

Report to Members 2025



Introduction by Chairperson Simon Berry

What a year this has been for the Hull Community Pub Society!

When we met last year, we had a vision, a plan, and a huge amount of determination. Since then, that vision has become a reality. Over the past twelve months, we have not only secured the future of The New Clarence, but we have also brought it back into use as Hull's first community-owned and run pub. That is something every member, supporter and volunteer should feel incredibly proud of.

2025 has been about turning ownership into action. We completed the purchase of the building, carried out major works to make it safe and fit for use, reinstated key areas including the kitchen and cellar, improved the energy efficiency of the property, and made important progress on accessibility through the installation of an accessible toilet and a lift to the first floor. These are not small achievements. They are major steps forward in transforming The New Clarence into the welcoming and inclusive community asset we always believed it could be.

Perhaps the biggest milestone of all was reopening the pub in September. Seeing people back through the doors, using the space, and enjoying the atmosphere of The New Clarence again was a wonderful moment. It showed just how much can be achieved when a community comes together with a shared purpose.

Of course, there is still more to do. The function room remains a major part of our longer-term plans, and the coming year will be about building on the momentum we have created. But this report shows just how far we have come in a relatively short time.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Society over the past year. Your commitment, encouragement and belief in the project have made all of this possible.



Simon Berry PLY
Chairperson of
The Hull Community Pub Society

About the Hull Community Pub Society

The Hull Community Pub Society was formed with a single, vital purpose: to save The New Clarence pub so that it could continue to be an inclusive community space for all. Since its inception, our Society has grown to include 531 members. We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to all our members for joining us on this journey.

Hull has a proud history of co-operative ventures, and we are excited to contribute to the revival of this spirit of collaboration. Our committee members and volunteers have worked tirelessly to make this dream a reality over the past year. Our members have supported the pub by coming back as customers since it reopened.

The Hull Community Pub Society is a community benefit society (CBS) which is a not-for-profit business model which sees any profits generated either used to maintain the building or to further community activities.

Governance

The Hull Community Pub Society was established in January 2024. It is the first Community Benefit Society (CBS) in Hull and currently has 531 members. At the point of the 2025 AGM the Society had just over 300 members so the new support in the last year has been considerable.

The Society has an asset lock which means that its members cannot profit from the business. They are entitled to a 3% interest payment on the community shares purchased at the discretion of the management committee. Members will be given the option of whether they want to receive this or leave the money in the pub when it becomes profitable. Any profits can only be used to maintain the building or support community activities.

The Society is registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. It operates on a one-member-one-vote democratic basis and exists for community benefit rather than private profit. An annual general meeting must be held each year at which members receive reports on the operations of the business, the accounts and have a say in how the pub is run. Also at the AGM the members elect members of the management committee.

The management committee has 9 members including a chairperson, treasurer, secretary and six ordinary members. The committee meets regularly and has oversight of the way the pub is being run as well as being responsible for any fundraising and development work on the building.

Two management committee members resigned during the year. The Society expresses heartfelt thanks to Ian Ibbetson and Jeff Clarkson for everything they did to enable us to re-open The New Clarence. Dave Young was co-opted by the committee to act as Treasurer following Jeff's resignation from that position.

Activities Undertaken by the Society in 2025

This has been a pivotal year for our Society, marked by significant milestones:

- Purchase of The New Clarence (February 2025)
- Reinstated the kitchen and cellar
- Installed an accessible toilet on the ground floor and lift to the first floor
- Improved energy efficiency of the building by improving insulation and installing LED lighting
- Undertaken structural works to make the building safe
- Reopened on 2nd September 2025

These accomplishments are a testament to the collective efforts of our members, committee, and supporters.

Accessibility. We are committed to making The New Clarence the most accessible pub and community space in the city centre by introducing the following facilities:

- A fully accessible toilet has been installed on the ground floor
- A lift has been installed
- A second accessible toilet will be installed upstairs to serve the function room
- The upper floor will be levelled to create step-free access



Simon going up to the function room for the first time

Energy Efficiency. The Hull Community Pub Society believes in the necessity to reduce carbon emissions and, as part of its membership of Oh Yes! Net Zero, has produced a carbon reduction plan. Throughout the renovations, we have prioritised energy efficiency and have an agreed target, signed off by the management committee, to reduce the energy to reduce the carbon footprint of the building by 50% during the renovation phase and will monitor the actual emissions from the outset.

