

Darnick Village Hall



Annual Report of Trustees Financial Year 1st October 2024 - 30th September 2025

Darnick Village Hall
Abbotsford Road
Darnick
Melrose
TD6 9AH

25th November 2025

The Trustees of the Darnick Village Hall have pleasure in presenting their annual report for the Hall's financial year of 1st October 2024 to 30th September 2025.

Darnick Village Hall - a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC050522

Historical Context and Constitution

The hall was built in 1891 on the instructions of [REDACTED] 'as [REDACTED] [REDACTED] sometime timber merchant of Melbourne Australia who afterwards resided at Darnlee' and was given to the village in 1914 when [REDACTED] appointed trustees 'to keep and maintain the hall...for the benefit of Darnick and surrounding district'.

Some years ago, the trustees decided that the hall should operate as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). This legal format has been adopted by a number of Borders village halls. We were registered as a SCIO by the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) on 13th October 2020. The hall's assets and liabilities were then transferred from the charitable trust to the SCIO in August 2021.

Operating as a SCIO means we are a body corporate offering trustees greater protection. The SCIO is the landlord of the adjoining Helen Cottage.

For the SCIO we adopted a model constitution issued by the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) and adapted by us with guidance from our then local council for voluntary service The Bridge.

The trustees are unpaid volunteers and are responsible for appointing new trustees and are the sole Members of the SCIO.

As well as keeping and maintaining the hall, the trustees have responsibility for Helen Cottage. In December 2014 it was renamed by the trustees to honour [REDACTED] once of Darnick and later an Australian philanthropist. It adjoins the hall and was until March 2014 occupied by a resident caretaker. It is now let on the open market, as permitted in the original 1914 trust deed. The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) first granted the hall charitable status on 22nd December 2014. This annual report is compiled in line with OSCR guidance for annual reports.

Charity purposes

A deed of variation of 1999 stated 'that the said Hall shall be held for the benefit and advantage of the inhabitants of the Village of Darnick and surrounding district for the purpose of meetings, functions, private or public entertainment and such other purposes as the Trustees shall deem appropriate from time to time with full power to make all such rules and regulations for the use of the hall in accordance with the foresaid objects and purposes'.

The SCIO charitable purposes are drawn somewhat wider and in the first part are standard for a village hall:

'The organisation's purposes are aimed at providing benefit for the community of Darnick, Scottish Borders and surrounding area:

The provision of recreational facilities or the organisation of recreational and educational activities with the object of improving the conditions of life for the defined community;

To promote citizenship or community development within the defined community.'

The policy of the trustees is to focus on their original task of 'keeping and maintaining the Hall'.

The Darnick Village Development Trust takes responsibility for village events, except for two events held annually in the Hall, the Remembrance Service and Carol Service that the Hall Trustees organise.

Administration

Members of the Board of Trustees during the financial year were:



Governance

The Board of Trustees met on three occasions during our financial year. Attendance at meetings was excellent. In line with OSCR guidance at each meeting any potential conflicts of interest were declared in advance of discussion.

Summary of Activities and achievements

During the financial year a total of 382 sessions were held in the Hall with an estimated footfall of around 7,500 people.

Amongst the many activities during the year were:

Darnick Toddlers
Walk It
Craft Group
Bridge
Pipe Band
Table Tennis
Tea and Chat
DVDT's "Couthie Neighbour" talks
Quiz night
Rolling Hills Folk Club
Melrose Reel Club
Opportunities Zambia Coffee mornings
Yoga
Pilates
Remembrance Service
Carol Service
Private parties
MP and MSP surgeries
Polling Station
Community Council

Hence the hall catered for a very wide range of ages and interests.

During the year we continued to review our Risk Assessment in line with guidance, and kept our hirers briefed on health and safety matters.

No Safeguarding issues occurred. There were no reportable health and safety incidents.

Outcomes, impact and public benefit

Our charitable purpose features the provision of recreational facilities, to improve the conditions of life for residents of Darnick and surrounding areas. It is in this way that we deliver the public benefit sought from us as a charity.

From an earlier survey of residents, we know that the hall is appreciated as ‘a community hub and focus for community cohesion’ and as ‘the venue for clubs and societies and concerts’.

Our hall-keeper maintains regular contact with long term hirers and meets most of our occasional hirers. We listen to any feedback from the users of the Hall and endeavour to ensure a high level of satisfaction with the facilities on offer.

Financial review

Our financial statements are prepared on a receipts and payments basis and not on an accrual basis, as is permitted by OSCR for charities with a gross income of less than £250,000.

The headline financial results for the year 1st October 2024 to 30th September 2025 are summarised below.

