

Chair: Sue Duffield | Secretary: Karen Raven

THORNTON RUST INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY 17 MARCH 2026

1. **Present:** Sue Duffield (Chair), Karen Raven (Secretary), Marjorie Spence, Tim McQueen, Rachel Newall, Rob Newall

Residents: Olwyn Chorley, Sheryl Willis, Barry Willis, Stella Beale

2. **Apologies:** Martyn Donno (Lettings), Paul Raven (Treasurer), Julia Loukota, Richard Loukota

3. **Minutes of AGM – 11 March 2025**

The Minutes were agreed as an accurate report of the meeting.

Proposed: Tim McQueen **Seconded:** Marjorie Spence

4. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

5. **Chairman's Report**

"All members of the Parish of Thornton Rust and outlying hamlets, who are over the age of 18, are considered 'members of the Institute'. Our aim is to provide, maintain and insure the building (Institute) for the use of members and non members, subject to charges that are determined by the Committee and are non- profit making. Any sums raised are used for the upkeep of the hall and for the provision of services.

The Committee at present consists of 12 members who serve a three year period and may be re-elected after that time. March is when the election of the Committee takes place. The Management Committee meet at least 4 times a year, sometimes more. All Committee members serve without payment.

The AGM is an opportunity for the villagers to ask any questions about the running of the Institute, maintenance of the Institute and the grounds.. The annual accounts will be available. This year we have co-opted three new members. Unfortunately our Treasurer and Secretary are resigning their positions. Thank you to both Paul and Karen Raven for their service over the last few years. We are pleased to have a new Secretary and Treasurer joining the Committee this year. The names and contact details of the Committee are posted on the notice board outside of the Institute.

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We have been delighted to welcome people from Bainbridge and Worton to many of our recent events. This has encouraged the Committee to invest more time in actively promoting the Institute to the wider local community. We have created a Facebook page for the Institute, where we post regular activities such as Pickleball (Monday evenings), Badminton (Wednesday evenings) and Circle Dancing (Thursday afternoons), Whist (every two weeks on a Friday evening). Our Facebook page now has 24 followers. We also have the village WhatsApp group and a quarterly newsletter as a means of providing updates and news, not only to the village but to a much wider area. All this is due to the hard work of Rachel and Rob Newall. I would like to give special thanks to Marjorie Spence for her continuing support in running the Whist Group, which raises funds for the Institute.

We have a quiz night twice a year (winter and summer) which still seem to be very popular. In November a Remembrance Service was held. Martyn Donno runs Skittles Nights periodically, where cheese and wine are served. Thank you also to Martyn who sets up the Institute for every occasion. Other events throughout the past year included regular coffee mornings and a New Year party, which as always was well attended. The help from several of the Committee, especially Tim McQueen, was very much appreciated.

One of our main concerns this year focused on the doors in the hall and the door into the stock room. After much discussion we decided to have them dipped. This seems to have been successful and when the doors have completely dried out we intend to repaint them, with the correct paint this time!

We intend to hold a summer BBQ, hoping for better weather than last year. Vanessa and Tim Kilvington were very helpful in loaning their BBQ and doing the cooking.

Since the last AGM we have held several coffee mornings, usually with a raffle. We held the Easter coffee morning on Easter Saturday 19 April 2025. This year we plan to hold it on Easter Monday, 6 April. A coffee morning in aid of Macmillan raised over £250 – a remarkable amount

We also celebrated the 80th anniversary of VE Day on 8 May, serving soup and sandwiches. We hosted a flower arranging demonstration but this was not well attended. We also held a very successful Italian evening in August and in October there was a Pie Night where a selection of pies was served.

Just before Christmas the Institute was decorated both inside and outside in time for the special Christmas Whist Group evening. The decorations were very festive. Although the weather outside was particularly windy and cold, the decorations survived. As is the

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custom the New Year party at the beginning of January was very enjoyable with a good attendance.

Thanks to all the members of the Committee for all their hard work over the last year, without which we could lose the Institute.”

No questions were raised following the presentation of the report.

6. Lettings

For the period 01 March 2025 to 28 February 2026 we let the Institute on 110 occasions which resulted in income generated for the Institute of £1305. This equates to an average of £11.86 per letting. Whist generates its own income for the Institute and met on 23 occasions.

Additional and overall Institute usage generating its own income for the Institute is as follows:

Whist	23
Entertainment	9
Coffee Morning	5 (including SUP, KFT and Macmillan)
Management	11 (including pre BBQ meeting)
	48

Overall, the Institute was in use on 158 occasions for period 01/03/2024-28/02/2025 giving approximately 43.5% occupancy.

There is projected income from the Circle Dance Group through to June 2026 of £140 which is not included in the figures above.

The Chair presented the Lettings report on behalf of Martyn Donno, who was absent.

“During the financial year 2025/26 both income and lettings figures are marginally down compared to the previous year, with lettings in particular experiencing a reduction of ten units. This decline serves to highlight the volatile and vulnerable nature of the letting market.

There are several factors influencing these results. Firstly, the Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Programme, although ongoing, is slowing. This in turn has had an impact on demand for letting both at home and in the wider area. Secondly, sustaining regular participation in activities such as badminton, pickleball and whist is crucial, but in common with many groups membership can be challenging. It is here fluctuations in attendance can exert additional pressures on letting performance. The Circle Dance Group are not immune to these fluctuations, further affecting overall income.

