

# Minutes of the Asby Village Hall Annual General Meeting Held on the 30th March 2023 in Asby Village Hall

**Present:** Jane Close, Elizabeth Parkin, Geoff Johnson, Kay Dorset, Steve Alderson, Graham Parkin, Jamie Goddard, Karen Royle

Seven members of the public, including Gina Aston who will be the new user rep for the cinema (Karen Royle will take over the PCC rep position from Pam Cowey).

**Item 1. Apologies.** No apologies received before the meeting.

**Item 2. Minutes of the previous meeting.** The previous AGM minutes, dated 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022, were agreed as a true record.

**Item 3. Matters Arising.** The only matter arising from the previous AGM was the proposal to begin a table tennis group by Reg Dorset. This group has been meeting regularly and is well supported.

**Item 4. Chairman's Report.** Jane Close thanked all members of the committee and volunteers for their hard work over the past year. In particular the working group who have put in many hours revising the constitution to make it fit for the 21st century.

Lots of work has happened over the past year including the weatherproofing and redecorating of the supper room, the installation of new toilets. Jane encouraged those who have not yet seen them to have a look before leaving the hall. Future plans and priorities for the coming year are been pulled together.

Geoff Johnson added particular thanks to Graham Parkin for all his time and effort in securing grants to enable the refurbishments to happen this year.

**Item 5. Treasurers Report.** Elizabeth Parkin shared the accounts for the financial year 2022/23 along with a list with more details of income by user group. She noted that this was the first full normal year since Covid.

Items of note included the use of capital from reserves for:

- New projector which cost £2,500
- Painting of the railings which cost £1,176
- Refurbishment of the supper room at a cost of £3,800
- Refurbishment of the toilets which cost £13000. With thanks to Graham Parkin this work has been covered by 3 grants totalling £10,700 (with a £1,740 payment from EDC still due) leaving only £560 to cover from our own reserves.

Income from hall hire totalled £4,565 with normal outgoings of £3,880 resulting in £775 being added to reserves.

Geoff Johnson noted that in the last full year before Covid (ending 2019) the income was £3200. So 2022/23 income represented an increase of 40% on pre-covid hall hire.

Also regarding hall hire it was noted that Yoga had unfortunately ceased during the year and the WI had just held their last meeting also.

Diane Blenkinsop asked whether the villagers could have volunteered to paint the railings to save money. Graham Parkin replied that the railings were in a very bad condition and needed de-rusting as well as painting which required a professional to do it properly.

**Item 6. User Group Reports.** The user group representatives were invited to give a brief report on their experience using the hall this year.

**School:** Graham Parkin - The school continues to be the largest user and largest source of income for the hall. They are very happy with the facilities and use it as an extension of their own building for plays, physical education, and after school activities. They also asked other users to be reminded that chairs should be stored safely on the stage (4 high with legs parallel) rather than at the back of the hall (which is unsafe for the children).

**History Group:** Graham Parkin - The history group use the hall in winter for talks. Speakers comment on the quality of the sound and audio visual kit.

**Cinema:** Karen Royle - Firstly thanks given for the new projector which hasn't give any issues since installation. The audience numbers have been up and down since covid but have picked up recently. An audience of 30 people is needed to break even. For the cinema, taking the chairs on and off the stage is a health and safety risk for older backs. There then followed a short discussion about the chairs.

[Other options were suggested including screening the chairs at the back of the hall so they are safe for the children (KD), storing the chairs in the supper room (OB)(but that room is used for other things), storing in the outside store (GJ) and using trolleys to move them (KR) (but there are steps). It was decided to continue to store the chairs on the stage since it is safe to do so provided they are lifted one at a time and there are two people available (one on the stage and one on the floor). Notices were suggested (DB) which might become necessary. **Action: User Group Reps to inform their groups of chair requirements (on the stage, 4 high, legs parallel).**]

**Parish Council:** Jamie Goddard - Meetings held every few months with attendance ranging from 1 to all the chairs being used. The supper room and toilets are really smart. Well done to those who worked on them.

**Women's Institute:** Annie Johnson spoke on behalf of the outgoing WI. She commented that several ex-members came to the final afternoon tea and remarked how lovely the hall was looking.

