

# **Acomb Village Hall, Playing Field and Pavilion**

## **Trustee Year-end Report April 2022**

### **Introduction**

The Village Hall, Playing Field and Pavilion in Acomb are currently managed by three independent Charity Commission Registered Trusts. None of the Trusts is run as a commercial business and each one is subsidised by Acomb Parish Council. All the Trusts are specified, by Trust Deed, to be run for the benefit of the Acomb community.

Acomb Village Hall is **leased** to Acomb Village Hall Trust by a landlord in Canada. The lease is set at a peppercorn rent and is valid until 1st April 2049. Circumstances have dictated that there is now a need to review the long-term future of this lease, and this is currently in hand. The Trust is an independent legal entity, regulated by the Charity Commission and a Trust Deed dated 2nd December 1963. The sole Trustee is currently Acomb Parish Council.

Acomb Playing Field (and all the facilities, other than the Pavilion) is owned by Acomb Recreation Ground Trust. It was **donated** to the Trust on the 2nd December 1963 by the landlord of the Village Hall. As with the Village Hall, the Trust is an independent legal entity and the Sole Trustee is Acomb Parish Council, in whose name the land is registered with the Land Registry.

Acomb Pavilion is owned by Acomb Playing Field Pavilion Fund (the third Trust). The land on which it was built was sold to the Trust by Acomb Recreation Ground Trust on 20th August 1970. During 1971, the Pavilion was built and managed by local people, and funded by public subscription. The Sole Trustee of this Trust is now Acomb Parish Council.

Various Management Committees of Residents of Acomb have operated as Management Trustees of these assets over the years. However, because of lack of use, lack of public interest or inability to fund them, they have all been transferred, and registered with the Charity Commission, to Acomb Parish Council as Sole Trustee. The Parish Council is now in the process of renovating some of the assets.

The Pavilion is being refurbished to provide another useful meeting facility for the community. In addition, there are plans to redevelop the Village Hall. All these improvements are being funded by grants being raised by various community organisations, including Northumberland County Council.

Much of the work planned by the Trusts, over the last few years, has been delayed by the direct and indirect impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Finance**

The Village Hall has limited income (around £2,000 per annum). In 2021, it received a Covid Grant of £10,000 from Northumberland County Council to offset loss of income. This has been used to fund its running costs (Business Rates, Electricity, Gas, Water, Repairs and caretaker costs). The Village Hall Trust's excess expenditure is funded by the Parish Council. The Village Hall Trust also has £20,000 in capital assets (donated, without condition, by the Catherine Cookson Trust) for the development of the Village Hall.

The Playing Field has limited income (from organised football) and its excess expenditure is paid by the Parish Council. It has no capital assets.

The Pavilion has no income, no capital assets and all its expenditure is subsidised by the Parish Council.

## **Acomb Village Hall Trust**



In December 2018, a Feasibility Study into the options for the development of the Village Hall and the Pavilion was carried out by Ainsworth Sparks Associates (Architect). The study was funded by My Community grant funding. Following much discussion of the study within the community, Acomb Parish Council funded the development of realistic, detailed architectural plans to refurbish the Village Hall. These were, produced in early 2020, by Ainsworth Sparks Associates. The works include the installation of a new kitchen between the current halls, servicing both halls. They also include new toilet facilities and lobby area and the removal of the stage in the large hall. The cost of the works was around £188,000 and some considerable effort has been made to raise grant funding for the total amount. Grants have currently been offered by Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust, Acomb WI and Acomb Parish Council. Unfortunately, much of the other fund-raising work has been unsuccessful. Potential Grant Funders often wish to see commitment from

communities towards this type of development, before making offers themselves. Whilst the Parish Council has offered a contribution to support the development, this is not necessarily seen as “community commitment”. It was planned that efforts should be made during 2021 to establish some form of public fund-raising, by events, sponsorship or other means, whilst pursuing further grants. However, further Covid-19 restrictions forced a hold on these potential activities.

During 2021/22, it also became apparent that the proposed plans no longer met the requirements of the changing demography of the community, or conformed to the recommendations for managing Climate Change within the Parish and the County. Consequently, a Village Hall Development Group (VHDG) was set up, and this group continues to work through the requirements and options available to the community, before restarting the development and fund-raising process. This will include further community consultation.