Income and Expenditure:

	2024/25	2023/24	
Income	£31,285	£18,563	
Expenditure	£7,594	£10,126	
Surplus/(Deficit)	£23,691	£8,437	

Balances at year end:

	2024/25	2023/24	
General Fund	£25,890	£15,986	
Improvement Fund	£82,152	£68,365	

During the year we made an application for grant funding to install insulation to the ceiling and floor of the Hall. (More details below) This application was successful and 50% of the grant was paid in advance of the works commencing. This accounts for £13,787 of the total income of £31,285 shown above. The second tranche of grant income will be received when the work is completed and this will appear in next year’s accounts.

The initial grant payment is also within the total improvement fund of £82,152 shown above and will be spent in early 2026.

Without the grant payment referred to above, general receipts at £17,498, were down £1,065 (6%) compared to the previous year. Prudent management of costs more than compensated for this minor fluctuation and the year closed out with a healthy surplus.

Having raised funds from several sources in 2014 for renovations, our financial priority has been to build and maintain a reserve sufficient to provide for maintenance and future renovation of the hall and cottage. The trustees agreed in 2018 that our reserve target should be set at £80,000. At the end of the financial year 2024/25, excluding the grant funds referred to above, the improvement fund remains at £68,365.

Future refurbishment may require us to spend substantial sums on building renovation given our building is over 125 years old.

The rent earned by letting Helen Cottage on the open market contributes towards meeting our costs as a charity. Our excellent tenant continues in residence. Galbraith continue to manage the cottage on our behalf.

We are registered as a charity for Small Business Bonus Relief which means we pay neither Council Tax nor Rates.

Our Treasurer Elspeth Gill continued to keep our books throughout the year. We are grateful for the work done by Elspeth.

Our accounts are scrutinised by Independent Examiner, [REDACTED], FCCA, IRRV (Hons). We are grateful for the time that Sandy generously gives to this essential work.

We made no changes to our prices in 2024/5.

Refurbishment and upkeep

As in every year we continually spend funds on the upkeep of the hall and cottage.

During the year we have ensured that statutory inspections and maintenance relating to health and safety checks are commissioned by our Hall-Keeper and our Safety Adviser, including electrical PAT and EICR checks and the servicing of our fire extinguishers.

Various running repairs have been carried out by local tradesmen and a new garden gate and fencing was installed to the rear of Helen Cottage.

In response to requests from some customers we installed WiFi facilities in the Hall during the year. This will enable Hall users to access streaming services for their events and will also facilitate live streaming of events being held in the Hall.

One of the Board's strategic objectives is to improve the energy efficiency of the Hall and over time endeavour to move towards a net zero position through the introduction of renewable energy generation and storage facilities.

In 2024 Borders Community Action commissioned energy assessment surveys for a number of village halls across the Borders area. Darnick Village Hall was included in this programme and we received an energy assessment report early in 2025. This made various recommendations with regard to insulation works to reduce heat loss and further recommendations about future installation of sustainable heating systems and renewable power generation and storage.

We received very helpful guidance from Borders Community Action with regard to how we might qualify for grant funding from the fund set up by central and local government for the "Decarbonisation of Community Spaces". This involves following a logical pathway that starts with the energy assessment survey and report. Then the next step is to carry out any recommended

insulation work to reduce heat losses. Later stages relate to the installation of sustainable lighting and heating systems.

We invited tenders for the installation of insulation above the ceiling and beneath the floor of the Hall. We submitted an application for grant funding along with a report on the tenders received and were pleased to receive approval from Borders Community Action to proceed with the works. The contract for the installation of insulation was awarded to Shelbourne and Greer of Hawick. The works will be carried out in January 2026. This will necessitate a closure of the Hall for 3 to 4 weeks, causing some inconvenience to our customers and a loss of revenue in 2025/26 but it is the right thing to do for the long term sustainability of the Hall.

Darnick 100 Club

Traditionally we have reported on the Club in the hall annual report. As a Private Society Lottery, it is now operated according to its own Rules and policies. It is governed by the hall trustees sitting as the Committee of the 100 Club. All scheduled draws took place and both prizes and profits were distributed in line with its Rules. We are grateful to [REDACTED] its Organiser.

Appreciations

[REDACTED] has once more worked tirelessly throughout the year to manage the programme of Hall usage and to ensure that the facilities on offer to our customers are kept in good order.. His attention to the hall and its hirers has been widely appreciated. We are very grateful to him for all that he does in the interests of the community.

[REDACTED] has again been an assiduous and highly regarded Treasurer throughout the year. Not only does Elspeth keep the books in an exemplary way but she also manages vital aspects of Hall stewardship including insurances and utility contracts.

[REDACTED] has kindly examined our accounts and has given us guidance.

[REDACTED], as Vice Chair, has led on repairs and maintenance and led on our relations with the Central Borders Federation of Village Halls.

[REDACTED] has kindly operated as our Safety Adviser from October 2020.

