

Chairman's Report

19th May 2022 AGM

1 Opening remarks

The period since our 2021 AGM has clearly been dominated by the Covid pandemic. Understandable concern by potential hirers impacted our bookings even when we were not under statutory lockdown. We were in fact required to close for many months other than for very limited prescribed activities.

Nevertheless, during this period we and other halls were supported by the local government in recognition of the vital service we provide in normal times to our local community. I am pleased, therefore, to report that we kept our financial head above water through this period and our regular bookings are now returning to much more like normal.

We have also had some personnel changes over this time and earlier in the year, following the retirement of the incumbent, we were pleased to appoint Sarah Kearney as our new Booking Secretary and meeting secretary, and she is with us this evening.

Nathalie Soanes, who had served us well since the opening of our new hall, also decided to retire.

The final point I would like to draw attention to is the free use of the Hall that is being offered to refugees hosted by our community to have a common meeting place.

The other points of note that you should be aware of are covered in the specific reports which we will therefore move on to.

2 Approval of 2021 AGM Minutes

Chairman to seek approval.

3 Our Structure

3.1 Legal Structure

Our Minutes of the 2019 AGM explained the legal structure under which we have been running since then.

3.2 Committee Structure

Our current committee (Trustees and non-Trustees) comprises the following members:

Bob Bixby
Liz Bixby
Peter Gosney
Martina Lopez-Portillo

Helen McBeath
Ann Henman
Geoff Mills (Chair)
David Scott
John Stradling
John Walsh (Treasurer)

All of whom will resign at this meeting as required by our Constitution. All have said that they would be prepared to stand for re-election and Dr. Helen McBeath has prepared to stand as a Trustee (from her past role as a Friend).

And we would very much welcome nominations for other potential candidates.

Sarah Kearney is paid secretary to the Committee but not a member

I would like to give thanks to both my current colleagues and to past committee members who have given freely of their time and experience to help us get to where we are today with this most successful new facility. I would also like to thank those wider members of our support community whose commitment to helping us we would not be able to operate effectively. On a personal level, I am particularly grateful for the regular help from Adrian Hampshire in keeping our website fresh and up to date. His input is almost weekly, and his response is always immediate. Not only do we have the best hall in Oxford but supported by the best website.

We have been supported on a commercial basis by a very able Bookings Secretary, Tim Pullen, and Facilities Manager Nathalie Soanes both of whom have chosen to retire since our last AGM. I thank both for their commitment and support and wish them well in their retirement.

We also have several villagers whom we call on from time to time for additional support. They know who they are, and I thank them for their continuing help.

Indeed, as a village, we are very fortunate with the extent of community support we receive.

4 The CIO "Objects"

I would like to share with you, as we did at the last AGM, the Objects defined in our CIO Constitution that govern our activities. I have underlined some key provisions. From this, you can see that we have very wide discretion so long as we respect these Objects.

The objects of the CIO are to establish and run a village hall and to promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Parish of Beckley and Stowood ("area of benefit") without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, nationality, race or political, religious or other opinions the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the conditions of life of the said inhabitants.

Reference to these Objects was made in determining what might be the appropriate support that we could give to refugees hosted by villagers to ensure that we did not stray outside of the constitution approved by the Charities Commission.

5 Balancing Commercial Activities and Village Support

So, we are definitely not a commercial business. We are bound by law not to make a profit and we are bound by our Objects to act in your best interests. However, we can't deliver those objects without income and so permitting some limited commercial use of the Hall is important to us. Nevertheless, we fully recognise that we must balance income generation against the potential impact to residents and particularly near neighbours of making too aggressive a use of the Hall for commercial reasons. We continue to turn away business that might, in our judgment, cause an unacceptable impact on near neighbours. We don't always get this right and our hirers don't always respect our hire terms, so this remains an ongoing challenge but one we take very seriously.

6 Booking Report

Our most recent booking report for April is available. Our Booking Secretary – Sarah Kearney – our thanks to her for her support to us in moving to a proprietary booking system (Hallmaster) that is already paying dividends in terms of the reliability of our booking and invoicing arrangements. I would draw your attention to the following:

- you can see how important to us is the commercial income to allow us to hold down charges for village activities. Of our total annual income of **£18,210.52** for the past twelve months, some **166** were from commercial and non-village hires.
- Our income has grown **28%** over the past year so far
- We have supported **29** village hires
- The leisure activities in the Hall include:

Yoga, Table Tennis, Pilates, Spinning and Weaving, Dancing/Music (for which we have a Music License), Art Group, Bells, and Village Events like Ceilidhs, Burns Night, Guy Faulkes night, etc.

7 Collaboration with other village groups

We have a good working relationship with the Church and the Pub and aim to focus on collaborative and non-competing activities. We have shared equipment with both.

8 150 Club

We continue to be indebted to the 150 Club for their past financial support and to Dave Drew who has been running it since our last meeting. The 150 Club support has enabled us to purchase our new projection and sound equipment

and we are now building future reserves in the Club for the purchase of a dishwasher for which space provision was made in the Hall but due to a tight final budget one was not originally purchased.

9 Landlord's Support

Finally, I would like to thank our landlord (the Parish Council) for the ongoing investments that the PC continues to make in our support.