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Nonetheless, a more initiative-taking approach, such as bulletins, newsletters and of course wi-fi to promote the Institute is expected to yield positive results. There is optimism that these promotional efforts will help the Institute's fortunes to grow, benefiting not only parishioners but also those beyond the bounds of our parish.

The increased popularity of the quiz nights and the growing interest in skittle evenings, together with the well established whist, much of which enjoy participation from outside of the parish, suggests to me opportunities for wider promotions. This will likely help to maintain the relevance of the Institute and extend its benefits to a wider section of the community. However I do caution not to expect an unrealistic turn of events due largely to the limited geographical area we serve.

On a personal note I would like to take this opportunity to extend my grateful thanks to all members of the Committee, who have always stood ready to support me in my role as Letting Secretary."

Following presentation of the Lettings report, Barry Willis suggested that we might look into setting up a Skittles League. This was thought to be a good idea and needs looking into further to see how it would work in practice. The Bainbridge WI have expressed interest in using the Institute at some point and the West Burton Art Group may also be a possibility. There was also mention of a beauty demonstration. Rachel will liaise with Sue regarding advertising events etc in the Upper Wensleydale Newsletter.

7. **Treasurer's Report**

Karen Raven presented the Treasurer's Report on behalf of the Treasurer, who was absent.

"The accounts for 2024-2025 were submitted to the Charity Commission on time. The draft accounts for this financial year end have been prepared and will be submitted to Nigel Chorley for review within the next few weeks and any findings shared with the trustees. The funds stand at £22,549 as at 1 March 2026. The deficit for the financial year is £1440.48; this is attributed to the continued rising costs of utilities, one-off payments for items such as the speakers, microphone, storage shed, "Tommy", Christmas Tree, plants etc, plus free events such as Carole Hudson's leaving party. However, our bank account remains healthy. No concerns are raised at this time.

Banking: The Virgin Bank account is running smoothly. Internet banking is easy to use and most people are happy to be paid or refunded by BACS, which means less petty cash needs to be held. There have been initial discussions about moving a large part of these funds (£20,000) into a savings account once the new Treasurer is in situ, leaving approximately £2000+ in the current account. Apart from £100 in petty cash being held, all other cash has been paid into the bank.

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Lettings and other income: The regular use from the Circle Dance group, the Thornton Rust Badminton group, the Pickleball group, and the Whist group have generated approximately 46% of this financial year's income for the Institute (last year was 64%). A special thanks, once again, to the Whist group who have raised £846 for the institute in this period. Efforts should continue to be made to try and encourage other groups to use the Institute regularly. The increased advertising via Facebook and WhatsApp, as well as the quarterly Newsletter and updates in the Bulletin, will hopefully help in this regard. The Institute received £38.53 from donations.

Events: Events have been well attended for the most part, with some generating a profit and others small losses. Pricing for events has remained reasonable but it may be an idea to look at increasing the prices slightly for some events and for others perhaps reducing the amount of refreshments provided and shopping at Tesco/Aldi rather than Campbells (apart from for meat). This year we have only had one coffee morning to benefit the Institute. We should try and have a few more in the new financial year.

Utilities and insurance: The cost of utilities continues to be high as a result of the increased price of oil and electricity. The cost of the Wi-Fi has remained steady at £17.80 per month and appears to have sufficient data for our needs. The annual renewal of the insurance (with the same insurance company) has increased slightly but has the level of cover required.

Repairs and maintenance: This year's expenditure on repairs and maintenance has been minimal. In addition to the regulatory annual requirements - boiler service, electrical PAT testing (undertaken March 2026), fire inspection, a repair was carried out to repair the gents toilet. The outside storage shed was purchased and the flower tubs replanted. The inner doors were taken to be treated prior to eventually repainting them. We were not charged for that work.

I would like to wish the new Treasurer every success in the role and look forward to supporting future Institute events, as well as continuing to look after the Institute grounds, if required."

It was agreed to store the documentation for previous years' accounts in the loft.

8. Election of Committee Members

All existing members of the Committee elected to remain, with the exception of Karen and Paul Raven (Secretary and Treasurer respectively).

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9. Election of Officers

Chair: Sue Duffield Proposed: Tim McQueen Seconded: Barry Willis

Treasurer: Vanessa Proposed: Rachel Newall Seconded: Rob Newall
Kilvington

Secretary: Rob Newall Proposed: Sue Duffield Seconded: Tim McQueen

Martyn Donno confirmed he was happy to remain as **Lettings Secretary**.

Sheryl and Barry Willis were co-opted on to the Committee.

Sheryl Willis Proposed: Sue Duffield Seconded: Rachel Newall

Barry Willis Proposed: Rob Newall Seconded: Marjorie Spence

10. AOB

Doors: Once the doors are dried out, Barry Willis offered to repaint them, unless a decision is made to have them completely stripped.

Outside Space: Tim McQueen suggested that thought should be given on how best the outside space can be utilised. It was agreed to discuss this further at the regular Committee meeting.

Committee Meetings: It was suggested that regular Committee meetings could be held in an afternoon, rather than evenings in the future. To be discussed and agreed at the next Committee meeting.

11. Date of Next Meeting

AGM 2027: Thursday 25 March at 7pm

The meeting closed at 7:45pm.

I agree that this is a true account of the above meeting:

Signed..... Sue Duffield (Chair)