

JAMES HARGREAVES COMMUNITY HALL TRUST

Minutes of the 21st Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 28th September 2021, 7pm at James Hargreaves Village Hall.

The Meeting opened at 7pm.

Those Present: Current committee members namely:

Gerry Poole (Chair), Julia Deadman-Spall (Secretary), Avril Sherring (Treasurer), Karen Berry and Gill Wingfield with Ann Bartlett and Debbie Hewson, co-opted members.

Also: Des Poole, Peter Wingfield, John Berry, John Sherring, Sue Warren, Mark Hillier, Chris Coneybeer, Kay Hicks, Peter Hicks, Barbara Green, Syd Green.

Gerry opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for attending the Hall's AGM, especially on such an inclement evening.

1. Apologies for absence were received from: Phyllis Diment, Pat Keogh, Kay Purvis, Julia Eager, Anthony R Morley, Ronnie Creswell, Ian Taylor, Chris Watson, Pete Watson, Jan Eastaff, John Eastaff, Ruth Worsley.

2. Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2020: Copies of the Minutes from 30th September 2020 had been distributed.

A proposer and seconder from the community for acceptance of the draft 2020 minutes was requested from the community.

Proposed by Jenifer Morley, Seconded by John Berry.

3. Matters arising: None.

4. Chair's Report: Gerry gave her report as follows:

Chair's Report 28th September 2021

Welcome to our 2021 AGM. This will be my last report as I intend to stand down as Chair of the Committee next April, leaving plenty of time to find and help settle in my replacement, whoever that should be! Due to the situation with Covid our hall has been little used over the past year. The Vintage Teas were held when they were allowed and the Table Tennis Group returned to the Hall last October although they have more recently been playing in Mark Hillier's garden. Unfortunately we have lost a few of our regular groups which is something we are all eager to address as the Hall relies on the income from these groups to keep it

maintained and up and running.

Maintenance

Since the last AGM we have continued to maintain the Hall. A new key safe was installed to make getting into the Hall more convenient and more secure. The Cleaning Rota stopped while the Hall was out of use but other more major maintenance was addressed. Kay went in regularly to keep an eye on the hall and generally made sure everything was in order. A new Garden Team has been formed, organised by Ruth Worsley and Carol Brown to maintain the outside areas including the car park and graveyard. Julia, Pat and newcomer Jill Hunt have been on hand to help out. Many thanks to all these people for giving up their time. We have employed a gardener, Henry Barlow, to trim the Graveyard several times a year in order to keep the weeds and brambles at bay.

We have had a number of jobs done to maintain the Hall since last year. Earlier this year it was discovered that the shed roof, where we store a lot of hall equipment, was leaking badly. Avril kindly found someone who was able to replace it for us which meant we had to clear it out. A team of committee members went up to empty the shed and sort through the contents. Once the work was completed we returned to put back and cull what was no longer required. Pat Keogh has since been repainting the shed with several coats of protective paint. Thank you Pat! The spring was really cold and wet and prolonged and the Hall started to suffer. Not helped by lack of use. The outside wall facing the road started to flake and peel and was looking really unsightly. I managed to engage the help of Graham Hunt who, a few weekends ago, gave up his time to scrape back and repaint the whole wall, all for the cost of the paint that he used. We are very grateful to him for his hard work and the great job he did. Back in May after an Electrical inspection required for our Insurance it was deemed necessary to update the electrics which Avril organised and oversaw. We are now up to date and meet the latest requirements. Thanks to Avril for being instrumental in most of the major maintenance this year. She and Gill have also done a major sort out and tidy of the kitchen. We have a few outstanding jobs including making a French Drain alongside the Hall to try and alleviate the damp although some concerns have been raised about this and we are going to discuss this further before proceeding. We also plan to fit a new toilet seat with one that has a lid, for hygiene purposes. Avril was also instrumental in obtaining several Council Grants for our hall and we hope to use some of the money to replace our very tired kitchen in the near future.

Hall Committee

Recently we have been pleased to welcome Debbie Hewson and Ann Bartlett onto the committee. Debbie has already started to make a big impact by reinstating the Macmillan Coffee morning which historically had been run by Phyllis. Ann already has the role of

distributing our Welcome Pack to the newcomers in the village. Thank you Ann for performing this valuable role. Julia Deadman Spall has continued as Secretary keeping us updated with all the latest news and events throughout Lockdown. Avril Sherring our Treasurer has now completed her fourth year on the committee and has continued to do a wonderful job keeping us up and running and keeping on top of all things financial! Other members of our committee work quietly in the background turning up to help whenever they can especially Pat Keogh and Gill Wingfield. Many thanks to Kay Purvis for keeping an eye on the Hall throughout successive Lockdowns.

