

# ANNUAL REPORT

FROM THE TRUSTEES  
2024



**Gearstones Lodge Outdoor Centre**  
Registered charity - 502341



## The Chairman

As Gearstones Chairman I would like to thank all trustees and committee members for their continued support.

Reflecting on 2024 I am pleased with the year we have had.

We joined the Remembrance Day march and represented Gearstones, thank you Danny for laying the wreath.

Thank you to trustees who go above and beyond in keeping the Gearstones tradition going.

I am looking forward to hearing the reports that our sub committee's have prepared.

This year our funds are buoyant and will enable the building committee to continue to make any necessary improvements, upgrades and cosmetic changes needed. However I am aware of the issues around the electricity supplier and the outstanding monies owed.

The Fire report from earlier on on the year is now being actioned. I have spoken to various suppliers of the fire retardant coating for the wood work.

We had a successful working weekend, and it was wonderful to see so many trustees and friends of Gearstones working together.

The continued ethos for all trustees to 'spread the word' in the community is excellent. We have had some positive and constructive feed back which is always very useful moving forward.

Viv Smith is standing down as a trustee and I would like to thank him for his many years of support regarding the Health and Safety for Gearstones and sharing his vast knowledge.

We also have many 'friends of Gearstones' who continue to work behind the scenes to ensure Gearstones Lodge and Cottage are always a welcoming accommodation for our community to spend quality time together in the outdoors.

Moving forward may we continue going from strength to strength in 2025 and I would look forward to welcoming new members.

Thank you to all involved.

Yours sincerely

Dean Armitage

# Administration, Organisation & Management Structure

## Charity Constitution – Aims and Objectives

### Constitution – The Scheme

The Trust property shall be held upon trust for the use of the members of the public at large (preference being given to the children from time to time attending any school or any voluntary youth organisations within the Mirfield area) to promote the benefit of such persons without distinction of sex or political, religious or other opinions by the advancement of education and the provision of facilities in the interests of education and leisure time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life of such persons.

### Charity aims and Objectives

**To provide** – Accommodation and equal opportunity for children, youth, and families to participate in outdoor activities, at an affordable cost that would not otherwise be available to them.

**To provide** – The development and skills of young people, including those with a disability by fostering individually and team spirit through enjoyment, education and training.

**To encourage** – A wider use of environment in safety, with consideration for those that live in it.

### Charity Details – Reg Charity Number - 502341

Gearstones Lodge Charitable Trust  
Ribblehead  
Chapel le Dale, Ingleton  
North Yorkshire  
LA6 3AS

### Correspondence Address

The Secretary  
Dan Goodall  
9 Wellhouse Close,  
Mirfield  
WF14 0BQ

## **Name of Bank**

HSBC  
Market Place  
Dewsbury  
West Yorkshire

## **Solicitors**

(Under review)

## **Trustees**

Mr D Armitage - Chairman  
Mrs I Allatt  
Mr M Allatt  
Mr P Burnett  
Mr G Burrows  
Ms D Cook  
Mr D Goodall  
Mr D Harker  
Mr K McConnell  
Mr T Naylor

## **Non trustee committee members**

James Madden

## **Management and Committee Structure**

Trustees  
Management Committee

### **Sub committees**

Building & Facilities  
Fundraising  
Health & Safety  
Policies

### **Elected Officials**

Chairman – Dean Armitage  
Secretary – Dan Goodall  
Treasurer – Kevin McConnell  
Bookings – Graham Burrows

## Administration and Organisation

The trust is administered by a volunteer Management Committee elected at the AGM held in March each year.

**Friends of Gearstones** – Is a support group of individuals and families who help and assist with support to user groups, refurbishments, repairs, and maintenance work.

**Stakehold partnership** – Incorporating Mirfield Day Centre, 1st Mirfield Scouts and Mirfield groups and families.

**Elected Officials** – are responsible for the day-to-day admin of the trust.

**Sub - committee** – deal with, evaluate and make recommendations to the management committee.

**Building and facilities** – are responsible for all works, expenditure, estimates, contractors, volunteer workers, maintenance, and refurbishments.

**Fundraising** – are responsible for organising fundraising activities.

**Health and Safety** – implementation of all legislation within H & S, advise on procedures and good practice.

**Policies** – advise on the implementation of Trust constitution, monitoring and procedures.

## Finance and Accounts

Presented below is an overview of the Annual Accounts for Gearstones Lodge Trust as at the close of 2024. The Lodge was fully open and the year saw strong interest in bookings.