## **Acomb Recreation Ground Trust**



This is a separate Trust from the Pavilion.

The MUGA project to refurbish the Tennis Courts was initiated by Action4Acomb, after the 2015 Community-led Plan identified a desire for improvement of the facilities. Unfortunately, the proposed scheme could not be fully grant funded and caused considerable contention within the community when consultation took

place. Consequently, an expert committee (including an architect and local users of the facility) was formed in Sept 2020. The committee reviewed the proposals and took account of the public consultation results. A new Options Appraisal was commissioned to determine the viability, cost effectiveness and usage of the proposed MUGA. This appraisal has been carried out and has been evaluated. The Trustee has agreed to defer further development of the revised MUGA until the Village Hall Project is fully funded, to avoid potential contention between local public fund-raising campaigns (a prerequisite for external grant funders, as it shows local commitment to the project). The revised MUGA proposals will be subject to extensive further public consultation (in the medium term), tendering and further fund-raising activities.

In the interim, the Trustee is committed to refurbishing the tennis courts.

## **Acomb Playing Field Pavilion Fund Trust**



Early in 2020, the Architect (Ainsworth Sparks Associates) also drew up plans for the refurbishment of the Pavilion on the Playing Fields. These included exterior renovation, new toilets (including Accessible facilities) and access paths. Funding has been fully achieved for this project, thanks to Cllr Trevor Cessford (our Northumberland County Councillor), Avant Homes Ltd (Birkey Heights Developer), Sport England and Acomb Parish Council. Unfortunately, due to enormous demand following 12 months of Covid restrictions, the Trustee has been unable to identify a Building Contractor who was able to deliver the whole project. Additionally, building

costs increased significantly during late 2020 and 2021. The Trustee has therefore re-evaluated and extended, but simplified, the refurbishment project. The first phase of the refurbishment (Roof Repairs) has been carried out, and when a Building Contractor has been identified, it is expected that the full refurbishment will be carried out between September and December 2022.

Norman Robson

Chair – Acomb Parish Council  
July 2022



# Independent examiner's report on the accounts

## Section A

## Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

Charity Name  
Acomb Village Hall

On accounts for the year  
ended

31 March 2021

Charity no  
(if any)

522019

Set out on pages

1-4

**Respective  
responsibilities of  
trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to 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 Commission. 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent  
examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below \*)

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have 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.

\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Date: 19 June 2022

Name:

Mrs Amanda Senior

Relevant professional

qualification(s) or body  
(if any):

--

Address:

7 Stonecroft
Horsley
Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 0AF

**Section B**

**Disclosure**

N/A

**Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.**

N/A

## ACOMB VILLAGE HALL

### Income and Expenditure Account for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

#### Income:

Rental Fees	£1,212.75	
Acomb Parish Council	£ 500.00	
Grants	£30,000.00	
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>£31,712.75</b>

#### Expenditure:

##### Administration

VAT Consultation	£ 600.00	
Licences/Subscriptions	£ 0.00	
Telephone	£ 478.08	
Independent Examination Fee	£ 50.00	<b>£1,128.08</b>

##### Building Running Costs

Cleaning and consumables	£ 405.70	
Council Tax	£ 0.00	
Heating, lighting	£ 349.34	
Insurance	£ 937.05	
Repairs and maintenance	£ 575.25	
Pavilion electricity	£ 372.00	<b>£2,639.34</b>

<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>£3,767.42</b>
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Total Income	£31,712.75	
Balances c/fwd 01/04/2020	<u>£ 435.01</u>	
	£32,147.76	
Less Total payments	<u>£ 3,767.42</u>	

<b>Balances as at 31/03/2021</b>		<b><u>£28,380.34</u></b>
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#### Balances of Accounts

Current Account	£28,137.84	
Petty Cash	£ 242.50	
<b>Total Balances 31/03/2021</b>		<b><u>£28,380.34</u></b>



# Independent examiner's report on the accounts

## Section A

## Independent Examiner's Report

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Signed:

Date: 19 June 2022

Name:

Mrs Amanda Senior

Relevant professional

qualification(s) or body  
(if any):

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Address:

7 Stonecroft
Horsley
Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 0AF

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