



Annual Report and Accounts 2023

Lands Village Hall Association

Prepared for next Annual General Meeting

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)



A small, single-story stone building with a gabled roof and a prominent arched wooden door. The building has a textured stone facade and a dark tiled roof. A sign in the window reads "LANDS HALL".

A dark blue Hyundai SUV with license plate WU66 HXC is parked in the foreground on the left. A silver SUV is parked behind it.

A white car is partially visible on the right side of the image. In the background, a white caravan is parked.

LANDS HALL

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Charity declaration

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

Bankers: Virgin Money Plc, Paypal inc.

Solicitors: Wrigley's Solicitors LLP (Leeds, Sheffield, Newcastle)

Officers and Trustees

Chairman: Glenn Reffin

Secretary: Alison Deakin

Treasurer: David Dodd

Other Trustees (Management Committee Members)

Simon Dobson

Paul Dodd

Gerard Gaynor

Elaine Harrison

Carol Suddick

Evenwood and Barony Parish Council did not appoint a representative.

Annual Returns

Report for year 2022 submitted 15 November 2023 (15 days late)¹

Report for year 2021 submitted 1 October 2022 (on time)

Report for year 2020 submitted 9 October 2021 (on time)

Report for year 2019 submitted 22 September 2020 (on time)

¹ The report was submitted 15 days late because of a technical issue with access to the register.

2 Officers' Report

Introduction

During 2023 Lands Village Hall has undergone a major facelift thanks to the grant funding made available from foundations and grant funders.

The primary aims of the funding I have sought have been twofold:

1. to enable and advance the refurbishment of the hall and to improve its facilities; and,
2. to achieve these refurbishments and improvements whilst enhancing the resilience of the community for an emergency.

These aims have resulted in the following achievements.

Projects and funding

Installation of a generator and heating

Although grant support was provided by The Northern Powergrid Foundation at the end of 2022, we did not receive the £9,950 funding or start substantial work until this financial year. We installed a new heating system that provides heating throughout the premises on a zonal basis, and a new diesel generator that enables us to use the hall during a power failure.

Resulting from this project we can provide a safe, warm space and refreshments during emergencies and power failures.

Emergency contingency plan

The funding from Northern Powergrid also provided a grant to purchase suitable emergency equipment (such as wind-up torches, hi-vis vests, whistles, clipboards, etc). This equipment is available as part of our new *Emergency contingency plan* that enables us to coordinate a community response to an incident and coordinate with the emergency services through the County Council's Civil Contingencies Unit.

Coffee morning subsidy

We received a small grant from NAVCO of £500 to subsidise our coffee mornings for the first few months of 2023. This enabled us to temporarily reduce the price of our coffee morning menu during the funding period.

Kitchen refurbishment project

In March, we received £9,383 from The National Lottery Community Fund, which enabled us to refurbish and equip our kitchen. Through this project, we completely removed the dilapidated old kitchen and installed a contemporary, professional kitchen, ceiling insulation, and new flooring. The project transformed the facilities we have available at the hall, making them fit for purpose and suitable for general use and particularly for use during an emergency.

The project was completed by closing the hall for six weeks from the end of July through to the beginning of September, which enabled volunteers (David Dodd and Glenn Reffin) to complete the work.

Hall painting

While the hall was closed for the kitchen refurbishment, the main room and toilets also received a makeover. Malcolm Steer volunteered to remove loose paint and plaster from the walls, replaster where we had water damage, and to paint the hall and windows. We are grateful for the long hours he spent up a ladder plastering and painting.

In addition, he fixed cementing problems causing water ingress along the roof edges. While there are still some issues to be resolved and fixed, the majority of the water problems are solved and the hall has been transformed into a brighter, cleaner state.

Noticeboards project

We received £2,313 towards installation of a village noticeboard in our car park, and poster frames for the hall's front elevation from our Durham County Council Neighbourhood Budget. The project will provide a letterbox on the front of the building for the first time, enabling us to register the hall with the Post Office, and to replace the hall's signage.

We anticipate installing these and completing this project in spring 2024.

