

Prudhoe Community Partnership

Report of the trustees for the year ended 31 March 2021

The trustees present the directors' report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: Prudhoe Community Partnership

Charity registration number: 1113927

Company registration number: 5757621

Registered Office and operational address:

Spetchells Centre
58 Front Street
Prudhoe
NE42 5AA

Website: www.prudhoe.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/spetchellscentre

Twitter: @prudhoe1

Trustees

Caroline Warburton (Chair)

Paul Murray (Deputy Chair)

Iain Watt (Treasurer)

Margaret Boonstra

Dr Steven Quilliam

Elizabeth Evans

Vesta Moore

Richard Shrimpton

Trustee Emeritus

Maggie Phillips

Doreen Elwell

Observer/Trustee

Cllr Angie Scott (representing
Northumberland County Council)

Company Secretary

Gail Jewitt

Independent Examiner – Robson Laidlaw, Fernwood House, Fernwood Road,
Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE2 1TJ

Bankers – Unity Trust Bank plc. Nine Brindleyplace, Birmingham, B1 2HB

Solicitors – Caris Robson LLP, 7 Front St, Prudhoe NE42 5HJ

Our Aims and Objectives

Purposes and Aims

The Partnership's purposes as set out in the objects contained in the company's Memorandum of Association are to promote, for public benefit, urban and rural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation – in particular the community of Prudhoe and district in the county of Northumberland.

The Partnership currently interprets this as *“making Prudhoe a better place to live and work”*

Activities

The Coronavirus pandemic has restricted much of the work we have been able to do as the Government locked down almost all of the organisations and businesses across the country. The Spetchells Centre closed its doors to everyone except the Police and has been slowly opening the rooms and offices in a covid-19 safe way. In September much of the building has re-opened with the return of tenants to their offices. The public toilets have also re-opened. We are still maintaining sanitizing and additional cleaning to ensure the safety of everyone using the building.

During the year, the Partnership has been involved in the following projects:

(i) Spetchells Centre

The Partnership manages a purpose-built community hub opened in 2012, which provides offices and facilities for a range of public, private and voluntary groups and organisations. It houses Prudhoe Library, which is the core tenant. The estimated footfall for the year was over 55,000 visitors in pre-pandemic times.

The Spetchells Centre provides wide ranging public benefit to the people of Prudhoe by ensuring that advice and information services from Northumberland County Council, Prudhoe Town Council and Karbon Homes are readily available in the centre of the town.

Pre-pandemic it also hosted regular sessions of West Northumberland Food Bank and Prudhoe Employment Hub, as well as meetings for U3A and a number of activity groups.

The offices were fully let throughout the year, although most tenants have been working from home during the restrictions. We currently have a waiting list for offices. Since December 2017, Northumbria Police have been based at Spetchells Centre and this arrangement has enabled more members of the public to speak to a community police officer. We have been informed that the Police are closing their Information Desk based at the entrance to the library. We now have plans to set up a Welcome Desk to provide information to the general public and it should be active from the end of 2021.

(ii) The Grove – Pocket Park

The Grove has taken over some derelict land on the main Front Street and is now a community garden where people can sit and chat amongst the trees and shrubs. The project has been co-ordinated by the Partnership with Trustees Paul Murray and Richard Shrimpton, working with volunteers to transform the site into the community asset that it is now. We thank the funders for their support: Co-Op; Thompsons of Prudhoe; Essity; Caris Robson; Ginevra; Aspen Physio; Balls Restaurant; Fab Face and Body; Heritage Accountancy; A McGee; Simon CGI; Red Hot Properties; Gilmore Estates; CSN; Elizabeth Evans Opticians; Bed and Chair Centre; Prudhoe Front Street Traders; Prudhoe Town Council; Northumberland County Council; Prudhoe Community Partnership.

(iii) Prudhoe Community Hub (No61)

The Partnership has been fortunate to secure a small shop at 61 Front Street, which is just opposite the Spetchells Centre. This provides us with a public ‘shop-window’ to promote the work of the Partnership, provide a base for some of the project work and facilitate a community resource. The partnership has taken on a 5yr lease, giving the chance to develop a wide range of opportunities to support the communities of the town. The Hub provided the base for the Arts Festival and for Radio Prudhoe and will also be the base for the Volunteering in Prudhoe project.

(iv) The East Project

This is a long-term project to provide facilities and a base for young people in the town. The working party was re-formed at the beginning of the year and has been developing ideas and concepts, including consultations with young people’s focus groups. In addition, PCP has engaged the services of Alan Gerono via Community Action Northumberland (CAN) for one day a week; he is working on this project and sharing information and expertise to move the project on. These links have included working with the Rural Design Centre/Newcastle University with their teams of experts. We hope to have some plans ready for public consultation in early 2022.

(v) Prudhoe Community Arts Festival

Following the cancellation of the Arts Festival in 2020, we were determined that something in 2021 would run. A small working group pulled together plans for two versions of the festival – a virtual trail and a foot trail. The Festival ran from 10 – 24 July, with over 27 artists displaying work in 17 venues along Front Street. In addition, a virtual trail was filmed at the end of June and this remains available to view from the PCP website. The base for the Festival was the Community Hub, where Radio Prudhoe was also broadcasting for three weeks. Whilst Covid-19 restrictions did restrict some of the activities, the Festival was a great success. A working party to plan the 2022 Festival will be formed in October.