Property and Security Matters. During the year, the pub experienced two security-related incidents. The first was an attempted burglary, during which no access was gained and no losses were incurred. The second involved a burglary, resulting in a small financial loss. Following these incidents, the Chairperson and Bar Manager have reviewed existing arrangements and implemented additional measures to enhance the security of the premises. The Committee will continue to monitor the effectiveness of these improvements.

The Committee is also aware of a tree located adjacent to the beer garden wall, which over time may affect the structural integrity of the boundary. Steps are being taken in liaison with the neighbouring property owner and the Council to ensure that the wall remains safe and that any necessary remedial action is undertaken in a timely manner.

Update on Finances

Pub Trading Performance

Our business plan envisaged that we would break even during the first four months of operations. The accounts for year to 31 December 2025 show a loss before tax of £1,819. It is worth noting that the pub made a gross profit of £20,083, being the turnover generated from sales, less staffing costs and costs of goods sold. This is in line with what was reported at the all-Members meetings held in the Autumn and New Year.

We effectively only had four trading months, due to the December 31st close of our financial year. We incurred staffing and mobilisation costs for a longer period prior to trading, and initially had curtailed opening hours for the first few weeks due to the finishing of building works. Given these factors, this minor deficit variance, was to be expected, but the pub is hitting its targets month on month and trading in surplus.

The pub incurred some large one-off expenses in 2025 related to the purchase, renovation and reopening of the building as detailed in the following table. The Community Ownership Fund Grant included £50k for revenue spend which covered these costs.

Revenue Spend Associated with Purchase and Renovation Covered by COF Revenue Grant

Source	Amount
Fees (building regs)	£0.5k
Insurance	£10k
Operations (bookkeeping, storage, admin)	£2k
Professional Fees (conveyancing, accounting)	£19k
Project Management	£9k
Surveys (RICS, Structural, Asbestos, CIBSE)	£9k
Total	£50k

Other administrative expenses incurred relating to the operation of the pub (rates, utilities, general repairs, payroll, epos, loan interest) are being covered by the income being generated.

Capital Costs for the Purchase and Renovations

The New Clarence project is being undertaken in three phases:

1. Purchase the Building (complete)
2. Renovate the bar area and landlords flat so the pub could reopen (complete)
3. Renovate the function room (pending)

In last year’s report we expected the capital costs for all three phases to be as follows:

Planned Cost of Buying and Renovating the Building

Item	Cost
Phase 1 Buying the pub	£250k
Phase 1 Additional payment to Kingston Apartments	£50k
Phase 2 Renovation of the pub	£210k
Phase 2 Reinstate kitchen	£25k
Phase 2 Installation of cellar equipment	£35k
Phase 3 Making the 1st floor and function room accessible	£70k
Total Costs	£640k

So the total cost of phase 1 was £300k, the expected cost of phase 2 was £270k and the expected cost of phase 3 was £70k.

The committee took a decision in the summer of 2025 to prioritise reopening the pub over completing phase 3. This was to enable the pub to begin generating income while plans for the function room are developed.

A sub-committee has been established to produce detailed plans for phase 3. The costs for phase 3 are going to be higher than the original plan because there are some unanticipated costs including:

- Replacing the roof and gutters
- The windows require significant renovation or replacement
- The function room itself is now four times as large as originally expected due to the steelwork being installed and the removal of a wall.

The plans for the function room are covered in the next section.

The following table shows the actual costs of phases 1 and 2:

Actual Cost of Buying and Renovating the Pub+Flat

Item	Cost
Phase 1 Buying the pub	£250k
Phase 1 Additional payment to Kingston Apartments	£50k
Phase 1 Total	£300k
Phase 2 Refurbishment GF - Building (Phase 1)	£73k
Phase 2 Electrics, Fire and Intruder Alarm System	£20k
Phase 2 Cellar Cooling	£ 4k
Phase 2 Temporary Roof Repairs	£ 7k
Phase 2 Kitchen including Venting & Equipment	£17k
Phase 2 Equipment - Bar Area	£18k
Phase 2 Steel Work & Floor Restructuring	£54k
Phase 2 Refurbishment of Flat	£86k
Phase 2 Total	£279k
Phase 1 and 2 Total	£579k

The actual cost of phase 2 was £279k (£9k over plan). Some of the costs were much lower than expected, for example the cellar and kitchen set up, because the Bar Manager was able to use contacts to get some equipment for free and we bought second hand instead of new kitchen equipment. Other costs, such as the steel work and roof repairs, had not been anticipated at the time when capital plan was presented at the last AGM.

