



# **Annual Report**

and

# **Annual Accounts**

**1<sup>st</sup> November 2024**  
**to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025**

**Prepared by Penkhull Village Hall Community Trust**

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## Executive summary

This report is for the period of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025.

On Mondays to Fridays, the hall was used for 17 regular classes and activities encompassing social, exercise, music, and children's groups. There was 73% occupancy over the weekend days. These figures demonstrate that Penkhull Village Hall is in great demand as a community facility and is meeting its constitutional objectives.

Penkhull Village Hall Community Trust employs two part time staff, so relying on dedicated volunteers for major support with the daily operation and maintenance of the village hall. The trustees, all volunteers, are part of that team and manage the legal and administration work, fundraising and strategy for the future.

During the year volunteers continued to repair and maintain the fabric of the building, saving significant labour costs for the Trust.

The trustees have dealt as usual with significant financial pressures. They decided to invest heavily this year in repairs and upgrades carried out by qualified tradespeople. In total we spent £45,975 on repairs and renewables. The energy costs, which almost tripled from £7K in 22-23 to £17K in 23-24, with changes in the utility contracts, the insulation and changes to the heating system fell back to double the costs of 22-23.

Having maintained hire prices since 2016, the trustees had no option but to increase the regular and one-off hire charges in January 2024 and September 2025.

The heavy and widespread use of the building demonstrates its place as an essential facility supporting the community of Penkhull and its environs.

## Legal status of the Trust

Until 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026, Penkhull Village Hall Community Trust was registered with both the Charity Commission (no.1176200) and Companies House (no.10410213). On 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026, it converted to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with the same charitable number (no. 1176200) registered solely with the Charity Commission

Penkhull Village Hall Community Trust owns Penkhull Village Hall on behalf of the community of Penkhull. Under the overage agreement reached with the Duchy of Lancaster in 2020, should the trustees at any point sell the building and land outside of community use, a third of the profits must be transferred to the Duchy.

The trustees of Penkhull Village Hall Community Trust are extremely grateful to the Duchy of Lancaster, without whom our community would not be in the position it is today to create a centre with a future.

## Location of the village hall

Penkhull Village Hall  
Trent Valley Road  
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Stoke on Trent  
Staffordshire  
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## Management team (24-25)

<b>Trustees</b>	Sue Hallam, Chair Charles Pantin, Treasurer Mike Allen Claire Johnson (appointed 4 February 2026) Karen Jones Sue Pantin John Stokes Janet Wakefield Mike Willis (retired 4 March 2026) Dean Richardson (retired 12 September 2025)
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<b>Paid staff</b>	Sue Birch, Business Manager Sarah Welch, Cleaner
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## Use of the village hall

There is a real sense of community in Penkhull and its strapline - *a village within a city* - is both indicative of how the area is viewed by its residents and evocative of its village-like lifestyle.

Given its amenities and its location in the centre of Penkhull, the village hall is a natural centre for community activity. Since the creation of The Penkhull Mysteries in 2005, arts and performance groups and activities have blossomed. Most have centred on the village hall.

As an old school, Penkhull Village Hall has three rooms available to hire, one of which is a small meeting room. Because of internal noise pollution the two adjacent main rooms can only be used simultaneously if the activities are complementary, and careful scheduling has achieved this on four evenings a week during the period of this report. Simultaneous multi-use of the building is more difficult at weekends owing to the nature of the activities.

It is important to maximise the use of the building to achieve the highest possible revenue and to make the most efficient use of the heating. Having said that, we need to ensure there is time for routine cleaning through the week and for deep cleans and maintenance/refurbishment through the year. This can result in closing the building for the times necessary, though the work is normally done during school holidays when there is less weekday pressure on the facilities.

Mondays to Fridays, the hall is mainly used for regular activities that encompass social, sporting/exercise, music, and children's groups. *The full weekly schedule is in Appendix i.*

It is the hall's policy to protect Saturdays and Sundays for ad hoc events, so the community has good access to the facility for events like parties for residents of all ages, concerts, dances, fundraising events, national celebrations and more. During the year there were 96 individual weekend events, an increase of 10 over last year. Of the parties booked, 23 were Penkhull residents and 46 were from outside the village but within the City, mostly from our next-door areas. *See further details about ad-hoc hire in Appendix ii.*

The village hall is in great demand, and many bookings must be turned down as the rooms are already booked. This year that happened 165 times.

The police post, now well-established, has continued to bring the expected benefits to both the hall and the village. Police officers and PCSOs on the Penkhull and surrounding patches have made extensive

use of the room provided. The facility negates the need to return to their station during a shift and means officers spend more time on the patch and have somewhere warm, dry and welcoming to spend their breaks. Because officers use the hall at random times of the day and evening low level anti-social behaviour around the building has all but disappeared, which is a major bonus.

