

Aston and Weymouth Village Hall

AGM 9th May 2023

- Welcome
- Minutes 2022 and matters arising
- Chair's Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Secretary's Report
- Parish Council Report
- 100 Club
- AOB
- Date of Next AGM Proposed on 7.5.24

Minutes of the Aston Village Hall Trustees Annual General Meeting

Place: Aston Village Hall

Date: 7.30 pm May 4th 2022

Present: Guy Chatburn, Helen Inskip, Rosalind Chatburn, Miles Scott and Vicky Jackson

No members of the public were present.

Guy Chatburn (in the chair) opened the meeting.

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes, which were approved.

Regret was expressed by all trustees, that despite posters and social media posts, no one else from the village was in attendance to hear the work achieved to date and the plans for the coming year. The chair thanked every trustee for their work over the past year and expressed the hope that, in time, more people would get involved through the Events Committee, be attracted by events over the next year and be willing to join the team. It was, though, a disheartening moment.

Guy then presented his Chairman's report (attached).

Vicky Jackson presented the Treasurer's Report in the form of the accounts for 2021/22 (attached). Vicky confirmed her intention to step down after seven years on the trustees and as Treasurer. Miles Scott offered to be the new Treasurer and this was unanimously approved. However, Vicky reported that she had agreed with Miles her willingness to stay on for a further year. This would effect a smooth handover to the new Treasurer and she would still play a part in events during that interim period.

Guy warmly thanked Vicky on behalf of the trustees for her hard work and service to the community and presented her with a planter as a token of trustees' appreciation. She was also thanked for her willingness to serve for a further year, while the trustees look for another person to join as a replacement trustee.

Helen Inskip reported on the 100 Club and was thanked for her work in maintaining this vital element of the hall's funding and community outreach.

Rosalind Chatburn presented both the Secretary's report and the Parish Council Representative's report and was thanked for her contribution to the past year.

The meeting was concluded at 8.00 pm followed by an informal planning discussion for the upcoming Platinum Jubilee and ideas on how to mark this historic event in the village.

Rosalind Chatburn

Secretary

**Trustees of Aston Village Hall
Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 9th May 2023**

Chair's Report

Welcome to the 2023 AGM of the Trustees of Aston Village Hall. We invite everyone to hear what we have done recently, and hope you will consider becoming a trustee. If that is rather a big step, we also have a more informal Events Committee, where we devise, plan and run community events, picnics and coffee mornings.

Thanks

I pay tribute to the scores of successive villagers, who have served, for a few years at a time, as a trustees, before passing the baton on to newer residents. I would especially like to thank the current team of trustees for their support, teamwork and hard graft over the past year. This report details our investments in the hall, essential repairs undertaken and how we encouraged villagers to return to the hall, post pandemic.

We welcome Miles Scott as our new Treasurer and thank Vicky Jackson for staying on for a further year, to help with the handover and with running community events. Vicky has been Treasurer for eight years and we thank her very indeed much for her service and dedication to the role.

I also want to highlight the role played by Helen Inskip too. Helen has been a Trustee for a very impressive ten years and is an essential part of our key community events, procuring food and drinks and running the bar (often on her own, as we find it so difficult to get help).

Trustee Vacancies

We are therefore down to just four trustees, so please consider joining us. Many fellow villagers have already "done their bit". I estimate that over the past ten years, twenty new households have moved into Aston. This should, hopefully, provide a supply of villagers wishing to serve. This is as long as the hall continues to attract and engage with village residents and keep relevant to modern lifestyles.

Being a trustee *is* quite a step, and brings with it personal responsibilities to the Charities Commission as well as to the founding principles of the trust. However, recently, trustees had also found themselves as a diminishing team also having to run every event, reducing the appetite to devise them. An early task as a Chair was to set up a separate "Events Committee". It was hoped that this informal group, might attract more to get involved in devising new activities and helping run more events. It is taking time, but gradually more are getting involved. It is from this wider pool of engaged villagers that our future trustees will be found and the prospects for the continuance of the village hall are favourable.

