



# Lavendon Village Hall AGM

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at  
7.30pm on Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023  
in Lavendon Village Hall

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## Committee Members Present:

*Chairman* – John Salter.      *Treasurer* – Geoff Simmonds.      *Secretary* – Nigel Stickells.

*Hon Trustee* – Stewart Jones

*Committee Members:* Michelle Corbett    Sally Emes    Becky Garratt    John Lay

*Apologies:*    Monica Chapman    Rev Richard Lake    Alex Mountcastle

John Panter    Judith Slinn Jones Panter    Toby Stone

*Members of the public present:*    Barbara & Eddie Adams    Richard Green

Trevor & Winifred Knight    Bev Shaw

## Item 1 - Welcome & Apologies for Absence

1. The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all to the AGM. Apologies were noted, as above.

## Item 2 - Minutes of the last AGM

2. The Secretary said that Minutes of the last meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022 have been available on the Village Hall web page at [www.LavendonConnection.Co](http://www.LavendonConnection.Co). The minutes were approved at the Management Committee meeting held on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023. There were no actions outstanding.

## Item 3 - Chairman's Annual Report

3. Hard copies of the Chairman's Annual Report were made available for meeting attendees. His report notes the charitable status of the Village Hall and the four pillars of the Charity's forward strategy adopted over the past year. These are:

- To maintain and improve the fabric of the Village Hall
- To manage the Hall's financial affairs prudently
- To promote the Hall's facilities to existing and potential users
- To address sustainability issues.

[NB In the latest update of the Strategy Plan v7.1, a fifth factor includes the provision of Safeguarding Policies underpinning the general VH strategy.]

4. The Chairman focussed on various key points contained in his Report (which will shortly be available on the VH web site page). The Chairman said that the number of events and bookings for the Hall during 2022/23 were very encouraging, although attendance at the film shows remained disappointing, resulting in an associated loss. However, Rebecca continued to do a sterling job of choosing and hiring films, showing them and providing refreshments.

5. The Chairman said that the disposal of rubbish after significant hall events had proved to be a problem following the newly introduced policy of non-collection for the charity by MKCC. As a result Hirers have since been encouraged to take their rubbish home; John Lay has done

a good job of disposing of all such rubbish at the end of each week. The Chairman also took this opportunity of thanking Eddie Adams for setting such a high standard of hall caretaking and cleanliness prior to his retirement.

6. In terms of improvements to the hall fabric, the Chairman said that a major project to overclad the main hall roof had been completed during the year. This project will not only sustain the roof life and improve weather resistance, but also provide integral insulation that should make a significant difference to our heating energy bills. The project was largely funded from an S106 allocation relating to the Lavendon Fields building development. The Chairman and meeting thanked Stewart for the successful implementation of this project.

7. Although completed since the end of the Hall's financial year, the Chairman also noted the recent refurbishment of the stage flooring which had previously suffered from a woodworm attack. This improvement had also been implemented by Stewart who said that the new surface was suitable for all types of dancing. Stewart was again thanked for achieving a very satisfactory outcome.

8. In concluding, the Chairman observed that after one or two difficult years of management resulting from COVID and its follow-on effects, the Hall had now recovered to a normal 'business as usual' state which was good to see. Nevertheless he said that the time had come for him to bow out of being Chairman of the Committee and that he was therefore giving two months' notice of his intention to do so. Stewart spoke warmly reflecting the Committee's view that we all had much to thank the Chairman for; he had successfully steering the Hall over the past 10 years towards a well invested and successful future. The meeting was in full agreement with Stewart's comments.

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

9. Hard copies of the Treasurer's annual report for the year ending 30 September 2023 were available for meeting attendees. Geoff Simmonds introduced his report by noting that the overall aim is to ensure the hall is financially self-sustaining. Hiring income needed to match our maintenance costs, primarily utilities, which were ever increasing. Fundraising and any grants obtained are normally applied to improvements in the hall fabric and facilities.

10. *Maintenance Costs:* Overall Geoff noted that we had received approx £20k income from bookings including kitchen hire for school meal preparations. This had produced a profit of about £7.6k, although this was largely attributable to the kitchen service which brought in £8k. Because of the inevitable increase in prices, Geoff said that he was now aiming to maintain a healthy working reserve of circa £20k to fend off any future unexpected costs. Geoff observed that a new contract had been put in place with Dustbusters enabling the hall to be kept well cleaned once a week. The cost was the same as our previous caretaking arrangements. Geoff noted that private hirings were up by 54% over last year, but that a longer term booking from one of the dance groups had ended, thereby losing us about £3k income per annum.

11. *Capital Projects:* Geoff noted that the roof re-cladding had largely been covered by the S106 grant mentioned earlier. End of year we had approx £27k available for capital projects, but this is already diminished due to recent stage refurbishment work. Further work on replacing the main hall flooring would necessarily have to come out of another S106 grant that might follow from the recent new Glebe building development.