Storage facility

Thanks to our regular communication and building a good working relationship with The Northern Powergrid Foundation, we received a further £7,105 through the second tranche of funding. The Foundation provided this grant towards a new storage unit for the hall to enable us to store all of the emergency and other equipment securely onsite ready for use during an incident. This critical project will help to clear clutter from the hall and bring emergency equipment to one central, secure location. We anticipate use of this funding and the completion of the project during spring 2024.

Future projects

In 2024, we will complete work associated with some of the grants that were awarded during 2023. The funding we received is ring-fenced for use on specific projects and purposes, it cannot be used for general running costs or other needs.

In addition, we will work towards installation of a defibrillator at the hall, and anticipate starting various energy efficiency projects that will be made available through further funding and (with the assistance of the community fund grant from Bluefield Development,) match funding.

Other achievements

Solar farm development

It would be remiss of me to fail to mention the work done during 2023 to improve the community benefits offered from the Bluefield Solar Farm Development proposal at Bluestone Farm.

Our involvement in the proposal was to discuss with the developers the proposed community benefit fund and how that would be deployed. While we remained neutral to the proposals, we sought to represent the views expressed to us by our members and the wider community wherever we could. Through our negotiations with Bluefield, we achieved a significant increase in the community offer, meaning additional benefits for the community as a whole from the proposed development.

The planning application was approved by Durham County Council in January 2024. The agreed community benefits package constitutes:

- a direct grant of £75,000 for energy efficiency projects for Lands Village Hall;
- installation of solar panels and batteries on the hall to reduce our electricity bills;
- installation of solar panels and batteries at Butterknowle Primary School to reduce its bills;
- free energy efficiency surveys for up to 60 residential properties directly affected by the solar farm;
- a grant of up to £5,000 towards energy efficiency measures highlighted in the surveys at residential properties;
- opportunity to create a community garden or similar subject to appropriate legal agreements.

Community benefits are receivable once the farm is developed, although Bluefield say they may provide early funding for suitable projects we identify, which are time-critical.

Events

During the year, we offered several community events, such as:

- Dog day!;
- Two open meetings for Bluefield Development;
- Easter Afternoon Tea;
- Christmas Cheer!; and,
- Christmas breakfast.

Our events always prove popular and draw in significant numbers of people from our area of activity and the surrounding areas. Events raise funds to further our activities and improve the village hall. Without the financial support offered by successful events, we would be unable to meet our running costs or provide additional events and activities in the future.

Our Coffee mornings remain popular and further our aims to combat social isolation, poverty, provide facilities for the community, engage the community, and improve our environment. During 2023, our coffee mornings brought in almost £1,000 towards our running costs.

Relationships

We improved our relationships with other village halls and local supporters. We helped to set up and organise the new Teesdale Community Hall Network, which is a network of community buildings across Teesdale who informally get together to discuss the issues we face, best practices, and provide support to each other.

We continued to develop our relationship with Durham Community Action, who have been instrumental in helping us with our organisation, plan funding and get noticed.

We decided not to continue our membership of the Teesdale Village Hall Consortium (TVHC), which saved our subscription fee. An analysis of the value for money offered by membership was negative, with no significant benefits achievable through membership of the organisation. We will keep TVHC's offer under review, in case the benefits of membership are improved.

Summary

During this year we have significantly increased our grant funding for the refurbishment of the hall and dramatically improved the facilities we offer. The grants received since the new committee took over in April 2020 amounts to £68,156. This does not include the £75,000 grant or the donation of the panels installation on the hall that are due when the solar farm is developed.

Our plans continue and in the next financial period the funding we received will be put to use in achieving the aims of projects that will have a significant benefit to the community.

None of this would be achieved without the skill to apply for and receive funding, ability to engage with stakeholders and funders to build our relationships across County Durham and beyond, and our volunteers, who have made it all possible. As has become a tradition, I would personally like to name David Dodd and Peter Jacques for their volunteering work throughout the year.

