



## **Westleton Village Hall: Charity No 1164038**

### **Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2024**

**Thursday 6 June 2024 at 5 pm**

#### **1. Present:**

John Shepherd (Chair, elected trustee)	Debbie Shepherd
Francesca Bartlett (nominated trustee)	Barbara Buckley
Sue Brett (nominated trustee)	Hillas Smith
Dilys Hall (Archivist, ex officio trustee)	Linda Ginn
Barry Banks (nominated trustee)	Tom Ash
Carole Homersham (nominated trustee)	John Ash
Andy Gilmour (elected trustee)	Debby Turner
Annie Groves (Centre Manager)	Linda Gilmour
Sue Evans	Jean Murrell
Mark Evans	Ivor Murrell

#### **2. Apologies**

Liz Barton (appointed trustee), Nikki Feltham (Elected Trustee), Keith Barton, Mike Brett, Alan Boyce

#### **3. Minutes of the 2023 AGM**

The minutes of the AGM held on 3 June 2023 had been circulated and were agreed as a correct record; there were no matters arising

#### **4. Treasurers report**

Sue Brett (treasurer) thanked Liz Barton for preparing the formal accounts, which were circulated, and Brian Boulanger for auditing them. Total income for the year £58,326.58, an increase of approximately £16,000 from the previous year, and our expenditure was £58,997.75, an increase of about £21,000 from 21/22. We finished the year in a satisfactory position with a very small deficit of £585.

Hall lettings (mostly regular weekly/monthly activities) accounted for over a third of our income (largely thanks to Annie's promotional efforts). Activities include, music, art, soup and pud, various sports, French conversation, health and well being activities, WI, gardeners, Camera Club, and the model railway group. The Hall is also now a popular venue for private events, birthday parties etc. The pricing structure gives reduced rates for Westleton residents.

Regular "Hall for All" events (organised by trustees and volunteers) accounted for nearly another 20%, with thanks to all of the volunteers who help to put these events together, and to everyone who supports them. The main events during the year were: French Day, Book Fair, Jumble sale, Irish night, Christmas Fair, Music with fish and chips



evening, as well as the perennial Wild Flower festival and craft fair, run in collaboration with the church, and numerous other (smaller) events such as quiz nights, barrow markets, talks and food!

Other significant areas of income have been the foyer, bringing in about 11% of the annual income, with thanks to all our volunteer foyer hosts. Also we have benefitted this year from interest on our reserves following the bank interest rate rises. Lastly, we have received over £2000 in donations, and have claimed nearly £300 in gift aid, and received a final payment of £3820 from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Our biggest expenditure is the Centre Manager's salary, but since Annie is also our most valuable asset this is not problematic ! Our other large outgoings are for electricity, accounting for nearly £7000 during the year. Our previous (lowish) contract rate finished in December, so unfortunately that figure will be even higher this year.

Cleaning is also a significant expense (about £4000 a year). However, as the Hall is used more, so the cleaning inevitably needs to increase. Also in line with increased use of the Hall, our repairs, maintenance etc costs have increased, but it is important to keep the Hall both safe for our users, and an attractive environment. The enhancement in the foyer with the new wall cupboards has been well received. Other significant expenses are the non negotiables – insurances, licences, rates, utilities etc. Moving outside, we have made repairs to the flint wall, and we have also nearly finished a project to create a lovely courtyard area in memory of Tony Ingram, with a new bench to appear very shortly, and a formal inauguration scheduled for the end of June.

Tom Ash asked why the Hall for All events expenditure was so high, and whether the events are really profitable. Sue explained that Art Group Sales (money received on their behalf at their exhibition) of £884, the Church's share of the Wildflower Festival net proceeds (£556)<sup>1</sup> and Calendar printing costs of £804 were all included in this, although these were not strictly event expenses. This was not ideal and she planned to make some changes to the accounting in future to represent our new activities more informatively.

## 5. Chair's report

It had been (at last) the first completely normal year since the end of Covid restrictions, so that we have been able to have a full programme of events for the first time since before the renovations in 2019 ! Attendances at events have been mostly back to near normal, especially for anything involving food & drink, and various events involving sales. Our finances are in a sound position, and although we had budgeted for a small deficit we have done a bit better than expected. Fundraising via Hall for All events is now part of our normal programme: we aim to run events for fun, or for profit, or (preferably) both ! We have also spent more money on maintenance (e.g. the flint wall restoration) and minor improvements (Foyer furniture, a better printer, and the courtyard development).