We much appreciate our positive relationship with the Darnick Village Development Trust. We continue to work with them as our sister charity.

Thanks go to [REDACTED] for his long-term care of our hanging baskets. [REDACTED] moved away from Darnick during the year and maintenance was continued by [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] continues to clean the hall. Thanks go to her.

Overall, my appreciation goes to all who hire the hall and to my fellow trustees for their care, commitment, energy and attention to the hall.

Future Strategy

Our continuous focus is to maintain the hall and ensure that it remains an attractive, safe and welcoming venue for community activity.

Our longer term strategy is to ensure that the Hall has a sustainable future that meets the expectations of the users. This includes both economic and environmental sustainability.

We will exercise prudent financial management, including the retention of financial reserves to cover any unforeseen building maintenance.

We will build on the initial stages of energy assessment and insulation works to identify any opportunities to enhance the energy efficiency of the Hall. In addition we will explore opportunities to retrofit a more sustainable heating system and renewable energy generation facilities so that we move the Hall towards a net zero state.

We recognise the risks to the Hall posed by increasing utility and other operational costs and will always seek value for money in our operational management.


We also recognise the risks to our income associated with any possible reduction in Hall usage. We will mitigate this risk by continuing to offer good facilities at a reasonable price.

Income from Helen Cottage is important to the Hall's finances and we will keep the cottage in good order with a view to retaining our much valued tenant.

Experience tells us that there will be opportunities to welcome new users to the Hall and we will always support this whilst also continuing to value our long term users.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Hall and cottage are in good physical condition. The Hall's financial position is healthy. The community of users is diverse and actively engaged in deriving community benefits from the Hall's facilities. The Trustees have a wide range of skills and experience and above all have the enthusiasm and commitment to exercise their stewardship role diligently.

, on behalf of the Board of Trustees

November 2025

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Darnick Village Hall (Registered Charity No. SC050522) on the Accounts for the period 01 October 2024 to 30 September 2025

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 ("the 2005 Act") and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 ("the 2006 Regulations"). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the 2006 Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the 2005 Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.


Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Regulations. 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 seeks explanations from the 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 the course of 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 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Regulations; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Regulationshave 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.



27 November 2025

Darnick Village Hall

Statement of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 30 September 2025

2024		General Fund	Improvement Fund (Note 1)	Total
£	Receipts	£	£	£
10,680	Hall Lets	10,390.00		10,390.00
950	Donations	-		-
960	100 Club donation	960.00		960.00
933	Grants (Note 2)		13,786.50	13,786.50
5,040	Cottage rents	5,040.00		5,040.00
-	Other Income inc. Interest	1,108.29		1,108.29
18,563	Total receipts	17,498.29	13,786.50	31,284.79
	Payments			
1,323	Gas	1,066.00		1,066.00
620	Electricity	850.66		850.66
-	Water	-		-
85	Presentations	28.00		28.00
1,080	Insurance	1,116.74		1,116.74
230	Licences	204.01		204.01
1,303	Caretaking and cleaning	1,340.76		1,340.76
3,729	Hall maintenance	1,831.60		1,831.60
76	Expenses	90.20		90.20
-	Donations	-		-
1,680	Cottage repairs/refurb/fees	1,065.80		1,065.80
-	Hall Refurbishment	-	-	-
10,126	Total payments	7,593.77	-	7,593.77
8,438	Surplus/(deficit) for the year	9,904.52	13,786.50	23,691.02

Darnick Village Hall

Statement of Funds at 30 September 2025

2024	Funds reconciliation	General Fund	Improvement Fund (note 1)	Total
£		£		£
75,914	Balance at 1 October 2024	15,985.91	68,365.36	84,351.27
8,438	Surplus/(deficit) for the year	9,904.52	13,786.50	23,691.02
84,351	Balance at 30 September 2025	25,890.43	82,151.86	108,042.29

Bank of Scotland

84,351	Treasurer's Account	36,980.56
	Deposit Account (32 Day Notice)	20,230.40
	Deposit Account (95 Day Notice)	50,831.33
84,351		108,042.29

Heritable property

130,000	- Hall, Abbotsford Road, Darnick	130,000.00
130,000	- Cottage, Abbotsford Road, Darnick	130,000.00
260,000		260,000.00

Notes to the Accounts

1.This fund was originally established by the Trustees of the Smith Memorial Hall in 2013/14 to meet costs of essential major repairs/ refurbishment to the hall and cottage. We may be required to spend substantial sums on upgrading the heating and repairing the roof.

2.This grant of £13,786.50 was received from Community Spaces Decarbonisation Fund to cover expenditure for insulation improvements to the hall.This work, which will cost £27,573, will be carried out in early 2026 following which another grant payment of £13,786.50 will be received.

Treasurer's signature



Date

27/11/25