Major issues becoming apparent in previous years were Energy costs with both Gas & Electricity prices increasing substantially. To try and mitigate these costs, phased increases to rentals were introduced in late 2022 and have continued.

A 2 year fixed price contract was entered into for Electricity prices to ensure some stability, this expires March 2025. A further 2 year contract has been obtained after March, with prices cheaper than the earlier contract.

Again costs were kept to a minimum and covered the essential fixed costs to maintain the fabric of the Lodge.

Thanks go to all volunteers who spent a substantial amount of their own time in ensuring the Lodge was kept in a fit manner to ensure a smooth running of the facilities.

Cash balance at end of Y2022 was £27.8k

Cash balance at end of Y2023 was £46.6k

Cash balance at end of Y2024 was £63.5k

Whilst cash balance looks strong, this is mainly in anticipation of forthcoming maintenance and building expenditure anticipated in 2025. Also the policy has been to build up a substantial contingency fund in case of major repairs to what is an old building and exposed location.

Note cash balance is higher than expected as some reason our Electricity contractor had failed to invoice the Lodge for approx 18mths. This situation has been partly resolved in early 2025, but full invoicing for the earlier periods has yet to come through. Note it was Gearstones Lodge chasing the Electricity supplier to get the invoicing up to date, the problem lay with the supplier.

### **Revenue - £35.6k (note previous year £43.8k)**

Revenue was down on the previous year on both cottage and Lodge, tho this provides no concern as there is always strong interest in renting out both properties it is just seen as a blip due to timings and smaller nos of people in the parties booking the Lodge.

The Cottage had a revenue flow at £2.7k

The Lodge showed revenues of £32k

Bequest from a former Trustee £0.8k

## Finance and Accounts (cont.)

### Expenditure - £18.6k, (note previous year £25.1k)

Main items were :-

Electrical work reviewed and updated £1.2k

Energy costs as always continued to be a major expense, but Y2024 costs reflect no Electricity costs being invoiced. Gas bills were £5.2k Energy is always expected to be a major expense, outgoing costs needs to be closely monitored throughout the coming years.

Insurance for the Building at £6.0k, still remained at a reasonable level.

Other outgoings included Rates, Waste disposal, Water testing, Miscell Repairs (i.e. supplies for the various working parties doing work on the Lodge – which kept the overall maintenance cost down).

Again the policy of tight cost control by the Committee in which only essential maintenance was conducted and the bulk of that by volunteers has continued to be successful in Y2024.

Kevin McConnell – Treasurer.

## Booking Secretary

The lodge and cottage continue to see very positive engagement for 2024/2025. The January 2024 minor price increase has not deterred guests from placing bookings, with comments on its value for money often being mentioned.

We had the very welcome return of a regular hirers, and after listing Gearstones on TripAdvisor, Yorkshire Dales National Park and National Trails, we've seen bookings from new customers to Gearstones as a result.

The online booking system is maintains to be a fantastic resource for both myself and our guests, with the website availability calendar making bookings easy and convenient for everyone.

As with previous years, peak bookings for both the lodge and cottage tend to fall on weekends. Mid-week lodge bookings are mostly recurring residential trips.

The key safe boxes are still a great facility for guests to gain access to the properties at Gearstones. The response from our guest has been positive too as it allows for code sharing for party members who may arrive prior to the booking organiser.

Customers old and new continue to be impressed with what the lodge and cottage have to offer and would like to thank everyone involved for their support this year in keeping them both clean and tidy. We have received wonderful feedback and many word of mouth referrals as a result.

The cottage remains a valuable asset to the charity. There has been an increase in cottage bookings for guests walking both the Pennine Way and Dales Way. We've had a higher number of one night enquiries, proving that the cottage is in a perfect location to support guests needing a single nights occupancy. These have mainly been mid-week bookings.

The cottage continues to be ideal base for any works going in the lodge, and often used by the committee members for the monthly health and safety checks.

Please continue to spread the word about Gearstones as this helps to keep it open and flourishing.

Graham Burrows

## Building and Facilities

This year has seen some continuing progress on our refurbishment of the lodge and cottage.

Main works this last year have been to fix and renew numerous windowpanes and sills within the lodge and cottage where the seal and glass have blown to the extents we could not see out.

