play, Pippa and her team of helpers organised the Village Show (with a record amount raised) as well as the Annual Coffee Morning. We are very grateful for all the support given to these events

We are also grateful for grants received from Durham County Councillors Bell and Henderson and Durham Community Action and TVHC. We also received funds from Cotherstone Parish Council and the Fun Weekend Committee and numerous donations from residents, for which we are always grateful.

My thanks to Committee Members and Officers for all their help over the year. Special thanks to Jean for all the time and effort she has put into organising the grants and window replacement, Teresa for keeping the accounts in order and Ann for sorting the bookings and cleaning in the Hall.

We all look forward to another busy year.



Jenny Watson  
Chair of Trustees

**COTHERSTONE VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**  
**(Registered Charity Number 523335)**

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**

**held on Tuesday 9 April 2024 at 7.35 pm in the Village Hall**

1. **Present:**

Mrs J Watson	Chair, Parish Council
Mrs D A R Forster	Vice-Chair, Teesdale Flower Club
Mrs T Wilcox	Treasurer, Independent
Mrs J Ambrose	Secretary, Independent
Mr P Collyer	Teesdale Record Society
Mrs E Cowell	Independent
Mrs J Gill	Independent
Mrs D Hedley	Independent
Mr A W Thorn	Independent
Mrs B Thwaites	Independent
2. **Apologies:**

Mrs A Lamb	Independent
Mr S Lamb	Teesdale Players
Mrs P Leech	Show Secretary
3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** The Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 11 April 2023, having previously been circulated and reproduced in the Annual Report, were agreed to be a true record of the proceedings and were signed by the Chair.
4. **Chairman's Remarks:** Members' attention was drawn to JW's letter in the Annual Report highlighting the number of groups now using the hall; the numerous performances by local groups and from the Highlights Rural Touring Scheme; annual fundraising events such as the village show and annual coffee morning; achievement of Hallmark level 1; and production of "Our Cotherstone". JW thanked the many people involved in running these events and in maintaining the hall in good condition for use by the community.
5. **Treasurer's Report:** TW advised members of the individual amounts of donations received over the year from both individuals and local organisations (Fun Weekend, Parish Council, etc) together with income from sale of items formerly stored in the hall but no longer needed and compensation from Barclays Bank for inconvenience caused. She noted that income from room hiring had increased and that the Village Show and various concerts had generated significant funds. However, gas and electricity charges had become major costs, with heating particularly expensive. Following a recent energy audit, it had been decided to lower the frost setting on the hall's heating to 10°. Utility Aid had offered to lock in a new lower rate for implementation at the end of the current gas contract in early 2025, with the unit charge reduced from 17.5p to 7.4p but the standing charge increased from 25p to 45p per day. TW calculated that the overall reduction of remaining with EDF on these rates would be about 50% on current costs. After discussion, the meeting agreed to lock in the new rates for implementation in early 2025. TW advised that Barclays Bank would close its Barnard Castle branch by January 2025 and was directing its customers to use the Post Office. To this end, TW had requested three paying-in cards for use at the Post Office. TW also noted that Virgin Money was moving to on-line banking only and were offering charity accounts with higher rates of interest than the present account; TW would investigate further. Members were advised that Durham County Council would be invoiced £300 for use of the millennium room for a polling station for the forthcoming local elections in May. However, in view of the fact that this rate had been unchanged for several years and noting the significant increase in heating costs, in future the rate would be increased to £500. Once again, DCC had levied a zero rates bill for the coming year. There were no questions.