The following table contains the sources of capital funding that the Society received in order to fund the above works:

Sources of Capital Funding to Date

Source	Amount
Community Ownership Fund Grant (Capital)	£250k
Community Shares Sold	£248k
Grants Received for Energy Efficiency Works	£25k
Members Bridging Loans	£55k
Total	578k

We mentioned in the last annual report that the committee was exploring getting a loan. The committee agreed to proceed with that and applied for a £100k loan from Community and Co-operative Finance (CCF). However, the funds were not available in time for the renovations that had to be completed in the summer of 2025 to enable the pub to reopen. Three members therefore made bridging loans of £20k, £20k and £40k respectively to the Society on the understanding that they would be repaid when the CCF loan came through. We are expecting to receive the loan in the near future. This approach ensured that works could proceed without delay and avoided additional costs that would have arisen from postponing the reopening of the pub.

Members should note that when the CCF loan is received a £100k charge will be placed on the building for the term the loan is being repaid (10 years).

Independent Financial Review and Assurance

At the 2025 AGM, members voted to waive the requirement for a formal audit. The Committee carefully considered this position during the year, particularly in light of the scale of income and expenditure, and the use of short-term bridging loans from members to support the timely reopening of the pub.

Having explored the option of undertaking a full audit, we obtained estimates which indicated a cost in the region of £10,000. The Committee concluded that this would not represent the best use of the Society's funds at this stage of its development.

Instead, the Committee appointed Phoenix Accountancy Business & Consultancy Ltd to carry out an independent review of the Society's accounts and the draft report to members. Their role was to provide assurance to members that the financial information presented is accurate, clear and a fair reflection of the Society's activities during the year.

We are pleased to report that the independent accountant has confirmed that the accounts and this report provided to members meet these expectations.

As part of the independent review, the Committee has been provided with guidance on how we can enhance the presentation of grant funding and related disclosures in future accounts to improve clarity, transparency and alignment with best practice. These recommendations will be implemented in the 2026 accounts.

Looking Forward to 2026 - Function Room Renovations

Reopening the function room and installing a lift and accessible toilet has always been a fundamental part of the vision for The New Clarence. Unfortunately, we did not have enough money to renovate the function room in 2025 and prioritised completing structural works and reopening the pub and kitchen.

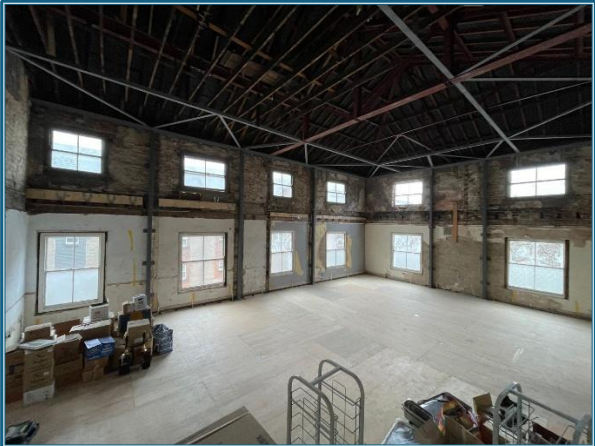
The following two images show how the function room used to look.



The previous owners of the building ripped out the ceiling/floor in between the first and second floors. Our excellent architectural technician, Paul, came up with the idea of taking out the wall that you can see on the left-hand side of the above picture. The space on the other side of the wall used to form part of the landlords flat. As the flat had also been ripped out we had the opportunity to remodel it into a maisonette across the first and second floors of one end of the building. This enabled us to create a new function room that is double the width and height of the old one.

The image to the right shows what the function room looks like now. The grey steel work that we had to have installed is visible vertically in between the windows and in a zig zag configuration below the roof.

Committee members and volunteers have been hard at work generating plans for how the space should be configured and getting costings for the works.