*The Thursday Community Café has been a great success since its inception in 2014. An initial grant to buy café furniture was a big help in establishing an attractive and welcoming environment, but it has been the volunteers who have ensured its success in meeting its objectives and contributing to hall funds. There are 28 volunteers involved in running the café – setting up and taking down the café, baking cakes, preparing lunches, taking orders, fulfilling orders and serving to between 60 and 100 people every week except Christmas and New Year.*

*The café was set up to help tackle loneliness. Over the years it has provided a constant space where people come to meet friends and make friends. Food and drink are almost incidental. It's the company, conviviality and community that matter to people, including the volunteers who find it a rewarding and enjoyable part of their week.*

Without doubt Penkhull Village Hall is the hub of the village community. It is the place to go to find out what is going on and to make individual voices heard, the place to go to learn new skills, the place to go for celebrations and the place to go to 'give something back'.

## Running the village hall

Trustees and other volunteers make sure the hall provides the best possible environment and customer service. Volunteers assist the business manager in the day to day running of the hall and in supporting hirers and it is solely volunteers who run the weekly community café, and open and close weekend bookings.

All the activity is supported by volunteers running the administration to ensure the hall complies with legal requirements, and sound financial management ensures the trustees have accurate financial information on which to make both operational and strategic decisions.

## Buildings

Penkhull Village Hall started life as a church school over 180 years ago. It closed as a primary school in the 1970s when other schools opened in Penkhull. It was then used during the day as an annexe by St Peter's secondary school for a period and since 1994 has been used wholly as a village hall for use by the local community. It is part of the Penkhull conservation area.

Because it was built as a school the village hall benefits from several different sized rooms and a stage. One of the downsides is that as many rooms as possible need to be used concurrently to maximise revenue and minimise waste of utilities. As there is no soundproofing this can be difficult to achieve because not all activities are compatible.

## Maintaining the village hall

Penkhull Village Hall is an old, failing building. It requires constant care and maintenance, and we are fortunate to count among the voluntary improvement team, people with a wide range of skills from essential DIY to the electrical and plumbing trades.

They allow us to keep up with minor repairs and decoration to keep the hall looking attractive to hire, which is essential to maintain income and reputation.

Alongside that we have invested heavily this year in repairs and upgrades carried out by qualified tradespeople. We spent £37,400 on further insulation, roof repairs, office environment upgrade, a new kitchen floor and upgrades to the heating system. In total we spent £45,975 on repairs and renewables.

## Finances

Penkhull Village Hall finances are managed through the year by trustee and treasurer, Charles Pantin. The annual accounts are prepared by BKplus, Chartered Accountants, Graphic House, City Rd, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 2PH

### *Commentary on the financial year*

Penkhull Village Hall has gone from an operating loss of £677 in 22/23 to an operating profit of £17,592 due to a one-off donation of £20K in 23/24 and to a loss of £24068 in 24/25. The loss was due to the trustees investing heavily this year in repairs and upgrades carried out by qualified tradespeople.

- Income was reduced mainly due to a loss of donations, partly compensated by a rise in fundraising and an increase in hire income with both more bookings and a rise in the hourly rate.
- Total expenditure rose by £27K as repairs rose by £28K. The gas and electricity expenditure fell by £4K but was still twice the level before the Ukraine war price shock.

Having previously indicated a likely price rise to regular users, trustees did raise their hourly rate from £17 to £18. All activity leaders have been able to meet the small increase. Income from regular groups rose by £4.7K over 23-24 financial year.

Income from weekend hire rose by £4.2K on the previous year with the number of days booked for events rising by 10. The rise in income is mainly due to the usual hourly rate for one-off bookings rising from £20 to £25.

## Planning for the future of Penkhull Village Hall

Penkhull Village Hall is an old, failing building with myriad problems, many of them costly, which is why the Trust was formed. As a charity the Trust can apply for major grants and support to make the major changes that are necessary for a community centre fit for our children and our children's children. The volunteers have a great range of skills that make it possible to keep the hall repaired and maintained but much of this is cosmetic and we have had to spend over £37K on big ticket items during the year.

Since its inception the Trust has been working on a long-term plan of major rejuvenation of the hall as the current building has a limited life. Whilst the Trust has received significant and welcome support from its architects, plans have not proceeded at the rate intended. This means trustees are now faced with having to do major work on the hall to keep it going until a sustainable solution can be put in place.

It is the people involved, staff and volunteers, who make it all possible, however, it is getting harder for the small, dedicated group of volunteers, particularly the trustees, to keep going at the current rate. So alongside the work keeping the hall running, the trustees will be turning their focus next year towards making the people side of the operation more sustainable, with more volunteers and potentially more paid staff. This would have a major impact on expenditure with relatively little room for increasing income, but the Trust will fail for lack of people before it fails because of its building problems.