6. **Election of Management Committee Representative Members:** It was reported that Mrs G Lyon had recently resigned as Representative for the Zumba group and that the Fun Weekend committee had not nominated a representative. The following Representative Members were subsequently confirmed:-
- |                      |   |                   |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|
| Parish Council       | - | Mrs J Watson      |
| Teesdale Day Club    | - | Mrs T Wilcox      |
| Teesdale Flower Club | - | Mrs D A R Forster |
| Teesdale Players     | - | Mr S J Lamb       |
| Village Show         | - | Mrs P Leech       |
| Zumba                | - | Vacant            |
7. **Election of Independent Management Committee Members:** The following were confirmed as Independent Members:-
- |                |              |              |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Mrs J Ambrose  | Mrs E Cowell | Mrs J Gill   |
| Mrs D Hedley   | Mrs A Lamb   | Mr A W Thorn |
| Mrs B Thwaites |              |              |
8. **Confirmation of Cotherstone Show Committee:** The following were confirmed as the current committee:-
- |                            |           |               |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Mrs P Leech, Hon Secretary | Co-opted: | Mr M Hedley   |
| Mrs J Ambrose              |           | Mr R W Hunter |
| Mrs E Cowell               |           | Mrs A Thorn   |
| Mrs J Gill                 |           | Mrs G Lyon    |
| Mrs D Hedley               |           |               |
| Mrs J Watson               |           |               |
| Mrs T Wilcox               |           |               |
9. **Annual Report and Accounts:** The Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2023 were formally accepted by the meeting.
10. **Appointment of Auditor/Independent Examiner:** It was agreed that Anna Urbanowitz, Chartered Accountant, should be asked to continue to examine the annual accounts.
11. **Election of Officers of the Management Committee:** JW vacated the Chair at this point; DARF proposed and the meeting unanimously agreed the re-appointment of JW as Chair. JW having retaken the chair, the meeting unanimously agreed the re-election of DARF as Vice-Chair, TW as Treasurer and JA as Secretary.
12. **Decision on Transfer from a Registered Charity to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation:** TW advised that she had contacted two local solicitors, McGarry and Tilly Bailey and Irvine, regarding transfer of the charity to a CIO; their responses were awaited. DARF advised that Ward Haddaway in Newcastle had carried out similar work for Scarth Hall at Staindrop. The meeting agreed to take forward work to convert from a Registered Charity to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
13. **Date of Next Meeting:** Tuesday 8 April 2025 at 7.35 pm.

# Cotherstone Village Hall Accounts for the Year Ending 31st December 2024

## RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

	<u>2024</u>		<u>2023</u>	
	£	£	£	£
<b><u>RECEIPTS</u></b>				
<b>Donations and Grants:</b>				
Donations	1,791		1,230	
Grants	<u>7,000</u>	8,791	<u>250</u>	1,480
<b>Fundraising Activities:</b>				
Hall Hire	10,233		7,532	
Flower and Vegetable Show	2,320		2,113	
Theatre Groups and Other Fundraising	1,467		2,702	
Our Cotherstone Advertising	<u>360</u>	14,380	<u>370</u>	12,717
<b>Other Income:</b>				
Cottage Rent	3,120		2,940	
Bank Interest Received	<u>384</u>	3,504	<u>158</u>	3,098
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>		<b><u>£ 26,675</u></b>		<b><u>£ 17,295</u></b>
<b><u>PAYMENTS</u></b>				
<b>Direct Charitable Expenditure:</b>				
Theatre Group Expenses	70		65	
Light and Heat	7,129		4,324	
Northumbrian Water	396		310	
Insurance and Licences	1,245		1,056	
Telephone and Broadband	707		601	
Cleaning Services	2,820		2,670	
Hall Repairs and Maintenance	1,650		1,662	
Windows and Roof/Toilets	16,009		3,016	
Stationery	265		642	
Sundry Expenses	<u>407</u>	30,698	<u>290</u>	14,636
<b>Other Expenses:</b>				
Cottage Repairs	174		253	
Cottage Insurance	<u>422</u>	596	<u>336</u>	589
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>		<b><u>£ 31,294</u></b>		<b><u>£ 15,225</u></b>
<b>NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS</b>		<b>4,619</b>		<b>2,070</b>
Bank Accounts as at 1 January		<u>58,504</u>		<u>56,434</u>
<b>Bank Accounts as at 31 December</b>		<b><u>£ 53,885</u></b>		<b><u>£ 58,504</u></b>