A fully-costed business case is being put together that articulates the vision for the New Clarence Function room. This will help us to generate the funds we need in order to complete the works. The following AI generated image gives an impression of how the space could end up looking.



AI generated image of what the function room could look like

We had originally anticipated that the renovation of the function room to cost in the region of £70k. At that stage our plans for it were more modest (the function room was a quarter of the size), we hadn’t anticipated that the roof and gutters would need replacing and that the windows required attention. With the roof replacement and our more ambitious plans for the function room we now expect the cost in the region of £260k and are seeking to fund it via the following sources:

Source	Amount
Further Community Share Offer	£10-£100k
Hull City Council Grant (tbc)	£130k
Loan	£45k*
Further Grant Funding Will be Sought	tbc
Total	£185k-£275k

*The Society is expecting to receive a £100k loan during the spring of 2026. £55k of this will be used to pay off members bridging loans and £45k will be available for the renovation of the function room.

We will undertake the work in phases, starting off with replacing the roof and gutters and the further phases will be undertaken as and when the funds are raised.

Note that the further shares will be made available to existing members first and then to members of the public

Thank You to our Funders and Supporters

We are incredibly grateful for the support and funding we have received from Plunkett UK, Co-Operatives UK, Power to Change, Community Shares Booster Fund, HM Government, Co-Operative and Community Finance.

CO-OPERATIVES UK

**Community
Shares**



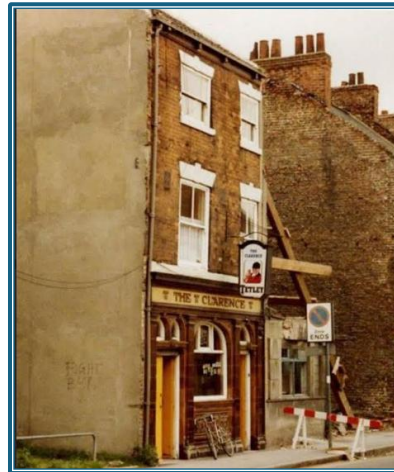
**Booster
Fund**



**Funded by
UK Government**

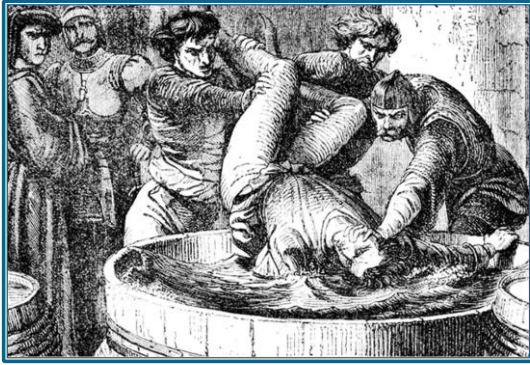
History of The New Clarence

The New Clarence has a rich and fascinating history. The original Clarence pub, which stood on the other side of Charles Street, was demolished in the late 1980s. Both the original Clarence and the site of The New Clarence appear in the background of the market scene in the 1985 "Only Fools and Horses" Christmas special, *To Hull and Back*.



The New Clarence is not a traditional street-corner pub. It comprises four buildings—10 John Street and 77, 78, and 79 Charles Street—believed to have been built in the 1850s. Initially, the Charles Street buildings housed shops on the ground floor with flats above. During the First World War, these buildings were converted into a Co-operative grocery store. After the store's closure in the 1960s, the buildings served as meeting and education rooms for the Co-operative Society until the 1980s.





In 1989, the building was converted into a pub following the demolition of the original Clarence. We believe that The New Clarence is the only pub with this name. Its predecessor was named after the Duke of Clarence, the brother of Richard III, who was executed for treason. Legend has it that as a royal, he was allowed to choose the manner of his execution and opted to be drowned in a barrel of Madeira wine.

The New Clarence pub closed its doors in June 2023 after being sold to developers who wanted to turn it into accommodation. The Community rallied together and the Hull Community Pub Society was formed and bought back the pub.

The New Clarence re-opened in September 2025 and is Hull's first community owned and run pub



Thank you to everyone who has been part of this incredible journey so far. Together, we have not just saved a pub, we are creating a vibrant, sustainable community hub that will serve Hull for generations to come.