



# Lavendon Village Hall AGM

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at  
7.30pm on Thursday, 24 November 2016  
in Lavendon Village Hall

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**Committee Members Present:** *Chairman*–John Salter; *Project Manager*–Stewart Jones; *Treasurer*–Geoff Simmonds; *Secretary*–Nigel Stickells; *Committee Members*–Barbara Adams, Sandra Alexander, Monica Chapman, Sally Emes, John Lay, Laura Murray-Carr, Mick Rutherford.

*Apologies received from:* Hazel Steels.

13 members of the public attended the AGM.

## **Item 1 - Welcome & Apologies for Absence**

1. The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed members of the public to the AGM. The Secretary advised that Hazel Steels was unable to attend and had offered her apologies.

## **Item 2 - Minutes of the last AGM held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

2. Hard copies of the minutes of the last AGM Meeting were available to members of the public and they had also been available on the village web site for the past year. Mr David Tomkins proposed that the minutes be adopted, seconded by Mr David Alexander.

## **Item 3 - Chairman's Annual Report**

3. Hard copies of the Chairman's Annual Report were available for all meeting attendees. The Chairman ran through his written report which highlighted the work of the Committee over the past year. In particular, the Chairman referred to the Strategy proposed by the Trustees earlier in the year and subsequently adopted by the Committee, as follows:

### **(a) Maintaining and improving the fabric of the Hall and its facilities:**

The Chairman reported that Project Diamond Phase 1 is virtually complete: this includes the new plant room, a new frontage with curved canopy and matching curved steps, tarmac dressing, a disabled ramp, a flower planter, new entrance doors, a wider corridor, reconstructed ladies and gents toilets, a wheel-chair accessible toilet, custom-designed kitchen and new bar area. Phase 2 has also been completed: cavity wall insulation and replacement double-glazed windows.

The Chairman said that three more Phases are planned: Phase 3 – a modularised entertainment system; Phase 4 – a car park at the rear of the hall with access lane; and Phase 5 – improvements to the roof and ceiling.

The Chairman also referred to the many sources of generous funding that have enabled the refurbishment work so far, as well as the Grand Opening following the Phase 1

works. The opening included a parade led by the Starlight Samba Band and a ribbon-cutting ceremony by William Tusting.

**(b) Managing the Hall's financial affairs prudently:**

The Chairman said that this aspect of the strategy is in the capable hands of our Treasurer, Geoff Simmonds, who reports monthly on the financial affairs of the hall. One aspect which has been of concern is the ongoing need to cover the running costs with income from our regular hirers; otherwise cash must be transferred from fund-raising income. Lately, however, there have been signs that the situation is improving. It is therefore important for us to attract new users, and as part of that initiative a new pricing structure and simplified T&Cs will soon be introduced.

**(c) Promoting the facilities to potential users:**

The Chairman said that we strive to retain our regular users and attract new users by keeping our rates competitive and T&Cs fair and transparent, capitalising on our new facilities (and now a 5-star kitchen) and ensuring the hall is kept clean. Also, a variety of successful events have been held during the year including 'Lavendon's Got Talent', Afternoon Teas and a Murder Mystery evening. Other events planned for the New Year include a Comedy Evening and a Dinner/Cabaret Evening. Promotion and communication is important in attracting new audiences to the hall and the Chairman listed a variety of media outlets that were now being used to create interest.

**(d) Planning the long-term sustainability of the hall:**

The Chairman said that the aim of this part of the strategy was to ensure that the Village Hall survives and flourishes. He said that we now have an attractive, energy-efficient building, which shouldn't need too much done to it for quite a few years, and the proposed Phases 3, 4 and 5 mean that we are, even now, thinking of continuous improvement.

4. The Chairman went on to thank various committee members for their help over the past year. They included the Secretary, Nigel Stickells, for his part in the administration of the hall; Stewart Jones for successfully driving the main refurbishment project to a conclusion, John Panter as a man-of-all trades with his practical contribution and contacts; Geoff Simmonds for keeping the hall finances well in order month by month; Barbara Adams and Sandra Alexander for their tireless fund-raising work without which the refurbishment work would not be possible; Bev Shaw as Booking Secretary; and also Eddie Adams who has turned his hand to do a wide variety of practical jobs over the past year.

5. The Chairman paid tribute in particular to Stewart Jones who was leaving the Committee to take on a demanding challenge as a Trustee with Age-UK, and also to John Panter who was taking a break for a spell after a long period of demanding practical work. Thirdly, the Chairman also paid tribute to the contribution made by Sandra Alexandra who has been a stalwart on the Fund-raising sub-committee but is now taking things a bit easier. Finally the Chairman thanked all other members of the Committee, the many other volunteers, hirers and supporters in and around the village.

#### **Item 4 - Treasurer's Annual Report**

5. Hard copies of Geoff Simmonds detailed annual Treasurer's report for the year ending 30 September 2016 were available for all meeting attendees. Geoff said that in effect there were two sections to his report. Firstly, the operational side where the aim was to try and ensure that hiring charges and other income would be sufficient to cover the usual outgoings such as utility charges and other routine maintenance costs. This year there had been a small surplus of £490 which was welcome. This had largely come about because bookings income (£7,880) had increased by 7½% year-on-year and running costs were down by 19% mainly due to lower utility charges and boiler maintenance costs.