(vi) Volunteering in Prudhoe

The Volunteering in Prudhoe project has working in a fairly reduced capacity during the pandemic but we are now ready to extend the work and start to support volunteering and community groups. Working with both Hexham and Haltwhistle Partnerships and with support from Northumberland CVA, we are helping to develop a database of volunteering opportunities. The project will be based in the Prudhoe Community Hub, with a paid member of staff (via Kickstart Programme) to research and record volunteering opportunities.

(vii) Community Buildings Renewable Energy Project

This project has been delayed significantly by the pandemic, as Locogen were unable to visit the venues. An initial report has been received and it is hoped that the project can now progress.

Participating schools and Community Buildings: Prudhoe Community High School - Highfield Middle School - Ovingham Middle School - Broomley First School - Mickley First School - Ovingham C of E First School - Prudhoe Castle First School - Whittonstall First School - Wylam First School- Spetchells Centre - SICA Stocksfield - Wylam Institute - Ovingham Reading Room - West Academy - St Matthew's Catholic Primary School

(viii) Other projects

The Partnership is keen to work with other groups to support their work without necessarily leading in the work. In the last few months, we have been working with the Prudhoe Walled Garden Development Group, Prudhoe Pathforce, Prudhoe Youth Project, Lets Get Digital Project and the Local History Society.

Financial Review

Overview

General Fund	Spetchells Fund	Cash Reserves (inc restricted funds)
Income: £19,682	Income: £134,000	£152,541
Expenses: £13,532	Expenses and Mortgage: £87,154	
Surplus: £6156	Surplus: £46,846	

Full details of the accounts can be found in the audited accounts for the year ending March 2021.

Assets

The Partnership holds long terms leases from Northumberland County Council on the following properties:

- Spetchells Centre, 58 Front Street
- 68 – 69 Front Street (tenants: Red Hot Properties and Stevie Cuts)
- 23a Front Street (tenant: Shoe Fix)
- 51 Front St (tenant: Dhillons Fish and Chip shop)

Reserves Policy

The unrestricted reserves at the year-end were £243,297. The Trustees' policy is to hold reserves to meet redundancy costs and six months running costs and to hold sufficient funds to meet any emergency repairs that might be needed to any of the properties they own. Trustees consider this to be an adequate sum for that purpose.

Plans for Future Periods

The implementation of the results of the town survey will continue to set the agenda for the Partnership for the next year. In particular:

- Work on the East Centre project remains a key priority, working with the existing youth provision in the town and other key community groups and undertaking consultation with the local community on their views and ideas for the development of this key site.
- Further development of the Prudhoe Community Hub (No61)
- Volunteering in Prudhoe project developments

- Working with other key groups on selecting projects for the Borderlands Funding
- Developing plans for a community theatre in the town
- Undertaking another community survey to inform the work of PCP in the coming years in the light of the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Risk Review

The trustees undertook a full risk assessment in March 2021 in the light of the community impact of the Pandemic. The overall risks remain very similar and the highest risks identified were major mechanical and electrical repairs at Spetchells Centre, loss of major tenants and declining reserves.

Governing Document

The Partnership is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 26th February 2006. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association, which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. The Memorandum and Articles were revised at the Annual General Meeting on 15 July 2009 and again at the Annual general Meeting on 20 June 2017. This document will be reviewed by Trustees at the end of 2021.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Partnership is governed by the trustees, who are also directors of the company.

. The composition of the trustee body is:

- Ten trustees elected from individuals and organisations in membership of the Partnership
- Two trustees emeritus
- One trustee/observer appointed by Northumberland County Council
- One trustee/observer appointed by Prudhoe Town Council

Trustees 2021/22

Caroline Warburton (Chair); Paul Murray (Deputy Chair); Iain Watt (Treasurer); Margaret Boonstra; Vesta Moore; Richard Shrimpton; Dr Steven Quilliam; Elizabeth Evans; Angie Scott (NCC Cllr); Town Council representative (tbc).
Trustees Emeritus - Doreen Elwell; Maggie Phillips

The Partnership currently has two Trustee Vacancies

Trustees meet bi-monthly and trustees also volunteer to help in running the Spetchells Centre. In addition, trustees use their skills and expertise as members of working parties and in other ways. All the projects are undertaken by trustees and supporters on a voluntary basis, except when particular skills or resources are needed. The General Fund includes a budget for consultants on these occasions.



PCP is also planning to be part of the Government Kickstart programme and has been accepted for two x 6mth posts to develop both the Spetchells Front Desk project and the Volunteering in Prudhoe project. In both cases these roles are being extended for a further 6mths

Chair of Trustees

In July 2021 George Hepburn completed his 5yr term of Chair of Trustees and this role has now been taken on by Caroline Warburton.

Staff

The Partnership employs a part time Manager for Spetchells Centre, Gail Jewitt, and a part time Assistant Manager, Julie Smith. During the year, Gail continues to take responsibility for bookkeeping in addition to her other duties. Both Gail and Julie provide a great welcome and support to tenants and guests and trustees thank them for their hard work with a multitude of tasks and willingness to go the extra mile.

Related Parties

Angie Scott is an elected member for Northumberland County Council and we await a nomination from the Town Council for a councillor to take up their allocated space.

Accountants and external examiner.

Robson Laidlaw has provided support by training Gail Jewitt and providing management accounts. They have also acted as Independent Examiners since January 2017.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (issued in March 2005) and in accordance with the special provisions of Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small entities.

This report will be approved by Trustees at the November meeting – Tues 16 November 2021

Caroline Warburton (Chair of Trustees)

Caroline Warburton

20 September 2021