Glenn Reffin
Chairman

3 Governance

History of the trust

Through significant research, Glenn Reffin has recovered the original deeds for the building and car park. The deeds were updated on 7 June 1940, when the premises was sold by *Henry Stobart and Company Ltd* (25/26 Northgate, Darlington) to William Dowson—Labourer (35 Lands Bank); Ernest Liddle—Education Inquiry Officer (School House, Howden—le—Wear); Ernest Morley—Electric Engineman (27 Lands Bank); George Oldfield—Labourer (66 Lands Bank); and, John George Stainthorpe—Poultry Farmer (25 Lands Bank). These five men set up a trust, called “the Institute”, for public use, having paid £50 for the premises. This became the village hall when it was registered in 1965.

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. It has a Management Committee that ensures the trust operates according to its constitution and regulatory requirements. The committee sets the fees and benefits of 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

During 2023, we had 33 members, 26 of whom were voting members.

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. The charity also has suitable insurance policies in place covering public liability and other insurances, as applicable.

4 Financial report

Financial review

At the start of 2023, the Trust's liquid assets were worth £5,987.45, and at the end of the financial period on 31 December 2023, the trust had a net sum of £24,025.21.

This change reflects a significant push for funding and time spent on grant applications during the year to raise funds for our refurbishment programme, outlined in the Officers' report. Our relationship with these funders has been nurtured throughout the year, with regular feedback and information. This effort has paid off with commitments of project funding from many sources, summarised in the following table:

Source	Project	Amount
Northern Powergrid Foundation	Generator, resilience planning	9,950
NAVCO	Coffee mornings	500
The National Lottery Community Fund	Kitchen refurbishment and equipment	9,383
Durham County Council Neighbourhood Fund	Village noticeboard and hall poster frames	2,313
Northern Powergrid Foundation	Storage facility	7,105
		29,251

Responsibilities

The association's governing document requires the Management Committee to prepare and present annual financial statements giving a true and fair reflection of the charity'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.

During 2023, Lands Village Hall broke through the income threshold whereby it must provide audited or independently inspected accounts to members and the Commission. Therefore, these accounts have been inspected independently by Keith Hatton of West Auckland, our appointed Independent Examiner, and his report is attached.

On behalf of the Trustees

G Reffin

Glenn Reffin

Chairman



Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of Lands Village Hall Association

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Lands Village Hall Association (the Association) of the year ending 31 December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Association you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Association's accounts carried out under section 1445 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Association as required by section 130 of the Act; or,
- the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: *Original signed by Keith Hatton*

Name: Keith Hatton

Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies (if any):

Address: *Address supplied*

Date: 08 April 2024



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Balance sheet

	Opening balance	Period change	Closing balance
Property–cost	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fixtures and fittings–cost	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fixed Assets Total	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bank account	1,630	17,850	19,480
Savings account	3,676	21	3,697
Cash	681	135	816
Paypal account	0	32	32
Current Assets Total	5,987	18,038	24,025
Assets Total	5,987	18,038	24,025
Expense creditors	0.00	0.00	0.00
Current Liabilities	0.00	0.00	0.00
Retained earnings	0.00	0.00	0.00
Profit and Loss Account	5,987	18,038	24,025
Equity	5,987	18,038	24,025
Liabilities and Equity	5,987	18,038	24,025

Income and expenditure report

Receipts

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
Donations, grants	1,158	28,751	0	29,909	2,962
Fundraising events	891	0	0	891	634
Interest	31	0	0	31	26
Membership fees	50	0	0	50	56
Hall hire	110	0	0	110	201
Other income	0	0	0	0	140
Gross income	2,240	28,751	0	30,991	4,018

Asset and investment sales

Receipts from asset sales	0	0	0	0	0
Loan repayments received	0	0	0	0	0
Asset income	0	0	0	0	0
Total receipts	2,240	28,751	0	30,991	4,018

Payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
Cost of fundraising	1,026	0	0	1,026	758
Repairs/maintenance	908	6,834	0	7,741	17,844
Light and heating	2,916	0	0	2,916	1,192
Water and sewerage	197	0	0	197	367
Insurance	458	0	0	458	439
Postage/telephone	1	0	0	1	4
Sundries	79	535	0	614	868
Grants, donations, subscriptions	0	0	0	0	219
Bank charges	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal	5,584	7,369	0	12,953	21,690