Community Events.

After enforced closures and frustrating disruptions caused by Covid restrictions and illnesses, the Events Committee and the Trustees are proud to see how successful the hall has been in serving the community and attracting new neighbours over the past year.

It has been a key objective of the most recent team to encourage more use of the hall by single households and encouraging daytime use. We aimed to host events enabling people to meet and chat with other neighbours, not just focussing on the set piece big evening events with prebooked tables, which we also revived and thoroughly enjoy.

- The monthly weekday coffee mornings, set up initially as an outside café during the pandemic is still attracting fifteen to twenty regulars for a chat and coffee.
- The trial coffee morning with bacon butties on a Saturday welcomed over thirty villagers. This could be a popular event in the Autumn too.
- In conjunction with St Leonard's Church, forty Aston residents gathered around the Christmas tree, then sang carols inside followed by mulled wine and mince pies.
- Eighty residents dined on Poolside's excellent Fish and Chips at the recent Quiz Night
- Over forty villagers enjoyed a chip butty and a drink at Helen and Jade's family fun bingo night.
- Eight children from the village and nearby, joined their parents and trustees for a fun Christmas themed children's party.
- The Queen's Platinum Jubilee was marked in the village with a community meal and games at AVH, attended by over one hundred and ten locals. This was an historic moment and it was wonderful to see so many in the village turn out for it.
- Most recently, a brief day of sunshine enabled us to host the King's Coronation Tea outside, as fun Street Party. Sixty-five people came along to enjoy the games, sample a free cream tea and fizz toast as well having a picnic and sharing bakes and puds.

What has become apparent, is that each community event tends to attracts a different group of villagers, and over the past year the cumulative reach of the village hall has been very significant.

Knowing how many are likely to come is the biggest challenge of all. Introducing Eventbrite booking and cashless ticketing for the big paid events has helped give the current team a better steer on how many folk will attend: this has helped reduce wastage, prevent losses and cater for the right numbers.

Investments

Despite the problems posed by Covid, the most recent team of trustees have continued to make investments in the hall. Mindful of the need to allocate reserves carefully, we have sought assistance wherever possible and been successful in winning grants from The National Lottery, Staffordshire County Council and Newcastle Borough Council.

Improving Digital Reach Reviving the abandoned Facebook page and keeping up a strong presence on the community WhatsApp group has enabled the team to successfully share events and drive visits to the website, digitally. A grant from Staffordshire County Council part-funded a complete relaunch of the old non mobile-friendly, un-editable website. It is now mobile enabled and provides the ability for user content generation, meaning the team can post and edit the calendar of events, news items and set up booking of places or take payments for tickets.

In addition to taking advance payments online, using Eventbrite, the card readers from Sum Up mean we are not restricted to cash. In all cases, sales are fully tracked, receipts are now possible, and refunds are straightforward to do.

Updating Equipment The tables were heavy to lift and badly marked through decades of use. With the support of the National Lottery Community Fund we have invested in extra lightweight aluminium tables which are far easier for the events team, and hall hirers, to set up, clean and store safely.

Replacing Electrics The recent change in regulations on electrical systems meant our hall's electrical distribution boards were failed at inspection and therefore were not going to be covered by insurance. This necessitated a major overhaul of the electrics and a new distribution board installing, before the hall could continue to be used.

Replacing Lighting We applied to Staffordshire County Council's Climate Fund to part-fund the change to low energy lighting throughout the hall and outside. Requiring a complete replacement of luminaires to LED units, not just swapping bulbs, it was an expensive investment, but the reduction in running costs is already being seen and it contributes to a lower carbon footprint for the hall.

Repairing the Heating Our veteran oil boiler is serviced annually, but its age meant it required a new pump and burner unit after failing during the winter. The radiators were also found to be silted up, leading to the pump's failure. We arranged for the system to be cleaned out and flushed through, immediately making the radiators more efficient in raising the temperature. However, the trustees are aware of the potential cost of a new boiler and will be considering all options for replacement, including air source heat pump technology and grants availability in the future.