**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

		<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>	
		£	£	
<u>CASH FUNDS:</u>	Barclays Community Account	25,224	30,227	
	Virgin Money Charity Deposit Account	28,661	28,277	
		<u>£ 53,885</u>	<u>£ 58,504</u>	
<u>REPRESENTED BY:</u>	Unrestricted Funds	41,885	46,504	
	Cottage Repair Fund	8,000	8,000	
	Winding-up Fund	4,000	4,000	
		<u>£ 53,885</u>	<u>£ 58,504</u>	
<u>MOVEMENT ON RESERVES</u>				
	Unrestricted Fund	Cottage Repair	Winding Up	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£
Balance at 1 January 2024	46,504	8,000	4,000	58,504
Receipts	26,675			26,675
Expenses	31,294			31,294
	<u>£ 41,885</u>	<u>£ 8,000</u>	<u>£ 4,000</u>	<u>£ 53,885</u>

**Independent Examiner's Report on the Receipts and Payments Account**

**Report to the Members of Cotherstone Village Hall on the accounts**  
**for the year ended 31 December 2024**

Cotherstone Village Hall does not require an audit but recommends an independent examination.

**Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement:**

An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the village hall and a comparison of the accounts presented with these records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the Officers 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 these accounts.

**Independent Examiner's Statement:**

In the course of my examination, no matters have come to my attention which give reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the Officers have not kept:

- Proper accounting records; and
- Accounts that are prepared which agree with the accounting records

Signed: Anna Urbanowicz

Date: 13 April 2025

Name: Anna Urbanowicz

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

Address: Pensbury, Cotherstone, Barnard Castle, DL12 9PQ

### **Non Monetary Assets**

#### **Permanent Endowment:**

Land and buildings used by the Charity: The Village Hall and Cottage  
(Freehold vested in the Official Custodian for Charities)

#### **Other Assets (Non Endowed):**

Held for functional use by the charity: Furniture and equipment in the hall as per the inventory (costs unknown), piano, tables, chairs, kitchen equipment, etc.

#### **Reserves Policy:**

It is the policy of the Trustees to hold free reserves for six months normal trading activity and additional reserves as agreed on an annual basis to meet the costs of any improvements and/or repairs over the coming year.

The Committee continues to hold £8,000 as a general reserve for property repairs.

The Committee has agreed to hold £4,000 as a Winding-up Fund.

Accounts Prepared by:

.....  
Teresa Wilcox, Treasurer

.....  
Date

Accepted and approved on behalf of the Trustees of Cotherstone Village Hall:

.....  
Jenny Watson, Chair

.....  
Date

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

**"Our Cotherstone"**: The village magazine continues to be produced on a quarterly basis, with the aim of informing residents of village events and acknowledging the efforts of residents in making the community a cohesive and pleasant place to live. We continue to rely on advertising by local companies and individuals to supplement the costs of printing.

The **Flower and Vegetable Show** was a resounding success, both in terms of entries and financial contribution to hall funds. Our thanks to Pippa Leach and helpers for staging the show and to Stephen Lamb for his persuasive auctioneering talents. Sponsorship of classes by local residents and companies once again provided additional income, resulting in over **£2,000** being raised for hall funds.



**Property and Maintenance:** All mandatory equipment inspections were carried out during the year. The Management Committee is very grateful for the efforts of those who carry out minor repairs and arrange for major work to be done by contractors. In addition to on-going maintenance, major works during 2024 included replacement of the windows in the middle lounge and main hall, installation of air-vent tiles on the roof and additional insulation of the roof space (the latter two items to address mould on the walls and ceiling of the side porch).

**Caretaking Services:** Once again, the Management Committee wishes to acknowledge the hard work of Ann Thorn throughout the year in keeping the Hall clean and tidy, ensuring it is open for users and that the heating has been switched on in advance to provide a warm welcome. Ann also handles the bookings for the Hall, which is a major task in itself.

Jean Ambrose, Secretary, Management Committee

## **PLAN FOR 2025**

### **Aims and Objectives**

#### **Aims:**

- To maintain and support a comprehensive range of informal services for the community of Cotherstone and surrounding area.
- To contribute to community development and support, through partnership with other groups and agencies where appropriate.
- To develop a management system that best supports the delivery of community provision within the area.

