



## **Berwickshire Youth Piping & Drumming Foundation**

### **Chairman's Report for 2023 - 24**

The BYPDF was established to bring bagpipe tuition to The Berwickshire High School and its feeder Primary schools – Greenlaw, Swinton, Duns, Chirnside and Coldstream. The hope was to establish close working relationships with the town bands in Duns and Coldstream so that both the schools and bands might benefit from an increase in the number of young people learning to play the bagpipes.

In 2023 we managed to pull together a pipe band made up of students who have learned to play through BYPDF. Although young, the players have performed immensely well in a variety of events since then, including a first appearance at the Scottish Youth Pipe Band Championships in Kilmarnock.

#### **Maintaining our Aims**

The programme sustains a constant 50 to 60 pupils (currently 51) across the Berwickshire High School and its five feeder primary schools. Our goals are to advance bagpipe music amongst the young people of Berwickshire; to promote our national heritage and culture; to increase public exposure to bagpipe music with its performance in public; and to help develop links between young people and the wider community.

Many of the young players who were learning to play the chanter have now progressed onto the bagpipes and are increasingly getting together to play as part of our pipe band. We currently have ten pipers in the band with more nearly ready to join them. The band has given several performances – notably at school concerts and remembrance events.

#### **Quality of teaching**

To improve tuition quality and give pupils the best chance of progressing on what is a difficult instrument to master, we remain focused on keeping class number low, with one-to-one tuition provided whenever possible. At BHS, our tutor [REDACTED] has brought together the more experienced pipers in small groups at times so that they can practice ensemble skills. In Primary schools, especially when pupils are first learning, they have sometimes been taught in groups of up to 4.

#### **Fundraising**

Local windfarms (Blackhill and Aikengall II) have provided further support this year, and we continue to benefit from financial support from the Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust. This support will run its course in 2025 and the SSPDT have put us in touch with a professional fund-raiser to support our fund-raising efforts. Beyond 2024, it is clear that other sources of income will have to be explored. These might include grants from windfarms, increased parental contributions, concerts, Parent Councils, raffles, and one-off fund-raising events. Our tutor is teaching for two days across the cluster each week. It is estimated that we will need to raise approximately £10,000 per year to

sustain the project. A grant from the Hugh Fraser Foundation of £2000 per annum over three years was awarded in 2024.

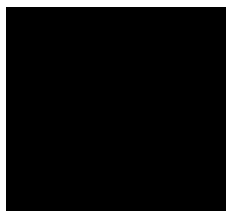
### **Looking to the future**

There is significant and sustained interest in learning the bagpipes in the Borders, with the schools involved in the programme welcoming and very willing to include piping lessons in the teaching curriculum and delighted to have this subject available to pupils.

It is a major challenge to ensure the continued financing of this initiative. We are, of course, seeking out and applying for additional grants, as well as planning to organise our own events to minimise costs.

One of the teachers at the school, [REDACTED] is an experienced pipe band drummer. She is to take on the role of “Drum major” and give free tuition to young players interested in learning to play either the snare or tenor drum.

We would also seek to strengthen the links with the local town bands. Former BYPDF Chairman, [REDACTED], is the Pipe Major of the Duns Pipe Band. Several players who have learned to play with the BYPDF are now playing for the Duns Band or the pipe band in Coldstream and we hope that this number will increase and that both the BHS Pipe Band and the local town bands will be stronger as a result of our programme.



Chair, BYPDF)



# BYPDF Financial Statement to June 2024

Bank balance as at 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2023	£72.97
<b>Income</b>	
Student Fees/donations	£1,440
Scottish Schools Pipes & Drums Trust	£10,000
Fallogo Rig Wind Farm	£2,500
Donations (concerts, Christmas Fayre etc.)	£395.72
Total	£14,335.72
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Tutoring costs	£10,048.49
Pipe and chanter expenses (G1 Reeds Ltd.)	£268.98
Total	£10,317.47
Balance of account 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	£4,091.22

