The Net North Shields
Registered Charity No. 1151677

Trustees' Report
and
Financial Statement
for the year ended
31 December 2025

Legal and Administrative Information

Name:	**The Net North Shields**
Charity no:	1151677
Structure:	Unincorporated association governed by a constitution.
Trustees:	D Hodgson L Kay B Tavernor C Brown JC Nolan S Barlow R Chapman
	Trustees are elected by the membership at each Annual General Meeting.
Principal Office:	The Old Low Light Clifford Fort North Shields Tyne & Wear NE30 1JA
Bankers:	HSBC 110 Grey Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 6JG
Independent Examiner:	Mark Thompson MAAT VODA Spirit of North Tyneside Wing 2nd Floor, Wallsend Community Hub & Library 16 The Forum Wallsend NE28 8JR

The Net North Shields

Trustees Report: for the year ended December 2025

We approach 2025 with a real sense of achievement and optimism for the future. It has been a particularly busy and memorable year for the Old Low Light, with the centre playing an important part in the North Shields 800 celebrations, marking the tenth anniversary of the official opening of our heritage gallery, and delivering a broad programme of exhibitions, events and activities for our community.

Partnership working has been a strong theme throughout the year. Since January we have been part of a small team providing a 'fact of the day' for every day of the year for North Tyneside Council to share on social media and through its North Shields 800 website. It has been a great opportunity to contribute to the celebration of our town and its remarkable history.

We began the year with a particular focus on community wellbeing and connection. We hosted Food For Thought, a community group bringing people together through shared food and conversation, and supported Read Easy by raising funds to help the local charity purchase new books to improve adult literacy. From January to March we also provided a weekly Warm Space on Fridays, offering a welcoming environment and hot drinks as part of North Tyneside Council's Warm Space initiative.

Creative activity has also featured strongly. Ceramics classes ran between January and March, while Coastal Sewcial was launched in January and continued throughout the year, bringing people together for friendly and creative sewing sessions using sewing machines.

Our programme of music and performance has continued to grow. In February we hosted Marras and Mariners, an afternoon of sea shanties and poetry, as well as one of our popular classic music concerts organised by David and Jennifer Murray. We also marked International Women's Day in March with a guided walk led by Pat Stevens and a Women at Work talk with Janis Blower, celebrating the contribution of women both past and present. Musical events continued with a concert by Birkett and Fisk.

March also marked an important milestone for the Old Low Light as we celebrated the tenth anniversary of our official opening. It was a wonderful opportunity to bring together friends, supporters and volunteers and to reflect on how far the centre has come since those early days.

Our volunteers once again delivered a very successful plant sale in May, raising valuable funds for the centre. This was followed by the annual display by the North of England Classic Car and Pre-War Automobiles Motoring Club, which attracted many visitors and has become a much-loved highlight of our spring programme.

In June we were pleased to be partners in a successful Community Day at the Linskill Centre, celebrating the history, heritage and culture of North Shields. More than 1,500 people attended, with six talks, exhibitions and displays, live music and a community marketplace providing opportunities for local organisations to promote their work.

The summer brought two major exhibitions to the Old Low Light. From July to October we were honoured to host 'Harvest from the Deep' by award-winning photographer Peter Robinson. His photographs, taken over a period of ten years, recorded the working and home lives of local fishermen involved in one of the UK's most dangerous industries. The exhibition was hugely popular and we were particularly pleased to welcome so many working fishermen into the centre to see it. When the exhibition ended, a selection of Peter's photographs remained on display in the café.

Also in July we opened ‘North Shields – 800 years in the making’ in the heritage gallery. This major new exhibition takes visitors on a journey from the town’s beginnings as a small settlement of fishermen’s huts at the mouth of the Pow Burn, through wars, conflict, innovation and prosperity, to the North Shields we know today.

