

# St John's (Kingsdown) Village Hall

Registered Charity Number 302777

## The Annual General Meeting of the St John's (Kingsdown) Village Hall was held on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at St John's (Kingsdown) Village Hall at 7pm.

### Record of those present:-

#### Community Reps:-

Jane Banks (JB - Secretary)

Nick Hansom (NH)

#### User Groups:-

Sharon Morris WI rep (SM - Chair)

Alan Smith – (AS) Parochial Church Council rep

Anna Taylor – (AT) Preschool rep

Cllr Carol Fowler (CF) – PC rep

Simon Longland, ( SL) table tennis rep and treasurer.

#### Members of the public:-

Mike Glavin (bookings and maintenance officer), and three members of the public (Helen Williams (HW), Sylvia Main (SMA), and Antony Shepherd (ASh)– arrived at 7.40pm).

**Apologies:** – none

### Minutes of 2016 Annual General Meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2016

The minutes were agreed as a true record. Proposed by SM, seconded by AS and signed by SM.

**Matters arising:** - There were no matters arising

The Chair thanked everyone for coming to the St John's (Kingsdown) Village Hall AGM, asked them all to sign the attendance sheet and offered refreshments to the attendees.

The Trustees were introduced to the meeting, and the fire escapes were pointed out.

Copies of last year's minutes and the accounts were distributed, and a copy of the present Deed of Trust, the governing document, was available for reference.

### Chair's Statement:-

We have had a busy and productive year. The committee has met, regularly, every month to discuss problems and ways forward. The Hall has been continuously maintained by Mike who keeps a very close eye on the fabric of the building, both inside and out, and can usually spot a problem before it becomes a nightmare. Our thanks go to him for his hard work and the care he takes of the Hall.

During the summer the Chairman and Treasurer both resigned from their positions and it was up to us, as a committee, to fill those gaps. We were extremely fortunate in finding someone with Simon's expertise to step in to the Treasurer's role. He has dragged us all in to the 21st century with Dropboxes and Google Drives and has done a splendid job of ensuring our finances are of the standard required by the Charity Commission. I'm the bossy one so I got the job of Chairman.

We have, for some time, been very concerned about the temperature of the Hall during the winter months. It could be very cold, despite Mike's best efforts and at the last AGM the then Chairman mentioned we were looking at gaining funding for double glazing. I'm pleased to say thanks to Nick's hard work and ability to write a cracking bid we were awarded £4188 from The Big Lottery. As a result of this, double glazing has been installed, taking care to preserve our beautiful, old windows, and the frames have been re decorated. Of course, once you have heat inside a 19th century building such as this, the hot air hits the thick, cold walls and we have the problem of condensation. We have purchased two new fans to help with this problem. As I have said, the hall is very old and like all buildings of this age damp walls are a problem. We are, at the moment, in possession of three quotes from damp proofing firms and are now looking at our finances and, hopefully, new funding opportunities to enable us to carry out this necessary work.

In collaboration with the Preschool we now have Wi Fi throughout the Halls.

The Village Hall continues to be a very busy venue. Pre-school, Dance classes, yoga, table tennis, WI meetings, Parish Council meetings, fund raising activities, children's parties, and other private functions all take place here on a regular basis. The Trustees held a very successful Xmas Fayre, once more, last year. Jane is not only the most efficient secretary to the Trustees but organizes the bookings as well. These bookings are our lifeline and without her energy and commitment the damp would continue to creep up the walls.

What of the future? We shall continue to search out sources of funding to enable us to provide a safe, warm environment for these organisations to enjoy. We are hoping to provide a Village Hall event in the summer, as well as our regular Christmas Fayre. There is also a rumour of a Pantomime being performed during the Festive Season. Watch this space!

We are hoping to make the best use of our new Wi Fi facility and will be advertising The Lower Hall, in particular, as a space ideal for computer clubs, after school catch up sessions for GCSE/A Level students and all manner of meetings.

We would like to provide access for buggies and the disabled from Upper Street and/or a construction of a 'layby, drop off area'.

And finally we are keen to renew our Hallmark level 3 status (only about 10 halls in Kent have this status and we are one of them!). This celebrates the way we run our hall and how it is used by its community and our neighbours. Jane and I went to a meeting run by ACRE - Action with Communities in Rural England, on the outskirts of Tunbridge Wells and met with other VH trustees from which we came away with assurances that we are a very pro active committee who work well within the set guidelines.