There are still a few more panes to swap out and upgrade in the coming year.

Updates are continuing with out-of-date light fittings, where we now have a problem in sourcing spares for the old-fashioned type of fluorescent light fittings. These are being replaced with modern new ones. To date all the games room have been swapped out to new LED fittings.

The grounds are looking great now we have been continuously tackling the mowing of the grass etc. Which gives a pleasant environment for guests.

No further problems have occurred this last year with the boiler system, and all is working well.

The gas tank has had its periodic service and checks by the supplier.

Health and safety visits are now spread out among committee members, which give all a good insight into all the workings of Gearstones lodge.

Annual inspections have been completed as part of our "Annual Inspection Programme" and include the following:

- The premises electrical supply and building circuits.
- All electrical equipment and appliances.
- The automatic & manual fire alarm system.
- The emergency lighting system.
- All portable fire extinguishers.
- Water supplies testing and control.
- LPG storage and associated pipe work

The Local Authority or private contractors carry out these inspections.

Projects for this next year, looking into the possible refurbishment and splitting of the office room into a usable bedroom for staff or instructors with toilet and shower facilities.

Along with and a new store area for all the Gearstones cleaning equipment and essential service items.

Refresh the downstairs shower area with a coat of paint.

Swap out a few more of the central heating radiators that need some TLC.

General 'smarten up' of the Lodge and new soft furnishings in the cottage.

Tim Naylor

# Health and Safety – Statement of Intent

## Policy

Gearstones Management Committee so far as is reasonably practicable will take all necessary action to prevent and control risks to health, safety and welfare of all visitors attending Gearstones Lodge premises.

## Responsibilities

Gearstones Lodge Management Committee will endeavour to ensure that all equipment and facilities within the premises are of an appropriate standard to meet the current H & S regulations.

## Visitors

All visitors must familiarise themselves with the safety information and instructions regarding the use of equipment, fire alarm and emergency procedures displayed in the main entrance. Any faults with emergency equipment must be reported to party leaders, then reported to a H & S committee member.

## Health and Safety Committee

Are responsible to the management committee for all H & S issues at the premises. Monitoring of procedures is carried out monthly and reported to management committee.

# Health and Safety Report

Craven council have continued with additional water sampling and testing that shall be carried out as required by the European Union proposals to revise the drinking water directive.

The Fire Risk Assessment has been reviewed, updated and the findings recorded.

All risk assessments have been reviewed, updated, and recorded.

All required testing and inspection of health and safety procedures and equipment have been carried out and recorded.

Annual inspections and servicing as required has been carried out to:

Central heating boiler

Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998

Electrical Inspection

Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

Emergency Lighting

BS 5266-1 Code of practice

Fire detection

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Fire doors

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Fire-fighting equipment

British Standard 5423

Gas cooker

Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998

Portable Appliance Testing

Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

Water supply

Private Water Supplies Regulations (England)(Amendment) 2018

V Smith

## Corporate, Community Liaison and Fundraising Committee

The future looks bright with Gearstones held in high regard within the community and well placed to play an increasingly important role in the wellbeing of those we seek to serve.

We are attracting a wider range of groups in the lodge and the cottage thus making the trust more stable.

We have new committee members on board, we are always looking into future fundraising ideas. This has included an updated Face Book page. New posters will be distributed in community areas such as the library, shop notice boards and other clubs such as South Pennine Boat Club.

This will reinforce what Gearstones has on offer to the Mirfield and wider community.

## Equal Opportunities Committee

The trustees and elected members of the Gearstones Management Committee have a mandatory duty to provide an equal and non-discriminatory service to all members of society placed upon them by the constitution governing the Trust's charitable status.

We fully accept and welcome that society consists of many diverse groups and individuals and this diversity is an asset to the community.

We recognise that we have a moral responsibility to promote equal opportunities and we will pursue equality in all our charities work.

Our efforts over the past years to provide diverse and varied facilities to meet the needs and aspirations of all sections of the community continue to be worked on. Consultations with professional bodies remain to enable all members of the community to enjoy Gearstones and the surrounding areas.

We strive to create a safe and inclusive atmosphere within our organisation so that everyone maintaining our representation where we are doing well continues, and improving our representation in areas where we could improve.