#### **Objectives:**

- To identify new needs as they arise within the community and subsequently prepare a response in co-operation with specialist agencies to meet these needs.
- To monitor existing activities to ensure that maximum use is being made of the Hall's facilities.
- To liaise with departments in the County management structure and other voluntary organisations to ensure the two-way flow of information on policy development and problems.
- To maintain a management structure that enables all members of the community to express their needs and which provides the best solutions.

### **Explanatory Notes**

The community served by the Hall is a small one, in a large dispersed rural area. The population is weighted towards the elderly and retired but with, at present, a steadily growing younger element.

### **Curriculum/Programme**

The Target Audience is the whole of the village and surrounding area and our efforts are directed at providing a service for all sections of the community.

#### **Identified Needs:**

- There is a requirement to enhance the cultural life of the village.
- There is a continuing need to supply an environment in which the social, cultural and artistic needs of the community can be satisfied.

#### **Outcomes:**

- The Village Hall Committee has participated in the Highlights Rural Touring Scheme since 1999 and welcomes productions by both The Teesdale Players and The Castle Players



## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Regular User Groups are represented on the Hall Management Committee and so have the opportunity to convey comments on problems or successes. In addition to this formal structure, the Independent Members of the Management Committee also gather comments on the Hall's operations.

- The work of the Management Committee in striving to comply with good practice and statutory requirements was recognised by the award of Hallmark 1 during 2023. Time spent on the major works undertaken during 2024 prevented work on achieving further Hallmark recognition; however, it is hoped to take this forward during 2025.

# **GOVERNANCE**

## **CODE FOR THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR**

The Committee of Management of Cotherstone Village Hall supports the Code of Good Governance for Trustees as set out in the National Hub of Expertise in Governance (a Home Office ChangeUp initiative).

**Principle 1 - Board leadership:** Every organisation should be led and controlled by an effective Board of Trustees which collectively ensures delivery of its objects, sets its strategic direction and upholds its values.

**Principle 2 - The Board in control:** The Trustees as a Board should collectively be responsible and accountable for ensuring and monitoring that the organisation is performing well, is solvent and complies with all its obligations.

**Principle 3 - The high performance Board:** The Board should have clear responsibilities and functions and should compose and organise itself to discharge them effectively.

**Principle 4 - Board review and renewal:** The Board should periodically review its own and the organisation's effectiveness and take any necessary steps to ensure both continue to work well.

**Principle 5 - Board delegation:** The Board should set out the functions of sub-committees, officers, the chief executive, other staff and agents in clear delegated authorities and should monitor their performance.

**Principle 6 - Board and Trustee integrity:** The Board and individual Trustees should act according to high ethical standards and ensure that conflicts of interest are properly dealt with.

**Principle 7 - Board openness:** The Board should be open, responsive and accountable to its users, beneficiaries, members, partners and others with an interest in its work.

**Cotherstone Village Hall has the following up-to-date documentation in place:-**

1. Registration with the Charity Commission
2. Constitution (which was up-dated and amended in 2011)
3. Management Committee Minutes Book
4. Annual Report
5. Annual and examined accounts
6. Bank and building society accounts showing charity number
7. Licence for the building from Durham County Council (originally issued by Teesdale District Council)
8. The required building insurance
9. Public Liability insurance
10. Music Licence from PRS
11. Hard wiring certificate
12. PAT certificate (small appliances testing)
13. Gas inspection certificate
14. Fire fighting appliances inspection certificate
15. The required fire exit notices
16. Child Protection Policy
17. Environment Policy
18. Equal Opportunities Policy
19. Finance Policy
20. Fundraising Policy
21. Health and Safety Policy
22. Hiring Policy
23. Risk Assessment Policy
24. Vulnerable Adults Policy
25. Financial Procedures
26. Health and Safety Risk Assessment
27. Fire Risk Assessment
28. Data Protection Policy
29. Safeguarding Policy
30. Displays current rules for the use of the building
31. Displays notice of current officers and contact numbers

This report is produced, assembled and printed on  
behalf of Cotherstone Village Hall Committee of Management