Again this year we have received two resignations from the committee. Firstly Pat Keogh who after years of being on the committee and helping out in a myriad of ways has decided that it is time to stand down. She will really be missed at our meetings although she assures us she will continue to help out behind the scenes. Many thanks Pat for everything you have done for our Hall over the years! The other blow is Julia Deadman-Spall our Secretary who has kept everyone informed and up to date for the past four years. She has now decided to step down and resign from the role. Julia has proved a very capable and efficient Secretary and we are all very grateful for all she has done and she will be sorely missed!. Karen Berry has offered to take on the role of Secretary and Julia says she will help Karen to get established and up and running. Thank you Karen for offering to take on this vital role! Finally we have a retirement from the Committee. Phyllis who has spent so many years helping out at the hall with events and activities and generally keeping an eye on things has decided it's time to stand down from the Committee. Thank you Phyllis for all the years of help and commitment you have given to the Hall and in turn the Village!

The current committee will now consist of:

Gerry Poole (Chair), Karen Berry (Secretary), Avril Sherring (Treasurer), Kay Purvis, Gill Wingfield , Debbie Hewson and Ann Bartlett.

As you can see our current committee is somewhat diminished and we are keen to recruit new members with fresh ideas, skills and interests. So if you are keen to get involved please come and join us. We are also always looking for people to help support the Hall by joining the cleaning rota, helping to maintain the garden, organising events or just getting involved in any of the organised events.

Events

Events have been very limited in the past year. In May this year Ruth Worsley and Carol Brown organised a plant sale which raised £333 for the Bridport Food Bank. Thanks to all those involved. In September 2020 although Phyllis was unable to hold the usual Macmillan coffee morning she still managed to raise £350 through donations from the village, thanks to everyone who contributed. Kay Purvis and June Mitra organised a Christmas Vintage High Tea for the villagers to enjoy which was very successful.

Village Life

Having worked hard to get the Hall up and running after the first wave of lockdowns we were unfortunately unable to re open despite putting in place risk assessments, relevant signs and special conditions etc. However since restrictions eased this summer our Hall is now open and ready for use as soon as groups feel ready and able. We still have wipes and sanitiser and encourage hirers to undertake some basic cleaning The kitchen is now back in full use.

Although events and use of the hall have been curtailed in the past eighteen months our committee are still committed to putting on a range of events and activities each year in the hope that they are well supported and as always others are welcome to come up with their own ideas for events and activities.

Village Support and Council Endorsements

Our Hall has been so well used in the past but since Covid has lost a lot of its regular users. We are therefore on the hunt for new groups and events to keep our little Hall at the heart of our community.

Current Groups and Events Include:

The once monthly Sunday Afternoon Vintage Tea Room has continued to be organised by Kay and June who have kept this very popular event going since restrictions were eased thanks to them for their commitment and hard work!

Debbie organised the Macmillan Coffee morning this year which raised £420 for this worthwhile charity. Thanks to Debbie for her energy and enthusiasm in making this event a real success. Also thanks to everyone who helped out or supported this event. Avril has planned a Beetle Drive with hotdogs for the 1st October and there is a Quiz planned for November. As ever we hope that our Village will support these events. The Hall is also used for other events such as the Hardown AGM which was held last week and a print making series of days run by Emma Molony called Beyond the Map. Nesta Davies runs the occasional Book Binding course here and the National Trust also use the Hall occasionally to run courses. Karen Berry is organising a Soup and Cheese lunch on the fourth Friday of every month so let's hope this becomes a well supported and regular event. Thank you Karen!

Other regular groups

Unfortunately some of our regular groups and users have either ceased or decided to move elsewhere. We are hoping to entice some of them back to us in the near future. Our only regular groups at the moment are

The Watercolour Group alternate Thursdays 10.00-12.30

The Morcombelake Art Group alternate Thursdays 10.00-12.30

Gardening Club, 1st Thursday each Month 2.00-4.00

However Pat Keogh has let us know that Knit and Natter on Monday's 2.30-4.30 will be returning to hall in October which is great news and we are hoping Table Tennis will return to our hall as soon as the weather is too cold to play outside. Wednesdays 4.30-6.00

Alongside our regular users the Village Hall it is also used for other meetings:

The Hardown Society

Parish Council Meetings

Voting for elections.