All that remains for me to do now is to thank all of my fellow Trustees for their commitment to the committee and the work that they do to keep this historic building, which is so much part of our village, going. Unfortunately Nick is stepping down from the committee this year after 2 years. On behalf of the Trustees I would like to thank him for his diligence in, not only, gaining the grant for the windows but for all the paper work he has plowed through whilst looking at 'The Title to the VH'. His regular Health and Safety checks and the sorting out of the Insurances and the amount of time he has spent meeting contractors here, in the hall. We have all enjoyed working with you, Nick, and you will be greatly missed.

This concluded the chair's statement, and SM asked for any questions and comments. HW asked if we received information about grants from KCC, DDC and others. SM replied that we do receive some information, but would welcome any information HW could forward to us. CF stated that DDC have a 'keep me posted' facility on their website.

#### **Financial report and agreement of accounts for 2016:-**

SL stated that he was elected treasurer after the previous treasurer and chair resigned in July 2016. It had taken the remaining Trustees several months to organise the handover of paperwork and responsibilities and to change banks signatories.

SL presented the 2016 income versus expenditure accounts, and the 2015 comparison.

The Trustees had agreed these figures at their meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2017.

**Income £17,077.43      Expenditure £11,270.47      Income over expenditure £10,694.96**

We received £700 in donations and £4188 in grants during the year.

A vote had been taken, and the majority of the Trustees elected at last year's AGM wished to keep the windows as important features of the hall.

SL commented that we now have double glazing installed, and will be completing the refurbishment of the windows during the Easter break. This will be paid by the £4188 grant.

We now have Wi-Fi, and 3 secure channels, thanks to sharing the access with preschool.

The hall revenue has continued to increase.

We aim to use some of our funds to increase storage space on the mezzanine, combining storage with seating.

We also aim to investigate the provision of a projector and stand, and intend to apply for funds to treat the damp issue on the side wall of the hall.

AT proposed the acceptance of the accounts, seconded by AS, and they were passed unanimously. HW congratulated the Trustees on the significant increase in rental income, and stated that the hall is now a real community asset.

### **Reports from user groups:-**

**Parish Council** – CF rep said the Parish Council use Kingsdown's hall every month. The PC feels that the Trustees have made a good job in converting the hall into a village asset for all to enjoy.

**Parochial Church Council** – AS stated that the church does not use the hall very often now, but it was used on the occasion of Cathy Sigrist's farewell event.

**Women's Institute** – SM reported that the WI meets on the second Monday of each month, and alternates between Kingsdown and Ringwould halls. They have regular speakers offering a wide variety of topics. The group feels the hall is ideal, despite the lack of parking facilities, and would like to thank the Trustees for the improved facilities, and Mike Glavin for his help.

**Table Tennis** – NH reported that the club meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and is going from strength to strength. They have purchased a new table in conjunction with the Trustees, and have 3 tables set up per session.

### **Pre-School** – Report prepared by Anna Taylor (Chairperson, Kingsdown Pre-School)

Kingsdown Pre-School is a self-supporting group and registered charity. It is one of the few remaining traditional Pre-Schools providing a wonderful, nurturing, caring and educational environment for children aged 2 – 4 years old. Hundreds of children have passed through our doors since the Pre-school first opened in 1976 and last year we had a fantastic Alice in Wonderland themed tea party to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Kingsdown Pre-School runs sessions from 9.15am – 1pm every weekday morning during term time here in this lovely Village hall. The limited hours offered means that it cannot compete with nurseries as a childcare solution for many working families and this seems to be impacting on the popularity of the Pre-School.

After Easter we will be offering two additional afternoon sessions in response to feedback from parents that we need to offer hours in line with the primary school and this is an area which we will continue to focus on.

Last year sadly we did make quite a substantial financial loss. Our main source of income is from government funding for eligible children but this funding has not increased in the last 6 years, however our fixed costs of the hall hire and staffing have increased year on year, especially with the introduction of the national living wage. This year staffing has been kept to a minimum and replacements have not been recruited. Thankfully we are fortunate to have a very experienced and skilled team in place who are all doing a fantastic job with the excellent guidance of Supervisors Denise Hodge and Jeanette Thomson. We believe that the quality, experience and skills of our staff are what sets us apart from other child-care solutions and we regularly hear from parents that send their child to nurseries as well as pre-school that their child really looks forward to coming to Kingsdown Pre-school and benefits from the educational focus. This is something we are very proud of and continue to focus on.