6. Geoff said that the second aspect of his report concerned the fundraising and expenditure on Project Diamond refurbishment work. Although fundraising income was down this year to some £24k, expenditure was also less, and it had been possible to pay off £6k of loans out of £13k. Income included a generous legacy of £10k, over £11,573 from fundraising events and also £2,784 from the MK Local Giving charity. Geoff said that the retained outstanding loans of £7k may help with the further phases of refurbishment work. Overall, fundraising had produced some £128k over the past 3-4 years of which £111k had been spent on Project Diamond with £17k still available, less £7k in loans.

7. Geoff concluded that the past year had been financially positive and running costs have been reduced. However, Geoff also said that we need to capitalise on our new hall facilities and get more business in to help maintain our edge.

The Chairman thanked Geoff for his very comprehensive reporting over the past year.

#### **Item 5 - Refurbishment Project Manager's Report**

8. Hard copies of the Project Manager's report were available for all meeting attendees. Stewart Jones referred to his report and said that more recently the focus of work had been on getting the frontage of the hall looking right. This work included new doors, front canopy, handrail installation, corridor flooring, curved steps, and a new tarmac surround to the frontage. Some work remained outstanding to finish off the steps with corduroy strips and there one or two minor jobs were outstanding to finish off, costing up to £1.5k. Stewart thanked Eddie Adams for carrying out a number of significant tasks such as painting pipework and more recently removing the internal high level water tank and making good the surrounds.

9. Stewart said that the original refurbishment budget some years ago had been set at £110k and that this budget had been almost wholly retained over that period of time; contractors and tradesmen had held their prices and he estimated some £55k had been saved through the generous help and support of local volunteers. Stewart noted that despite the great variety of works carried out, it had been possible to keep the hall open at all times. A recent meeting with the MK Environmental Officer had resulted in the new kitchen being given a 5-Star hygiene rating, although some additional practical measures would be necessary to ensure the rating is maintained. Despite his leaving the Committee, Stewart still planned to keep a record of utilities and would look after the heating requirements – the latter were proving hard to predict again whilst the benefits of the new cavity wall filling and double glazing were being assessed.

The Chairman thanked Stewart for all his work over the past year and for his report.

## **Item 6 - Statement of Committee Election Procedures & Resignation of the Committee**

10. The Chairman referred to the procedures for the election and appointment of committee members for the forthcoming year. He explained that all Committee members were required to resign at this AGM, though for practical purposes they would if necessary continue to provide support until the next monthly meeting. The Chairman then called on all members of the Committee to resign.

## **Item 7 - Statement of Committee Nominations Advised by Village Organisations**

11. The Secretary read out a list of nominations received from village organisations for their members who were willing to serve on the Village Hall Management Committee for the coming year. The following have been nominated:

The Lavendon Parish Council	Mick Rutherford
The Parochial Church Council	John Lay
The Trustees of the Lavendon Union Chapel	No nomination received
The British Legion (Lavendon Branch)	Vacant, but John Panter observing
The Lavendon Youth Club	Currently non-functioning
The Lavendon Old People's Committee	Sandra Alexander
The Rascals Bowls Club	Sally Emes
The Women's Institute	Hazel Steels
The Lavendon School Governors	Vacant, but Bev Shaw observing
The Lavendon School Association	Laura Murray-Carr
The Lavendon Flower Show Committee	John Salter

## **Item 8 - Election of Six Committee Members**

12. The Chairman said that over the past year there had been five elected members serving on the Committee and these were: Stewart Jones, Monica Chapman, Geoff Simmonds, Barbara Adams, and Nigel Stickells. With Stewart leaving there were now two vacancies. The remaining members confirmed that they were willing to continue to serve on the Committee and they were duly elected: proposed Chris Stickells and seconded Stewart Jones.

13. The Chairman asked if anyone from the public audience wished to be considered for election to the Committee. There were no takers and so it was agreed to leave the two remaining seats vacant.

## **Item 9 - Public Question Time**

14. Referring to the new 5-Star kitchen rating David Alexandra thought it would be a good selling point when advertising to potential new hirers. This was acknowledged and Stewart observed the requirement to introduce some additional kitchen handling procedures such as record-keeping, checking about allergies, bacterial wipes, etc., together with some basic training for those closely involved with food preparation.

15. Ralph Hipkin asked about the surface finish on the entrance steps noting that he had recently slipped on the yellow edging and there were also puddles of water on the steps. Stewart said this was one of the outstanding items to deal with, including the fitting of corduroy strips. He was currently taking advice about how best to get this treatment right.

16. David Alexander also referred to the defibrillator facility and, noting the success of the original training session that was held, asked whether it was a good idea to have another awareness training session. The Chairman pointed out that strictly this was a matter for the Parish Council who had installed the defibrillator and initiated the original training. This and other related matters had been the subject of our last monthly meeting and Mick Rutherford would be pursuing this matter with the Parish Clerk. The Chairman of the Parish Council, David Tomkins, who was present, said that another round of training could be arranged if need be. Mick Rutherford said that he had carried out some research online to see what information was available.

17. Finally, David Tomkins, LPC Chairman, expressed thanks to the VH Chairman and Committee for all their work associated with getting the village hall into good order. This was much appreciated by the Committee.

#### **Item 10 - Any Other Business & Meeting Closure**

18. There being no other business, the Chairman thanked the audience for attending the AGM and closed the meeting at 8.22pm.

Issued by the Secretary: Nigel Stickells, email: [nigel.stickells@btinternet.com](mailto:nigel.stickells@btinternet.com), tel: 01234 712783

VH AGM Minutes - 26 Nov 2015