Repairing the Plumbing When an extreme cold snap was predicted, sensible precautions were taken to shut the supply, empty the pipes and heat the hall, but a section of previously unknown redundant leg of water pipe in the kitchen roof still froze. No damage was done in the thaw, luckily, but it did highlight the lack of cold weather resilience from the existing pipes and the undesirable presence of the large header tank above the hall. Investment in a rising main replacement could improve this resilience, as well as finally solve the poor water supply to the toilet areas.

Replacing the Defibrillator Taking over responsibility for managing the defibrillator from the defunct WI, we had first invested in a new outside heated cabinet. However, this year, during a regular check by Rosalind, the guardian, it was found to have failed immediately were loaned a replacement by AED Donate before purchasing a brand-new Heart Sine replacement defibrillator for the community. Another training course will be run soon.

Hall Hires

External hall hires have been badly affected by Covid. Pilates continues to be a survivor on Monday mornings, but the popular twice weekly Messy Play and Children's Dance activities unfortunately ceased as the organiser's personal circumstances changed.

Our new website and response forms have enabled us to screen-out inaccurate hall hire requests (wrong Aston!) and the focus is firmly on local family parties or for more instruction classes.

Future Plans

Grounds: The trustees are grateful to individuals who have planted, weeded and swept, but we are mindful of the need to keep the grounds and car park better maintained. We will be exploring options that might engage a wider volunteer community, such as a Weekend Work-party as well as considering more regular professional maintenance providers.

Heating and Plumbing: The oil boiler's age and running cost is giving cause for concern and part of the plumbing is not fully cold weather resilient. This will require further investigation and consideration of options for replacement, upgrade or renewal.

Bar and Kitchen: Over the years successive groups of trustees have not addressed the kitchen dishwashing and bar glass-washing facilities. The current team will now be looking to consider investing in both these areas as it would significantly improve hygiene standards and free up volunteer labour time.

Events Committee: The trustees will target growing the membership of the Events Committee and encourage them to try new events as well as continue with local favourites.



Guy Chatburn 8.5.23

Chair of Trustees

Aston and Weymouth Village Hall

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2023

	2023	2022
	£	£
INCOME		
Hire of the hall	1,608.50	241.00
Events		
Quiz	741.50	
Other	92.77	
Bar takings	1,355.38	
Grants received	2,445.00	4,136.00
Donations received	257.50	
Wayleave	112.13	
100 club receipts	864.00	1,134.00
	<u>7,476.78</u>	<u>5,511.00</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Events		
Jubilee	1,038.81	
Quiz	499.00	
Other	193.97	209.43
Bar Purchases	1,770.84	
Hall Costs		
Electricity	1,676.97	975.03
Heating Oil	0.00	664.13
Insurance	1,092.99	1,030.67
Water	170.29	152.40
Council Tax	222.72	71.06
Cleaning	855.72	345.01
Grounds	384.50	689.55
Miscellaneous	535.50	216.82
Repairs and Maintenance		
Electrical	2,979.79	112.70
Plumbing	1,013.40	320.00
Other	374.47	201.50
Website	2,628.00	42.00
Defibrillator	798.00	831.00
Equipment		1,469.00
100 club prizes	451.00	510.00
Donations	200.00	200.00
	<u>16,885.97</u>	<u>8,040.30</u>
Excess of expenditure over income	<u>(9,409.19)</u>	<u>(2,529.30)</u>