At the end of last year, a decision was made to close down the Parent & Baby/Toddler Group that was held on Tuesday afternoons here in the village hall which was a great shame as many local families have benefited from this resource over the years. It was a very difficult decision that was not taken lightly but was sadly as a result of finances with less families attending which meant the income was unable to cover the running costs of this group. Thankfully we were able to re-deploy the Toddler group staff to cover some of the busier sessions at Pre-School and redundancies were avoided.

With all this financial pressure on the Pre-School you can see why our fund-raising efforts are so important. Earlier in the year the Pre-School Committee organised another Bavarian Beer festival in the school hall which was a great success both as an enjoyable evening and raising money for the Pre-School. On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> April we will be running our annual Easter Egg Trail and we expect over 200 children to attend this very popular event. It is a lovely family event and we hope to raise much needed funds too. Furthermore one of our parents, Russ Mead, is running a marathon next month and donating their sponsorship money to us and the Park which is wonderful. Please do sponsor him if you can! And more fund-raising events are planned for the rest of the year and we thank the village for supporting these events and making them part of the Village social calendar.

The many improvements made to the Village hall are of course hugely welcomed by the Pre-School and Mike Glavin continues to do a wonderful job with maintenance support in keeping it a safe and appropriate venue for the Pre-School. We continue to work closely with the Village Hall and this year we came to an agreement to fund joint fibre optic broadband facilities for both the Pre-School and any other group wanting to use it which we hope we will be beneficial for all. We also continue to work

closely with the village primary school and of course the thriving Kingsdown community, all of which contribute to the success of our unique and cherished Pre-School.

HW asked AT about government funding and the effects the increase to 30 hours paid childcare has on preschool's funding. AT replied that this meant a miniscule difference (~5p per child), and not all children were eligible. This is a widespread challenge for many preschools, as the trend is that working parents are not using traditional preschools as they require more hours than such preschools are able to offer.

It had been a very hard decision to stop the toddler sessions after many years, but it was unviable financially. However, there is a baby group in the church on Thursday mornings which is proving a popular alternative.

Preschool is considering extending hours and also works with childminders in the village to increase hours, as the hall is not available every day, unlike dedicated nurseries.

**Announcement of User Group Reps (Appointed Trustees)**

The Secretary said she had confirmation of the following appointments until their respective AGMs.

**Pre-School** – Anna Taylor

**Women's Institute** – Sharon Morris

**Parochial Church Council** – Alan Smith

**Parish Council** – Cllr Carol Fowler

**Table Tennis** – Simon Longland

**Appointment of tellers** - Not required, as the total number of Trustees allowed under the Deed of Trust is fourteen.

**Nominations for Community Trustees:-**

Jane Banks was prepared to stand again, and was elected (Proposed by SM, seconded by HW, and agreed unanimously).

Nick Hansom is standing down. Sincere thanks were expressed to NH for his valuable contributions.

**Any other Business:-**

HW – asked if the former treasurer still has the WI laptops. SM stated that she did not know of any, but would investigate. **ACTION SM**

ASh – (arrived at 7.40pm) asked if the Trustees would consider putting a table tennis table in the lower hall. SM stated that this idea would be discussed. **ACTION**

SMA - asked about the land next door. NH commented that the Trustees had communicated with the landowner, but no amendments to the planning application had been submitted. The Trustees hoped that eventually we will be able to construct a path with a gradient suitable for wheelchairs, and that the ownership of the path would be ceded to the hall.

ASh – asked if the Trustees could improve the look of the toilets. We informed him that the idea of a reinforced roof over the men's and the disabled toilet had been discussed, but we will revisit this.

**ACTION**

**Date/Venue of 2018 Annual General Meeting:-**

**Monday 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 at St John's (Kingsdown) Village Hall at 7pm**

**The Meeting closed at 7.50pm**

The newly elected committee convened a meeting to elect the officers for 2017/18 (see separate minutes for full details)

Sharon Morris was appointed Chair, Jane Banks was appointed Secretary and booking secretary, and Simon Longland was appointed Treasurer.

Signed.....

Dated.....