Among activities the most successful have been flea markets, craft fairs, quizzes, the book fair, French day, and our (first !) jumble sale. Some (bingo, race night) have not gone so well, and we are sorry that the carpet bowls club has folded, but very grateful for their support over the years and the donation of their equipment to the Hall. We plan to resume a regular programme of talks, and welcome new ventures such as the very popular Tech Table, and upcoming Wimbledon Cream Teas. New ideas are of course always welcome...

The Trustees have been pleased to welcome Carole Homersham (as Camera Club nominee) to their number following the decision last year, but we *still need a Secretary*, and some help in keeping the website up-to-date would be welcome, as would more user group representatives... [NB the Hall is a CIO, and Trustees' liability is

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<sup>1</sup> The outgoing of £556 paid to the Church after the WFF and craft fair would be best described as a balancing payment to finalise the division of the total proceeds between ourselves and the church. Both the church and the Hall received approx £1400 (net) each,



extremely limited]. Brian Boulanger is stepping down from managing the bar for us, with a presentation to him taking place tomorrow to thank him for his hard work for many years. Dilys Hall has also decided to retire as Archivist (and Trustee), and we are grateful to her too for her work in that role. We shall be looking for a successor in due course. Please note that the official inauguration of the Ingram Memorial Courtyard, will take place on Saturday 29 June

Finally thanks to all those who have helped to make this a successful year, including all our users, user groups and visitors, our Volunteers - especially the foyer hosts (the Foyer has become our USP !), Brian for taking care of the planters and other gardening tasks, to Annie for her efficiency, enthusiasm and commitment to keeping everyone happy, and getting new activities up and running, and to the Trustees for their commitment and contributions over the last year. Special thanks also to Chris Simpson & Mike Brett for overseeing maintenance as volunteers, and to Paul Shore & Dave Collins, as our resident Tech Table experts.

Barbara Buckley suggested that it might be possible to save some electricity costs, as sometimes the Hall was actually too warm. Annie explained that the temperature was set to suit most people undertaking different activities, but it was tricky to please all the people all the time.

Jean Murrell asked what the role of Secretary involved, and JS explained that it was setting up and keeping track of meetings, and dealing with a little correspondence, but no longer very time-consuming since most correspondence was online<sup>2</sup>

Jean Murrell asked whether it would be possible to deliver a welcome pack for new residents, and Annie explained that this had sometimes been done but that we could do so more systematically

Ivor asked about whether there were plans for use of our reserve funds, and JS explained that in addition to the resurfacing of the car park, there was a longer-term plan for a rear extension (Improved toilets, a smaller meeting room, interior storage space and a dedicated office for the centre manager).

## **6. Election of Trustees & Officers**

Apart from the resignation of Dilys Hall, the Trustees and Officers were all willing to continue in office, and there were no nominations for new Trustees. The Chair reiterated that the Trustees would always welcome more user group representatives, as well as someone to help in keeping the website up-to-date.

## **7. Any Other Business**

Sue Evans (on behalf of herself and Mark) thanked the Hall and the village for welcoming them so kindly.

Barbara Buckley suggested that we should encourage people to consider leaving legacies to the Hall

Linda Ginn mentioned the marks on the walls from the chairs, and JS remarked that some form of longer-term protection was needed in addition to some redecoration.

## **8. Closing Remarks**

The Chair expressed his thanks to all users, user groups and visitors, for making the Hall a welcoming and vibrant centre of activities in the village, and to all our Volunteers - especially the Foyer Hosts, since the Foyer has become a unique attribute that makes our Hall (and the village) special.

Special thanks also to

- Brian Boulanger for running the bar at events for about 15 years (and doing a lot of gardening as well)
- Annie Groves for her efficiency, enthusiasm and commitment to getting new activities up and running, and making everyone welcome.

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<sup>2</sup> After the meeting Ivor Murrell volunteered to take on the role of Secretary and become a Trustee, and the appointment was subsequently approved *nem con* by the Trustees over email.



**Close:** The Meeting closed at 5-50 pm