Aston and Weymouth Village Hall

Assets and Liabilities as at 31 March 2023

	2023	2022
<u>Brought forward 01/04/2022</u>		
AVH Bank Account	35,577.30	38,381.86
100 Club Bank Account	5,648.47	5,015.47
Petty Cash	166.10	166.10
Accrued Income and prepayments	1,096.14	1,341.42
Accrued liabilities	(338.08)	(225.62)
	<u>42,149.93</u>	<u>44,679.23</u>
 Excess of expenditure over income	 (9,409.19)	 (2,529.30)
	<u>32,740.74</u>	<u>42,149.93</u>
 <u>Carried forward 31 03/2023</u>		
AVH Bank Account	26,938.81	35,577.30
100 Club Bank Account	6,090.47	5,648.47
Petty Cash	166.10	166.10
Accrued Income and prepayments	1,345.56	1,096.14
Accrued liabilities	(1,800.20)	(338.08)
	<u>32,740.74</u>	<u>42,149.93</u>
 Accrued Income and Prepayments		
Pilates	156.00	
Parish Council	90.00	
Takings to be banked	686.12	
Wayleave	112.13	
Prepaid water rates	215.55	
Prepaid Council Tax	85.76	
	<u>1,345.56</u>	
 Accrued Liabilities		
Donation - MND	(150.00)	
Bingo licence	(21.00)	
Coffee Morning supplies	(23.55)	
Electrical work	(1,484.65)	
100 club prizes	(121.00)	
	<u>(1,800.20)</u>	

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Secretary's Report

My role as secretary is straightforward, mainly involving taking the minutes of our trustees and events committees meetings and keeping a record of them. I also liaise with our hirers and voluntary groups who sometimes use our facilities eg. The Whitmore Active Living Group who walk sometimes from our car park.

Aston's link with St Leonard's Church Woore is historic – our village owns the chapel here, so I am always involved in liaising with and helping to organise the various community church services held at AVH.

Our First Tuesday coffee mornings which Guy and I run, provide an excellent opportunity for villagers to discuss ideas for future events at AVH and give feedback on those attended.

As secretary of the trustees, I try to welcome anyone who moves to our village with a card. This includes my mobile number so that they can join our Aston village community WhatsApp group if they wish. Set up in the pandemic by the parish council and administered by Jo Robinson (the previous secretary) , this has proved an easy way for folk to get to know one another and keep in touch. We currently have 49 participants which roughly equates to 49 houses – fantastic!

60001 households

I would like to thank the trustees for their help, patience and goodwill I really enjoy being part of the team.

Rosalind Chatburn

Secretary AVH Trustees

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Parish Council Representative's Report

I would like to give you a taste of what being a parish councillor is all about. Guy and I are your local representatives on the Maer and Aston Parish Council, which is an honour and responsibility.

All parish councillors are volunteers, and we are lucky to have an excellent, professional and friendly team. We all contribute with our various areas of expertise and skills, ensuring that we work as a cohesive and effective whole. For example, Guy and Andrew Mainwaring (Blackbrook) have been delegated to attend regular meetings with HS2. Their key aim is to get a fair deal for residents from HS2 during construction. That is all now in abeyance now, but the vigilance continues.

Julia Ziskin (Maer) is particularly interested in environmental issues and recently hosted an excellent evening of presentations at Maer Village Hall. My career in education is useful and another role is being guardian of the AVH defibrillator, which is now in shared guardianship with the parish council. As vice chair I stand in for our Chair Mike Kelly at meetings if required.

The parish council continues to have effective links with local churches, the police our borough and county councillors, who attend our meetings and provide detailed reports.

As regards planning, Maer and Aston PC is a consultee on all the parish's planning applications which makes up the majority of business every month. Details of these can be found on village notice boards and online. We aim to protect the beauty and safety of our villages and surrounding countryside and to prevent inappropriate development, and example being the planning application by Richborough Homes for 200 houses bordering our parish. This has just gone to appeal and your parish councillors, joining with neighbouring parish councillors, will be in attendance. Three years ago, we joined forces with parish council in the Whitmore area to compile the Local Neighbourhood Development Plan. We are now standing firm against developers who argue that this plan is already out of date! Appropriate development is supported and carefully scrutinised to get the best fit for our community. We consider issues such as size of footprint, purpose, sustainability, appearance and safe access etc.

Parish Councillors are your voices in the community so to represent your opinions , we need to know what they are. Guy and I are usually round and about in Aston and are happy to discuss any issues. Contact details can be found on the parish council website.

Rosalind Chatburn

Vice Chair

Maer and Aston Parish Council