



# Annual Report and **Accounts**

**Lands Village Hall Association**

**Annual General Meeting**

**6 November 2021 15:00 hrs**

**Prepared by: Glenn Reffin**

Lands Village Hall ◦ High Lands ◦ County Durham ◦ DL13 5AR

Lands Village Hall is regulated by the Charity Commission of England and Wales (reg. no. 520841)

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# 1

## Charity declaration

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Lands Village Hall Association is a registered trust regulated by the Charity Commission of England and Wales and subject to the *Charities Act, 1993*.

**Charity name:** Lands Village Hall Association

**Charity number:** 520841

**Registered office:** 54 High Lands, Co. Durham, DL13 5AS

**Aims:** The provision and maintenance of a village hall for use by the inhabitants of the area of benefit without distinction of political, religious or other opinions, including use for: meetings, lectures and classes; and other forms of recreation and leisure-time occupation, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the inhabitants.

**First registered:** 5 October 1965

**Website:** [landsvillagehall.uk](http://landsvillagehall.uk)

**Bankers:** Virgin Money Plc

## **Officers and Trustees**

**Chairman:** Glenn Reffin

**Secretary:** Alison Deakin

**Treasurer:** David Dodd

## **Other Trustees (Management Committee Members)**

Felicity Barker

Simon Dobson

Paul Dodd

Gerard Gaynor

Melanie Stewart-Pratt

Carol Suddick

## **Annual Returns**

**Annual Return for reporting year 2020** submitted 9 October 2021 (on time)

**Annual Return for reporting year 2019** submitted 22 September 2020 (on time)

**Annual Return for reporting year 2018** submitted 1 March 2020 (122 days late)

# 2 Officers' Report

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## Introduction

The Trustees took over the Trust for the Association at the AGM held on 18 March 2020. Usually, we would convene an AGM in March but the COVID-19 pandemic prevented us from this.

The initial aims of the Management Committee were simple:

- to raise funds to complete essential safety works in the hall;
- to reopen the hall for public use;
- to re-engage the community in the village hall;
- to implement an improvement plan to introduce modern facilities.

## Raise funds for essential works

Before we could reopen the hall, we needed to modernise the electrics and heating, which were the main obstacles to the hall's use. An estimate provided by the Parish Council for rewiring was £50,000. We intended to raise funds for volunteers to rewire the hall, and pay for a qualified electrician to certify the work.

As the pandemic lasted longer than expected, we eventually paid an electrician less than 20% of the estimate provided by the Parish.

During the pandemic, we applied for grants and funding to cover the costs of this work from Durham County Council and central Government grant aid. In addition, we applied for grant funds from Teesdale Action Partnership to help with ecological improvements to the local area.

We also received a grant from the Evenwood and Barony Parish Council towards the cost of a new lawnmower. This was received in 2021, falling outside the scope of this report.

## **Reopen the hall for public use**

The restrictions placed on public buildings during the pandemic hampered our plan to complete the electrical works during the period (they were completed in 2021). We were unable to enter the hall for the majority of the year, except to maintain the status quo and check the infrastructure. However, as soon as the Government lifted the pandemic restrictions, we were able to open for use.

## **Re-engaging the community**

Despite the COVID-19 restrictions, we worked hard to improve the local area.

### **The North Field**

The Trust owns land next to the village green. For 30 years, the community could not access this land, which remained fallow. The plot is very boggy and waterlogged in winter, with heavy marsh grasses and other vegetation.

One suggestion for the area was to use it as a playground, installing swings and slides, etc. The land is unsuitable for this purpose for several reasons:

- it is in poor condition, is uneven and often waterlogged;
- play equipment and installation costs are prohibitive;
- public liability insurance premiums are restrictive for play areas;

- necessary annual maintenance and inspection costs are high; and,
- it is on the wrong side of a busy road, unsuitable for children to cross.

Our primary objective remains the village hall, as required by our Constitution. Without much higher and sustainable annual income, it is not a realistic option.

The Trust decided to open the land to the community for the first time. We created a gated opening in the stone wall for public access, and paths around the site, with spots for picnic tables and benches. We planted trees including some fruit trees, so the area will become a natural habitat to wander through in future years.

This plan has a dual purpose: it enables people to use and enjoy the site, while exploiting its natural features: the trees will benefit from the excessive water.