Asset and investment purchases

Fixed asset purchase	0	0	0	0	0
Investment purchase	0	0	0	0	0
Loans made	0	0	0	0	0
Funders loans repaid	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal	0	0	0	0	0
Total payments	5,584	7,369	0	12,953	21,690

Balance of payments and receipts

Net payments/receipts	(3,344)	21,382	0	18,038	(17,672)
Transfers between funds	9,394	(9,394)	0	0	0
Cash funds last year end	5,987	0	0	5,987	23,659
Cash funds this year end	12,037	11,988	0	24,025	5,987



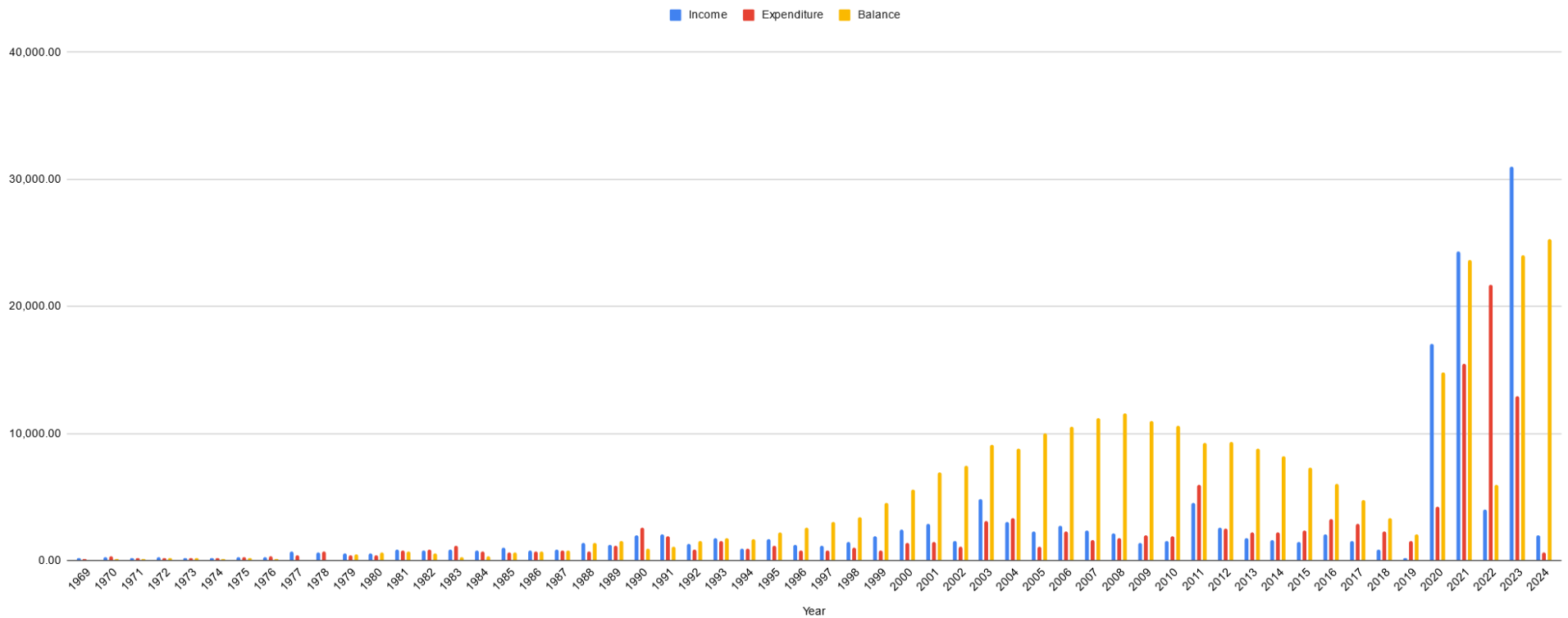
 COMMUNITY
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Income, Expenditure and Balance Chart

This chart shows the historical income, expenditure and total assets of Lands Village Hall from 1969 to 2024.

Lands Village Hall

Income, Expenditure and Balance





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