The exhibition was the culmination of months of research and work by our volunteers and supporters to bring together what we already knew about the history of our town and present it as a coherent story. We were grateful to friends in the community who helped source photographs and check facts, and particularly encouraged by the lovely comments visitors have left after seeing the gallery.
The new exhibition is intended to provide a starting point for a series of smaller displays focusing on particular aspects of North Shields’ history. The first of these explores the archaeology of Clifford’s Fort, with future displays planned on subjects including railways, Northumbrian pipes, salt panning, education and the role of women over the centuries.
Shortly after the opening of the North Shields exhibition, our friends at Innocent Bystanders performed ‘Standing on the Shoulders’, with songs and words telling the story of women from medieval times to the present day, including their experiences of plague, witch trials, wartime and riots. They generously donated the proceeds of all three performances to the Old Low Light, and a quilt made for the events is now displayed outside the heritage gallery.

During August we hosted an exhibition by Tynemouth Photographic Society in our café, featuring images of local scenes and events dating back to the late 1800s. In October we held our first Dungeons and Dragons event, inspired by volunteer Harry’s belief that the game could provide an opportunity to encourage imagination while helping people of all ages explore the history of the local area.

At the end of October, ‘Shipyard faces and intriguing spaces…a drawing and painting retrospective’ opened on our top floor. The exhibition by Peter Burns featured work from more than 50 years and was curated by Dave Young, a long-standing friend of the Old Low Light. It proved very popular and continued through to the end of the year.

We were also delighted to see the story of Mary Ann Macham take another important step into the public consciousness. In November we supported the publicity surrounding the unveiling of the sculpture of Mary Ann, the escaped enslaved woman whose extraordinary journey to freedom was featured in our 2019 exhibition, ‘Breaking Chains – North Shields and Slavery’. Six years after first telling her story, it was particularly rewarding to see this striking bronze sculpture unveiled on the bank top. It provides a powerful visual tribute and ensures that Mary Ann’s story becomes an important part of North Shields’ history.

From summer through to November, artist Gaynor Devaney led an ambitious textile map project at the Old Low Light. Eleven workshops brought together around 60 local people, who contributed their memories, ideas and creativity to create a stunning map of North Shields. Gaynor also joined us at the Community Day in June to hear from local people about what they would like to see represented. The finished artwork is now on display in our café.

Alongside these special projects and exhibitions, our regular programme has continued, including educational visits, heritage talks, guided walks and our popular classic music concerts. Our community space on the top floor has also remained well used by a wide range of community groups, including FLOW, which works with adults with additional needs and has been using the Old Low Light for several years.

We have also been pleased to support I Love North Shields through regular articles for its magazine and website, working with a group of people who are passionate about promoting the town and all that is good about it.

None of this would have been possible without the continued dedication of our volunteers. Around 80 volunteers supported the centre on a weekly basis, with nearly 200 people registered and active at some point during the year. Together they contributed approximately 24,960 volunteer hours – an extraordinary contribution and one which demonstrates just how much the Old Low Light means to the people who give their time to it.

Between January and December we welcomed 41,257 visitors, reflecting the continued interest in and support for the Old Low Light and everything it offers to the community. This represents another very strong year for the centre and demonstrates the value of continuing to provide a place where people can discover the history and heritage of North Shields, take part in creative and cultural activities, meet others and enjoy themselves.

We are extremely grateful to North Tyneside Council and the National Lottery Heritage Fund for their support, which enabled us to take part in North Shields 800 events, activities and projects. We are also grateful to all our other funders and supporters who have continued to provide generous assistance, and to everyone who has supported the centre through donations, memberships, café and shop purchases, room hire, events and visits.

As we look towards 2026, we do so with optimism and plans for another busy and exciting year. We will continue to build on the work of 2025, developing our programme of exhibitions, talks, music, walks, workshops and community activities while continuing to share the history and heritage of North Shields with as many people as possible.

Above all, we will continue to rely on the enthusiasm, commitment and generosity of our volunteers, supporters and friends, whose contribution makes everything we do possible.

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

Charity Law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which comply with the regulations set out in the Charities Act 1993. The Trustees have elected to take advantage of the provisions that apply to small charities and have prepared a Receipts and Payments Account and Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

Signed: ……..Chair, on behalf of the Trustees, date: ……..