We completed the first phase of work thanks to an Environmental Improvement Grant awarded by Durham County Council through Teesdale Action Partnership.

## **Village Green**

Thanks to an army of volunteers who helped Alison make the village green an attractive and usable area. It is hard to pick volunteers for praise, but I hope no one minds giving special mentions to Peter Jacques, Kathleen Mott, Simon Dobson, David Dodd and Paul Dodd. Their contribution helped to improve the village and provided a splash of colour during the pandemic.

## **Communication**

The Trust produced a newsletter during the year to introduce the new Trustees and our plans. The newsletter was well received. Thanks to ITEC® North East for donating the printing, and Redcentaur for the layout work.

Redcentaur also donated one year of registration and hosting for a new Trust website. As restoration progresses, the website will focus more on hall use. It allows us to engage with the community with news and information.

We also started a Facebook® page. The page allows us to converse with the community about events in real-time. Of course, engaging with the community on social media runs the risk of abuse. The Trust has adopted policies and strategies to deal with such behaviour.

## **Village improvements**

We actively engaged with individuals who identified small jobs to improve the area. We took these small-scale projects to Durham County Council and engaged with our Councillors to progress them. The projects included installing a dog foul bin (still outstanding) and replacing the dangerous barrier next to 57 High Lands, which was completed in September 2021.

## **Continuous improvement plan**

The improvement plan has two parts. The first is ensuring that the Trust has adequate procedures, governance and policies in place for it to do its work effectively. The second is to prioritise the projects necessary to improve the village hall over time.

### **Governance**

Without proper governance procedures and documentation, the Trust is open to external scrutiny and criticism: it cannot demonstrate how it makes decisions, approves expenditure, or implements procedures.

Throughout the lockdown, the Management Committee approved and implemented essential new governance procedures and policies, including risk management and safety procedures. These structures are now in place.

Additionally, the Trust has a shared Google® Drive, where it stores all essential documents and minutes. The Trust provides access to the various areas of the Drive securely and appropriately. This tool ensures that essential documentation is available to all Trustees. While this is probably not the most exciting news, it has taken a considerable amount of time to achieve this aim, giving the Trust a strong foundation for the future.

### **Prioritisation of work**

Now that the electrical work is done, we must prioritise other essential maintenance for the building. These projects include:

- some essential roof maintenance;

- window repairs;
- vegetation and infestation removal;
- redecoration (plastering, painting and floor varnishing);
- storage facilities;
- double glazing and insulation;
- security improvements; and,
- further conservation works.

## Summary

In summary, in 2020, the new Trustees significantly improved the dire financial position of the Trust at the last AGM. We undertook work necessary to reopen the village hall and successfully achieved this aim. I am proud to say that the Trust has made incredible progress during our tenure. It is in a much better position now than during our emergency meetings in January last year. Thanks to the hard work and diligence of the Trustees, the Trust is a viable concern for the future.

Finally, I would like to thank the Management Committee for its support and engagement during the period and the volunteers who stepped up to help out and made a difference to the community. And thanks to David Dodd and Alison Deakin for their help, support, and time in getting things moving.

Glenn Reffin  
Chairman

# 3 Governance

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## Structure of the Trust

The Association is a charitable trust registered on 5 October 1965 with registration number 520841. The Association is governed by the *Charities Act, 1993* and regulated by the Charity Commission of England and Wales. The Association is composed of subscribing members. In addition to the right to vote and stand for office, the Management Committee determines the subscription fees for membership. Members are currently entitled to:

- reduced rates of hall hire;
- reduced rates or free access to some events during the year;
- early notice for some events;
- voting rights at General Meetings; and,
- right to stand for election to a position on Standing Committees.

## Membership

In 2020, the Association did not implement a membership policy because of the closure.

From late 2021, membership was reintroduced and has increased tenfold from pre-pandemic rates. There are nine approved members and 12 pending approval.

## Partnerships and relationships

The Association is affiliated to The Village Halls Consortium (TVHC) paying £50.00 annually. The TVHC website provides further information about the organisation.

We maintain good relationships with Durham County Council, including service requests, funding, and grant applications. We invoice the Electoral Services department for hall use as a Polling Station. Additionally, we maintain contact with our local County Councillors.