The Hall Committee would like to thank the Char Valley Parish Council for their continued support. Thanks to Julia Eager for agreeing to be our link to the Parish Council.

Of course, the hall is also a great facility to hire privately on a very reasonable basis.

Future Plans

The Committee has debated the opportunities for the hall and its user groups. We are committed to ensure that the James Hargreaves Hall is well managed and that funds are used appropriately. Our 3 Year Plan sets out our plans as funds become available.

We continually look for best value from our suppliers / contractors to ensure the Hall funds are spent wisely.

Publicity

Over the past year we have used the following forms of publicity:

A monthly Newsletter, either hand delivered or via email to homes in Morcombelake, Ryall, Whitchurch, Beaminster and Chideock. Anyone can opt to receive the Newsletter by supplying their email to the secretary. The Hall Newsletter is used to announce future events and we display posters around the village to let villagers know what is going on.

A 'Welcome Pack' for newcomers is hand delivered by Ann Bartlett to anyone who has just moved into the area in the hope they will feel welcome and want to get involved in village life. This gives them information about the amenities and events and includes a Newsletter .

Thanks

I would really like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to the people who have worked so hard to keep the Hall up and running and at the heart of our community despite the current situation. Namely: Julia Deadman Spall for keeping us all informed and up to date during Lockdown. Avril Sherring for keeping our finances on track. Kay Purvis and June Mitra with the help of Helen Dowling who have kept the Vintage Tea going. Syd Green for providing the music for the Monthly Afternoon Tea. Also there are a few people who do a great deal to help behind the scenes especially Pat Keogh and Gill Wingfield who always seem to be there to help out.

Recommendations

The committee recommends the acceptance of the Chair's Report

Gerry Poole

James Hargreaves Community Hall

Morcombelake

September 2021

5. Treasurer's Report:

Avril distributed copies of the accounts covering the period from April 6th 2020 to April 5th 2021 to all attendees.

Overall income was £11,507.77. This included a Covid Grant of £9,652.77, Grand Draw Receipts; £1,113.00: and rent £250.00. Overall expenses were £6,515.89. The main expenditure was hall maintenance expenses at £4,105.79. The total excess of income over expenditure for the year was £4,991.88. Added to the existing balance this amounted to the new balance of £11,470.37. Thanks to Thelma Taylor for auditing the accounts and The Chair signed the accounts off.

Avril informed the meeting that there had been a further Covid Grant from Dorset County Council of eight thousand pounds in the financial year April 2021 to April 2022. We have also received the usual grant from Char Valley Parish Council. These grants have helped to offset the Hall's lack of rental income during the pandemic. Avril also explained that the Hall had not historically paid rates and that this situation has now been rectified with a rate assessment completed. As a registered charity the hall is exempt from 80% of the rate payments with a further 20% discretionary rate relief. Water rates have also been addressed recently and we are about to have a water meter fitted at the Hall. Therefore, in spite of the pandemic the Hall has a healthy balance of £17,160 at the end of August 2021. This is enabling plans to purchase and install a refurbished kitchen, with a dishwasher.

6. The current committee will now consist of:

Gerry Poole (Chair), Karen Berry (Secretary), Avril Sherring (Treasurer), Ann Bartlett, Debbie Hewson, Kay Purvis and Gill Wingfield.

A request for a proposer and seconder from the community for election of committee members en bloc was requested.

Proposed by Kay Hicks, Seconded by Sue Warren.

7. Public Discussion:

The meeting was opened up for general questions and discussion. Des Poole suggested advertising for a new chair and committee members via the Hall Newsletter. Debbie Hewson thanked Syd Green for raising additional money for the Macmillan Coffee Morning with his 'Piggy Bank'. Syd explained that he was given the piggy bank by his son for collection of loose coins and he thought it would be a good idea to encourage newcomers to the village to invest in a piggy bank. Jenifer Morley expressed thanks to the committee from all those present.

The Chair closed the meeting by inviting everyone to enjoy drinks and nibbles. We are hopeful that we will be able to resume our usual form over the forthcoming months. As always, we do welcome questions, queries and reflections from the villagers.

The meeting closed at 9pm.