**Pilates:** Not currently represented but Julie Connolly provided input ahead of the meeting. She raised a few items that would enhance her group's experience of using the hall: a clock somewhere in the main hall (visible from the stage); some draught excluders on the external doors to reduced drafts at floor level; and a question as to whether the chairs could be stacked somewhere other than on the stage (already covered in previous discussion). She also emphasised how much she enjoys using the hall for pilates - it is a great space.

**Table Tennis:** Not currently represented but Kay Dorset relayed some feedback on behalf of Reg. The group now regularly now has 4-6 people attending which is sufficient to cover

the hall hire. He has also run some extra sessions for the school. He is aware that some people in the village are interested in joining but can't make Weds afternoon so is considering other or additional times.

**WDLP:** Not currently represented but Geoff Johnson asked them for feedback and suggestions. Although their offices are in Tebay they like using the village hall for its size and location. They suggested we consider installing a hearing loop system since this is something they are sometimes asked about. Also asked if we could install a water urn rather than a kettle. (We do have a large water boiler but perhaps it needs more instruction or is too big).

**Yoga:** Geoff also asked the yoga leader why the classes stopped. This was because not enough people were coming and nothing to do with the hall itself.

**Post Office:** Happy with the hall (after a few technical teething problems now resolved).

**Action:** The suggestions made will be taken to the next committee for discussion and action, those being a clock, draft excluders, hearing loop, water urn.

#### **Item 7. Appointment of Representatives of User Groups and Elected Members.**

**Question from Karen Royle:** Before we move to elections can you tell us a bit about what the VH committee does in case anyone here would like to know more before deciding whether or not to put themselves forward?

Jane Close replied that the committee is made up representatives from the various user groups that use the village hall and elected members.

**Question from Ollie Birkbeck:** Does/Can the committee run village events?

Geoff Johnson replied that the village hall is a charity and its purpose is set out in law. He then quoted an example 'object' which says that a village hall charity is there to 'provide facilities' and quoted from the Charity Commission website (backed by gov.uk) which explains that social events and entertainment are not considered charitable and are only permitted on an occasional basis to raise funds for the village hall if needed.

**Comment from Karen Royle:** We want to see more use of the hall

Elizabeth Parkin repeated that the village hall committee can't hold events themselves and can only provide the building.

**Comment from Karen Royle:** The parish council could pay for street cleaning but instead got people involved, the church holds a food bank, people feel no connection to the village hall. Do we want it it just to be a village hall or a community centre?

Geoff Johnson replied that as a village hall charity it can only be a village hall. To be a community centre it would have to merge with another charity operating with a different purpose.

**Question from Ollie Birkbeck:** Could we run an event and hire the hall?

Jane Close replied that anyone can hire the hall to run an event. It doesn't have to raise funds for the hall and the event organiser can spend any funds raised how they wish. The event organiser also needs to consider how to fund the social events (since they always

cost money to put on). Money in the VH funds from grants can't be used for events - only for the purpose for which the money was granted. The cost of hiring the hall is a fair market rate.

Ollie then shared that she would set up a social events group and asked if she could then have a user group representative on the VH committee. The response was positive that such a group could have a representative.

John Bevan then proposed that all current elected members be re-elected en masse. This was seconded by Graham Parkin and carried.

Geoff Johnson then proposed that Graham Parkin also be elected, due to the amount of work he does for the committee. Graham accepted but since the meeting has declined to take up this offer.

As per the original trust deed which is the official governing document the chair for the coming year will not be elected until the next committee meeting, along with the other officers. There will also be a discussion then about which groups should be invited to have representatives going forward.

**Item 8. Appointment of Independent Examiner.** The treasurer confirmed that Mrs Savage was willing to be the independent examiner of the accounts for the coming year. This was agreed.

**Item 9. Any Other Business.** John Bevan made comment about the ongoing revision of the constitution including: that originally the representatives were not of 'user groups' but of 'village groups' and that the object in the original trust deed over-rides any charity commission guidance. Jane Close replied that many hours had been spent working on the constitution so far and there were many more hours still to be spent. John acknowledged that it was necessary to update the constitution and that it is a difficult task to take on. He raised concerns though about how approval for the new constitution is given and who in the community is involved.

Kay Dorset  
Village Hall Sec  
Tel: 51006  
13<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Attachments:

Village Hall Accounts 2022-23