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Report to the trustees of

The Net North Shields

On accounts for the year ended

31 December 2025 **Charity no 1151677**

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees of the organisation are responsible for the preparation of accounts; they consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 and that an Independent Examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- examine the accounts (under section 145 of the 2011 Act),
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act), and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. 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 seeking 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 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 trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:
   - proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 130 of the Act); and
   - accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: **Date: 13 October 2026**

Name: Mark Thompson MAAT

Address:
VODA
Spirit of North Tyneside Wing
2nd Floor, Wallsend Community Hub & Library
16 The Forum
Wallsend
NE28 8JR

The Net North Shields
Receipts and payments account for the period
1 January to 31 December 2025

	Notes	2025 Unrestricted	2025 Restricted	2025 Total	2024 Total
Income					
Donations	(2)	18329	40473	58802	40060
Charitable Activties	(3)	50294		50294	13245
Other Trading Activities	(4)	92729		92729	113564
Investment Income		48		48	155
Total Income		**161400**	**40473**	**201873**	**167024**
Expenditure					
Cost of Trading Activities	(5)	25607	3800	29407	24327
Charitable Activities	(6)	116575	36995	153570	162128
Depreciation		0		0	0
Total Expenditure		**142182**	**40795**	**182977**	**186455**
Surplus for the period		19218	-322	18896	-19431
Transfers Between Funds					
Balance at 1 January 2025		4447	4556	9003	28434
Balance at 31 December 2025		**23665**	**4234**	**27899**	**9003**

The Net North Shields
Balance Sheet
at 31 December 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
Fixed Assets	0	0
Current Assets		
Debtors		
Prepayments	1107	1145
Stock	769	894
Cash at Bank & in Hand	29501	10897
Total Cash Balances	**31377**	**12936**
Current Liabilities	**3478**	**3933**
Net Current Assets	**27899**	**9003**
Net Assets at 31 December 2025	**27899**	**9003**
Represented By:		
Restricted Funds	4234	4556
Unrestricted Funds	23665	4447
	27899	**9003**
Total	**27899**	**9003**

The financial statements were approved by the following members of the Management Committee :

Signed …… Position ……..

Signed …… Position ……..

Date …….

The Net North Shields
Notes to the accounts, 2025

1. Accounting Policies

a The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) – Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006

The Net North Shields meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

b Grants received are accounted for on a received basis and credited to income.

c Voluntary income is received by way of donations and gifts and is included in full in the Receipts and Payments Account when received.

2. Grants & Donations

North Tyneside Council - NS800 Exhibition Funding	15155
NS800 National Lottery Funding	3800
National Lottery Community Fund	21518
	40473

3. Charitable Activities

Room Hire	12192
Event Income	22012
Admission and Ticket Sales	9598
Membership	6492
	50294

4. Other Trading Activities

Café & Shop Income	92729
	92729

5. Costs of Trading Activities

Café Supplies	21884
Gift Shop Supplies	0
Event Costs of Sale	2677
Museum Costs	4846
	29407

6. Costs of Charitable Activities

Staff Costs	108489
Premises	34284
Insurance Fees	2967
Legal & Professional	611
Office Costs	7219
	153570

7. Trustees, staff and related party transactions

The organisation employed an average of 7 members of staff during the period of the accounts. No payments were made to trustees.

8. Restricted Funds

Analysis of Restricted Funds:	Open Bal	Income	Expend	End Bal
North Tyneside Council - Winter Warm Space	1000		1000	0
National Lottery Community Fund	3556	21518	20840	4234
North Tyneside Council - NS800 Exhibition Funding		15155	15155	0
NS800 National Lottery Funding		3800	3800	0
Total	**4556**	**40473**	**40795**	**4234**

The Net North Shields
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at 31 December 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
Fixed Assets	0	0
Current Assets		
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Restricted Funds	4234	4556
Unrestricted Funds	23665	4447
	27899	**9003**
Total	**27899**	**9003**

The financial statements were approved by the following members of the Management Committee :

Signed ..... Position Chair of Trustees

Signed ..... Position Secretary

Date 16/10/26