## Risk management

We have reviewed all significant risks facing the charity and implemented controls where necessary to ensure:

- we meet our charitable objectives;
- we have satisfactory financial controls in place to cover our immediate needs;
- we have adequate policies and insurance to cover possible liabilities; and,
- we have mitigated as far as possible the risks we can alleviate.

We manage the charity's risks and exposure to public liability through control mechanisms, including safety and fire risks. These are regularly reviewed.

# 4 **Financial report**

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## **Financial review**

At the start of 2020, the Trust's liquid assets were worth £2,020.02, and at the end of the financial period on 31 December 2020, the Trust had a net sum of £14,812.39.

This change marks a significant improvement to our financial position after several years of declining income and losses. Our improved financial position gives us a sound footing to refurbish the hall and build a foundation for the future.

## **Current financial position**

In recognition of the lapsed time between the year-end and AGM, the current financial position remains sound. In the year to date for 2021, we have received income of £21,952.44 against an expenditure of £12,273.08. This provides us with a running net income this year of £9,679.36, to date.

## Responsibilities

The Association's Constitution requires the Management Committee to prepare and present annual financial statements giving a true and fair reflection of the Trust's activities throughout the year and its financial position at the year-end. In preparing these statements, the Management Committee must:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards, and statements of recommended practices, were followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial report; and,
- prepare the financial statements on a going-concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume the Trust will continue to operate.

The Management Committee must keep proper accounting records that disclose the Trust's financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time. These financial statements must comply with the *Charities Act, 1993*. The Management Committee is responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Trust and for prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

On behalf of the Trustees

G Reffin  
**Glenn Reffin**  
Chairman

## Balance sheet

	<b>Opening balance</b>	<b>Period change</b>	<b>Closing balance</b>
Property–cost	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fixtures and fittings–cost	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Fixed Assets Total</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Bank account	312.09	13,794.23	14,106.32
Savings account	1,656.50	-993.69	662.81
Cash	51.43	-8.17	43.26
<b>Current Assets Total</b>	<b>2,020.02</b>	<b>12,792.37</b>	<b>14,812.39</b>
<b>Assets Total</b>	<b>2,020.02</b>	<b>12,792.37</b>	<b>14,812.39</b>
Expense creditors	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Retained earnings	0.00	12,792.37	12,792.37
Profit and Loss Account	2,020.02	0.00	2,020.02
<b>Equity</b>	<b>2,020.02</b>	<b>12,792.37</b>	<b>14,812.39</b>
<b>Liabilities and Equity</b>	<b>2,020.02</b>	<b>12,792.37</b>	<b>14,812.39</b>

# Profit and Loss Report

	2020	2019	2018
Hall hire	120.00	160.00	860.00
<b>Hall hire total</b>	<b>120.00</b>	<b>160.00</b>	<b>860.00</b>
Other income	16,903.23	0.00	0.00
Bank interest receivable	13.69	16.72	19.61
<b>Other income total</b>	<b>16,916.92</b>	<b>16.72</b>	<b>19.61</b>
<b>Income Total</b>	<b>17,036.92</b>	<b>176.72</b>	<b>879.61</b>
Marketing	820.00	0.00	0.00
Water rates <sup>1</sup>	77.24	309.27	303.22
Insurance	398.60	407.42	515.35
Electricity	948.78	383.18	527.46
Sundries	3.04	10.00	60.00
Equipment	80.13	36.00	142.50
Repairs and maintenance	1,775.77	150.00	25.00
Cleaning	25.00	200.00	415.00
<b>Overheads</b>	<b>-3,308.56</b>	<b>-1,495.87</b>	<b>-1,988.53</b>
Subscriptions	115.99	0.00	0.00
Charitable donations	0.00	0.00	300.00
<b>Other overheads total</b>	<b>-50.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>-300.00</b>
<b>Overheads Total</b>	<b>-4,244.55</b>	<b>-1,495.87</b>	<b>-2,288.53</b>
<b>Net Profit / Loss</b>	<b>12,792.37</b>	<b>-1,319.15</b>	<b>-1,988.53</b>

<sup>1</sup> A refund of £281.94 from Wave Utilities was not included in either the income or expenditure.

# Income, Expenditure and Balance Chart

This chart shows the historical income, expenditure and total assets of Lands Village Hall Trust from 1969 to 2020.

**Lands Village Hall**  
Income, Expenditure and Balance