12. The Chairman thanked Geoff for his detailed reporting over the past year and his work in ensuring that the hall was well sustained financially. The Summary from the Financial Report is reproduced as follows:

### **Summary**

*Income for the year was £25,915 (Exhibit A) as a result of receiving £12,207 from hall bookings, £5,298 from fund raising plus a new income stream providing meals to the village school. The latter realised a further income of £8,124. Total cash in the bank increased from the previous year by 26% to £47,089. Cash reserves at the end of the year were increased to £20,000 to secure future expenses for general maintenance and upkeep of the Hall given the uncertainty of future bookings and the impact of inflationary pressures on costs. The year has seen a significant increase in activity with bookings increasing by 90% on the previous year although this was primarily the result of the new kitchen service.*

*Inevitably running costs increased; up by 50% to £12,955. The reasons include: a replacement noticeboard in the car park; higher caretaker charges; and increased utility charges resulting mainly from increased use of the kitchen.*

*Overall the Hall achieved a profit of £7,661. However, it turns into a small loss of £463 without the additional income from the kitchen.*

### **Fundraising**

*2023 saw fundraising increase slightly from the previous year to £5,298. Matchfunding and Easyfundraising accounted for £2,581 and the rest from organised events. A series of film shows was held which unfortunately resulted in a loss of £302 as a result of poor attendance.*

### **Project Diamond**

*A project to overclad the roof was completed during the year to improve weatherproofing and thermal insulation of the hall. The project was funded from a S106 development grant awarded to the Hall for £25,403. Future plans include replacing the flooring on the stage which will be funded from existing funds and then replacing the flooring of the main hall. The latter will require another development grant.*

### **Users of the Village Hall**

*The largest user of the Hall during 2023 was the new school meal service at £8,124. The next largest users were two out-of-village dance and theatre groups which generated over £5,700 of income for the Hall. Village organisations accounted for around £2,000 of income including the Short Mat Bowling Club and Lavendon Old People's Committee. Most encouragingly, income from private users of the hall increased again from around £2,400 last year to over £3,650 this year. Their numbers have also increased slightly from last year to 48 this year. The trends are encouraging. Let us hope that they will continue in the same direction in the coming year.*

## **Item 5 - Resignation of Current Committee**

13. The Chairman said that at this point in the Agenda all Committee members were required under the 'constitution' to resign, and this they so did.

## Item 6 – Permitted Committee Nominations from Village Organisations

14. The following village organisations are permitted by the ‘Constitution’ to provide a representative for the Committee. Nominations are also shown, although several are subject to review as foot-noted below.

The Lavendon Parish Council	Alex Mountcastle <sup>1</sup>
The Parochial Church Council	John Lay
The Trustees of the Lavendon Union Chapel	Rev Richard Lake <sup>2</sup>
The Royal British Legion (Lavendon Branch)	John Panter <sup>3</sup>
The Lavendon Old People’s Welfare Committee	Judith Slinn Jones Panter <sup>4</sup>
The Rascals Bowls Club	Sally Emes
The Women’s Institute	(disbanded)
The Lavendon School Governors	Rev Richard Lake – has previously offered to cover their interests <sup>5</sup>
The Lavendon School Association	Rebecca Garratt

<sup>1</sup> Currently represented by Toby Stone.

<sup>2</sup> Replacement to be advised.

<sup>3</sup> Unavailable – alternative cover to be advised by John Lay.

<sup>4</sup> Replacement to be advised, possibly Jane Cony.

<sup>5</sup> Representation subject to footnote 2.

15. NB There are currently no Co-opted members of the Committee, although two are permitted.

## Item 7 - Election of Six Committee Members

16. Prior to formal elections, a number of relevant matters were discussed. Firstly, the Chairman reminded the meeting that he planned to retire from the Committee in two months’ time, thereby releasing one elected position. Nevertheless, the Chairman indicated that he was willing to continue helping and involving himself with the Committee. [NB This could reasonably happen in a position as a Co-opted member from end-January 2024].

17. In addition to the Chairman’s planned retirement, Geoff indicated that he also wished to retire in 12 months’ time having given 15 years of service to the VH. The Secretary also said that he planned to retire from the Committee in 12 months’ time. The issue concerning Geoff’s retirement was finding someone suitably skilled with general accountancy and book keeping experience. A number of names were suggested including Lucy Howard, Michelle Lambsden and Liz James. Rebecca undertook to liaise with Lucy Howard to see if she was interested in pursuing the opportunity.

18. In view of the impending retirements, a discussion followed concerning the Flyer previously proposed by Geoff which is aimed at soliciting interest from the community to join in with the Committee. It was generally agreed that more interest should be generated by placing articles and event information in, for example, the Phonebox and other forms of media, although it was also acknowledged that ideally someone should manage our overall PR efforts. Winifred thought that the emphasis should be on ‘*we are here for you*’ and others thought that the well-worn WW1 phrase of ‘*we need you*’ was not striking the right note. It was agreed that the Committee should discuss the Flyer again at the next monthly meeting to be held in January.

19. The meeting moved on to address the elections to the management committee. With the exception of John Salter, the remaining five committee members who were previously elected agreed to continue on the committee. There were no new candidates for election. A proposal was therefore put forward that the following be re-elected:

Monica Chapman, Michelle Corbett, Geoff Simmonds, Toby Stone, and Nigel Stickells.

**Proposed: Stewart Jones. Seconded: Barbara Adams. Unanimously agreed.**

20. John Salter agreed to continue until the end of January 2024, leaving a vacancy thereafter. Bev Shaw agreed to put herself forward as the sixth elected member of the Committee and this was approved by the meeting.

**Proposed: Stewart Jones. Seconded: Rebecca Garratt. Unanimously agreed.**

21. Bev Shaw also agreed that she was willing to become a Trustee for the Village Hall. The Secretary agreed to liaise with Bev to resolve the paperwork needed by the Charity Commission.

22. With the retirement of John Salter as Chairman the associated position becomes vacant. Rebecca expressed a willingness to take up the role and this was welcomed by the meeting.

**Proposed: Stewart Jones. Seconded: Michelle Corbett. Unanimously agreed.**

#### **Item 8 - Public Question Time**

23. There were no additional questions from the public. However, Bev Shaw took the opportunity of thanking John Salter for his enormous contribution towards the smooth running of the Village Hall and its Committee. Bev's comments were warmly echoed by others in the meeting.

#### **Item 9 - Any Other Business & Meeting Closure**

24. There being no other business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending the AGM, and the meeting closed at approx 8.30pm.