## Appendix i

### Regular users of Penkhull Village Hall 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024

(weekly unless otherwise stated)

Day	Group	Approx numbers	Aim
Monday	Baby Ballet	10- 15	The preschool dance syllabus has been carefully designed to ensure each child is taught the principles of ballet and tap at the right developmental level while boosting confidence, and of course having lots of fun.
	Kids Club	10-20	Educational, arts and social development for children age 6-13
	Clay Chorus	25-30	Adult singing group led by professional musicians, learning songs with harmony and performing at various events through the year
	Wood turners club (monthly)	40	Woodturning class and meetings with external speakers/trainers, often via zoom to class and with some members attending via zoom
Tuesday	Dance Fitness Class	10	Dance fitness class to music
	Seated Samba	16	Seated exercise class for people with limited mobility and strength
	Slimming World	30 - 50	Group and leader support to lose weight through a specialist programme, with education about food, nutrition, exercise and healthy living
	Rainbows and Brownies	35	Opportunity for girls aged five to seven and seven to 10 to learn about themselves, their community and their world
Wednesday	Tai Chi	12-20	Tai chi for adults
	Brazilian Dance Fitness x 2	10 – 15	Adult fitness classes based on Brazilian dance style
	Yoga	10	Yoga for adults
	Dizzy Heights Youth Club	20	A free club for teens with a wide range of activities to take part in

Thursday	Community Cafe	60 - 100	Opportunity for people of all ages to meet in relaxed surroundings. Aims to get isolated people out of their homes and back into the community, meeting old friends and making new ones. A natural place to advertise and sell tickets for community events, encouraging people to spend more time in community settings
	Wood turners club ( <i>twice per month</i> )	30	Workshop for wood turners of all abilities to work on lathes and other equipment, learning from each other
	Domesday Morris	20 +	Training for Morris dancing over the autumn and winter months. Domesday Morris is Penkhull's home-grown border Morris side that performs locally, nationally and internationally
	So-Sew WI ( <i>monthly</i> ). Penkhull's own WI	40	An opportunity for women of all ages to meet new people, learn new skills and be inspired in many different areas
	Jujitsu	75-85	Training for all ages in the art and skill of jujitsu with opportunities to enter exams and develop through the grades
Friday	Hatha Bliss Yoga	10	Training for all ages in the art of Hatha Yoga, learning key yoga postures, breathing techniques, meditation, physical flexibility and balance
	CYC In Harmony Choir	24	Adult SAB Choir meets fortnightly working towards two concerts a year

The village hall is the hub for the annual events that take place. These are the Penkhull Wassail (January), Penkhull Festival of Music and Art (September) and Christmas Fayre with Lights Switch-on (November/December). These events form part of the village calendar with significant numbers of local residents being involved. They also draw in people from further afield and help put Penkhull on the map. Without the village hall most of these events would not be possible.

A past favourite, the Penkhull Mysteries (July) had a break owing to Covid and difficulties re-starting but returned in 2025 with a slightly smaller offering that the team are hoping to re-build from.

The Thursday community cafe continues to thrive, regularly seating more than 70 people during its most popular two-hour slot when lunches are served. Although most customers are older, retired, people, the cafe does attract some young mums with pre-school children and working adults who take advantage of shifts and days off to come and join in.

The trustees, with other volunteers run the community cafe every week except during the Christmas period. Its reliability and happy atmosphere are much valued in the village

## Appendix ii

### Ad hoc use of Penkhull Village Hall

It is the hall's policy to protect Saturdays and Sundays for ad hoc events, so the community has good access to the facility for events such as parties, workshops, concerts and fundraising activities.

During the year there was 73% occupancy over the weekend days when the hall was open (92 days, closed only for: Christmas and New Year, four days when volunteers were not available, and six days for maintenance work. On 12 of the days there was more than one event during the day.

Weekend events included 70 daytime events, the vast majority of which were children's birthday parties, 15 Saturday evening parties, a baby naming event, allotment meetings, fayres, six Soundbath sessions, a fundraising lunch provided by a Prue Leith trained chef, a two-day beer and music festival, a photo shoot day, two pre-concert choir rehearsals, a one-woman theatre play, two cultural events and a major musical fundraising concert by two local professional artists. .

Of the parties booked, 23 were Penkhull residents and 46 were from outside the village but within the city. Many of the bookings have been repeats or a direct result of word-of-mouth where customers have been delighted with the quality of both the facility and the customer service.

### Meeting demand

During the year we had to turn away 165 enquiries for weekend events as we were already booked. A further 46 enquiries were turned down because they didn't meet our policies. We had 12 enquiries to run regular activities that we couldn't fit into our schedule.

These figures demonstrate very clearly that Penkhull Village Hall continues to be in great demand as a community facility and is meeting its constitutional objectives.