

Beckley Hall AGM 20th May 2024

Chairman's Report

1 Legal Structure

Our Minutes of the 2019 AGM explained our legal structure under which we have been running since then. However, it is worth noting that on moving to this new hall we changed our past structure from a traditional trustee model where the legal responsibility rests with the trustees to a then-new model of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation which is more akin to the limited liability company but regulated by the Charities Commission and thus provides a safeguard to the managing trustees. Nevertheless we continue to hold trustee insurance. We aim to keep a minimum number of trustees on our Committee with the other Committee members being non-trustees which can be a good way to gently engage with our activities without concern for the potential legal responsibility until some experience is gained.

2 Committee Structure

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

Liz Bixby
*Peter Gosney
*Julia Hanson-Abbott
*Martina Lopez-Portillo
*Chris Marsden
*Helen McBeath
*Ann Henman
*Geoff Mills (Chair)
* Paige Newmark
*John Stradling
*John Walsh (Treasurer)

All of whom will resign at this meeting as required by our Constitution. Those marked * have said that they would be prepared to stand for re-election.

I and we would very much welcome nominations for other potential candidates.

I would like to give thanks both to 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 facility which in the past year celebrated its fifth birthday. I would also like to thank those wider members of our support community without whose commitment to help us we would not be able to operate effectively. On a personal level I am particularly grateful for the many years of support from our past committee member, Bob Bixby, who retired in the last year and for Liz Bixby who is standing down at this meeting. .

We are supported on a commercial basis by a very able Bookings Secretary, Mel Green, Facility Manager, Neil Appleby, and Cleaner, Vicky Widdowson and I thank them for their ongoing commitment and sterling service.

Whilst not a committee member Adrian Hampshire was responsible over the past five years for our website and expressed a few years back a gentle desire to retire but whilst we looked for a successor continued to support us including in finding his successor who is Simon Davies and work for us on a commercial basis. Should anyone need web support I can recommend him.

We also have a number of 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.

1 The CIO "Objects"

I would again like to share with you 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.

5 Balancing Commercial Activities and Village Support

It is worth repeating, from previous AGMs, that we are definitely not a commercial business. We are bound by law not to make a profit beyond the prudent level to maintain our operational viability 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 local residents and particularly near neighbours of making too aggressive a use of the Hall for commercial reasons. We have indeed turned away business because of concerns about impact to near neighbours. Indeed I am pleased to report again that after some early teething difficulties we have had few adverse comments from the village although some constructive suggestions.

6 Booking Report

- Our level of bookings has returned to pre-Covid levels (but our expenditure has increased faster than our income which is something we are watching closely)
- Commercial income continues to allow us to hold down charges for village activities. Of our total annual income of £31,486.22 for the past twelve months some £23,050.00 was from commercial and non-village hires.
- Our income has grown 20% over the past year
- We have supported 266 village hires (Including private bookings plus regular bookings)
- The leisure activities in the Hall include:

Art, Table Tennis, Pilates, Sewing, Spinning and Weaving, Bells, Oxford Guild and Village Events like Guy Faulkes night.

7 Brief Reports on Regular Hall Activities (covered under prior Village Meeting)

8 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.

9 150 Club

We are indebted to the 150 Club for their past financial support and to Dave Drew who runs it for us and would encourage any new (or old) residents who are not yet members to contribute and Dave is here tonight with the relevant forms. The 150 club has funded our sound system, defibrillator and a dishwasher. We are building a reserve to deal with the unsightly waste bins at the hall entrance. As well as being an eyesore they attract unwanted third party waste dumps which in the past have included hazardous waste. The 150 club will help fund an attractive enclosure.

10 Landlord's Support

I would like to thank our landlord (the Parish Council) for the ongoing investments that the PC has made since we took over and their continuing active support to the work of our Committee.

11 Hall Name Change

You will have noticed throughout that I have referred to Beckley Hall rather than Beckley Village Hall. The Committee has agreed this change of our trading name but the legal name is unchanged as Beckley and Stowood Village Hall CIO.

