



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

		Period start date			Period end date		
From	01	April	2018	To	31	March	2019

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name HITCHIN TOWN HALL GYMNASIUM & WORKMANS HALL TRUST

Other names charity is known by CHARITY FOR A GYMNASIUM AND OTHER PURPOSES FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE INHABITANTS

Registered charity number (if any) 233752

Charity's principal address

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
 COUNCIL OFFICES, GERON ROAD
 LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, HERTS
Postcode SG6 1JF

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	North Hertfordshire District Council	Corporate Body (represented by Sub Committee consisting of the trustees named below)		
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Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year
Councillor Bernard Lovewell	
Councillor Julian Cunningham	
Councillor Michael Weeks	

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	TRUST DEED
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	TRUST
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	THE COUNCIL AS A CORPORATE BODY IS THE TRUSTEE, COUNCILLORS SIT AS TRUSTEES AND ARE ELECTED BY THE ELECTORS OF NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

The Trust comprises of an element of the Hitchin Town Hall comprising the Gymnasium and Workman's Hall. The remainder of the building is in the ownership of North Hertfordshire District Council, which is also the Trustee of the Trust part of the property.

Both parts of the property are managed by the District Council (the Trust property under formal agreement) and are used for community purposes, in line with the objectives of the Trust.

To affect management of the Trust and ensure separation from the Council, a Sub-Committee with full decision making powers in the interest of the Trust has been set up comprising of three Members of the Cabinet, whose Portfolios have no direct interest in the Council's part of the building.

Since local government re-organisation in 1974, when the Trustee changed from Hitchin Urban District Council to North Hertfordshire District Council, until 2009 the distinction between the Trust owned element of the building and the Council owned element has been lost. The arrangements explained above have been put in place to correct this omission.

Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

The objectives of the Trust are set out as:

"Upon trust to use or permit it to be used as a Gym for the benefit of the residents of Hitchin and for other purposes mentioned in s6(3) Museums and Gymnasiums Act 1891 and also for any other (charitable) purpose for the benefit of the North Hertfordshire District for which North Hertfordshire District Council can lawfully use building and land vested in them".

The whole of the Hitchin Town Hall complex, including the Trust part of the property was closed at the end of October 2012 to commence work on converting the building to a refurbished community facility, substantially incorporating that part of the building owned by the Council, and a District Museum substantially incorporating the Trust part.

Work continued throughout until 2016.

The project to create the new museum in the Trust part of the building has been fraught with problems since 2015/2016. There has been a protracted dispute between the Council and Hitchin Town Hall Limited, the partners in the project and the body responsible for the management and running of the community hall and cafeteria part of the building.

The position has not changed throughout the period that this annual report refers except for the fact that in January 2019 the Council was able to finally purchase the former 14 & 15 Brand Street, which now consists of the main entrance to the facility.

This has enabled the Council to plan and implement a full opening of the new facility with full access for the Museum from the new entrance on 6 July 2019. This will be reported formally in next year's annual report.

There is an alternative access point, which has been used to gain entry to the Trust property and therefore the new museum whilst the main entrance has been in dispute.

The refit of the new Museum has been completed and it has been open since October 2017, albeit on a restricted basis as there is no level access available via the alternative access point.

Despite the obvious restrictions, the Museum team has worked hard to encourage as many visitor numbers as could be accommodated within the constraints present at the Museum. In the period October 2017 to March 2018, visitor numbers were 3,772. In the full year April 2018 to March 2019, visitor numbers were 8,831.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

Section D**Achievements and performance****Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year**

The Sub-Committee Members acting on behalf of the Trust ensure that through the management of the building its objectives are met in the use of the Trusts areas for the provision of as much community benefit as may be possible.

This is achieved by making available unrestricted use of the building to all members of the community, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, age, religious belief or disability for a range of purposes.

Through policies and practices employed in the operation of the whole building by the District Council on behalf of the Trust, the Trust benefits the public in the establishment and promotion of community cohesion and development.

Following the operational closure of Hitchin Town Hall at the end of October 2012, the Trusts areas of the building were cleared of equipment and furniture by the end of March 2013.

This enabled those areas, together with remainder of the building, to be transferred to the Council's Property Services Department. This allowed the department, from the start of the reporting period, to make the necessary arrangements for the whole building to become suitably available to the NHDC project team for the commencement of refurbishment activities towards the creation of the new community hall and museum facility, which had been delayed due to the factors described in Section C.

A considerable achievement has been finalising the dispute with Hitchin Town Hall Limited and securing access to the main entrance to the building.

Despite the on-going dispute and the limited access to the building, the Museum Team has worked hard to ensure as much use as possible of the facility and this can be seen by the increasing visitor numbers reported above.

Section E Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The Trust's reserves total £2,516,595 at 31 March 2019. The reserves consist totally of restricted funds. These funds represent the property asset (Gymnasium and Workman's Hall), which is retained for actual use rather than to be expended.

The Trust has no unrestricted funds as at 31 March 2019 that can be expendable at the discretion of trustees in furtherance of the charity's objectives. The Trust's general expenditure is typically greater than general income. As a result North Hertfordshire District Council provides a contribution to the Trust and unrestricted funds are maintained at a zero balance over time. If the financial situation was to change and the Trust's level of income significantly increased the Trust would need to adopt a policy on an appropriate level of reserves.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

No funds are materially in deficit.

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

Income from activities for generating funds is earned from the hire of the Workman's Hall and Gymnasium. The facility had only restricted opening during financial year 2018/19 with only access only to pre-arranged groups and so only generated a small amount of income. The Trust received a contribution from North Hertfordshire District Council to cover all resources expended.

Expenditure incurred during 2018/19 was general running expenses of the Workman's Hall and Gymnasium and an increasing amount of expenditure on Museum Exhibitions and Events to reflect the small, additional usage of the facility.

The Trust does not have any significant assets or liabilities other than the tangible fixed asset.

Section F Other optional information

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Section G Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)

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Full name(s)

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Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)

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Date