Dan Goodall

Debs Cook



**Gearstones Lodge Outdoor Centre**  
Registered charity - 502341



A1A - DONATIONS / GRANTS / LEGACIES  
 DONATIONS - GENERAL 775 49  
 OLDER HALL  
 MIRFIELD TRUST 0 00

A1B - TRADING ACTIVITIES  
 SUNDRY RECEIPTS 0 00  
 BOOKING FEES - COTTAGE 2 740 00  
 BOOKING FEES - LODGE 32 041 00  
 ACTIVITIES 0 00  
 BANK CHARGES / INTEREST 0 00

A1C - FUND GENERATING / OTHER ACTIVITIES  
 SOCIAL EVENTS / SALES / ETC 0 00

A2A - NORMAL TRADING PAYMENT  
 HEATING / LIGHTING 5 128 89  
 REPAIRS & EQUIPMENT 2 910 00  
 INSURANCE REPAIRS REFUND 0 00  
 ELECTRICAL UPDATE 1 180 27  
 INSURANCE 5 995 00  
 OTHER ADMIN EXPENSES 3 379 46

A2 - OTHER PAYMENTS  
 NEW WINDOWS / EXTERNAL DOORS 0 00  
 NEW BOILER 0 00  
 NEW COTTAGE KITCHEN 0 00  
 NEW BEDDING 0 00  
 NEW FIRE DOORS 0 00

NET OF RECEIPTS / PAYMENTS 16 962 87

OPENING CASH LAST YEAR 46 619 40  
 CASH FUNDS THIS YEAR END 63 582 27

OVERALL CASH BALANCE SEE ABOVE  
 SPLIT CASH IN HAND 68 43 68 43  
 BANK A/C 63 513 84 63 513 84

ASSETS RETAINED FOR OWN USE  
 PROPERTY  
 ORIGINAL PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION 4 000 00 4 000 00  
 MIRFIELD EDUCN TRUST - 4 MORTGAGES  
 ORIGINAL 77 000 00  
 FIRE ALARM REPORT - 1994/95 12 000 00  
 GARAGE CONVERSION - 2 INSTALLMENTS 23 000 00  
 10 000 00

Y2001 GARAGE CONVERSION - 10 000 00 10 000 00  
 MIRFIELD COUNCIL GRANT  
 KITCHEN REFURBISHMENT  
 Y2001&Y2002 EXPENDITURE 6 000 00 6 000 00  
 CLIMBING WALL ADDITION 30 934 00

BOB HAD A FURTHER £222 - WHAT IS IT 222 00 222 00  
 MIRFIELD EDUCN TRUST

ASSETS RETAINED FOR CHARITY'S OWN USE  
 PROPERTY  
 FIXTURES & FITTINGS 29 200 00  
 2 200 00  
 3 500 00

CURRENT VALUE  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

SURVEYORS REPORT 1997 - FREEHOLD VALUE  
 INVENTORY DECEMBER 1999  
 ZENECA EQUIP PURCHASED  
 FURNITURE FOR GARAGE PROJECT - ESTIMATE  
 ESTIMATE

LIABILITIES  
 MORTGAGES OVER PROPERTY  
 MIRFIELD EDUCATIONAL TRUST \*\*\*\*\*

NOTES TO ACCOUNTS - GEARSTONES LODGE - CHARITY NO 502341  
 STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

NOTE 1  
 THE PROPERTY WAS PURCHASED IN 1972 BY PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION FOR £4,000  
 MORTGAGE MONIES RAISED SINCE HAVE BEEN USED FOR PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS & CONVERSIONS (NOTE 3)  
 THE PROPERTY WAS PROFESSIONALLY VALUED IN DECEMBER 1997 WITH A FREEHOLD VALUE OF £170,000

NOTE 2  
 THE TREASURER AND SECRETARY CARRIED OUT AN INVENTORY IN DECEMBER 1999 AT REPLACEMENT COST . THIS  
 TOOK INTO CONSIDERATION THE NEW FACILITY FUNDED BY THE MORTGAGE MONIES .  
 DURING Y2000 . FURTHER PURCHASES HAVE BEEN MADE AND THESE ARE NOW INCLUDED AT COST VALUE.

NOTE 3  
 THE MORTGAGES ARE IN FAVOUR OF MIRFIELD EDUCATIONAL TRUST AND HAVE BEEN ADVANCED IN FOUR SEPERATE  
 AMOUNTS SINCE 1972 . THESE ARE INTEREST FREE AND ONLY REPAYABLE ON THE SALE OF THE PROPERTY .

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