

**BIDDENHAM VILLAGE HALL CHARITY (CHARITY NO: 300004)
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Minutes of Meeting held at Biddenham Village Hall on Tuesday 2nd November 2010

Present from the 2009/10 Management Committee:

Phil Inness (Vice Chair)	Liz Watson (Treasurer)
David Watson (Technical Officer)	Richard O'Quinn (Secretary)
Heather Marks (Bookings Officer)	Tracy Matthews (Toddlers Group)
George Metcalf (Gardeners Association)	Bridget Cristofoli (Women's Group)
John Greengrass (Deputy Tech Officer)	Fiona Kraus (Recycling Officer)
Philippa Smith (Environmental Officer)	

Also present:

Bryan Norris	Peter Culverwell
Chris Gleave	Debbie Higham
Martin Hosegood	

1). Apologies for Absence

Richard Hall (Chairman)
Richard Harris (Assistant Secretary)
Sian Rosser (Independent Examiner of Accounts)

2). Minutes of Last Meeting (2008)

The Minutes of the 2009 AGM were read out by the Secretary. Approval of the minutes was proposed by Bryan Norris, seconded by David Watson and accepted by all present. The Minutes were signed and dated by the Chair.

3). Matters Arising (other than Agenda Items)

- 3.1) The matter of the transfer of the funds from the winding up of Biddenham United Charities was discussed. The Secretary advised that the cash account amount of £698 had been transferred to BVH funds and transfer of the investment account funds would be followed up with the Trustees.

4). Chairman's Report (full copy attached)

- 4.1) Richard Hall gave his apologies given that he was now working in Singapore. However he was able to "deliver" his Report to the meeting by making a video recording and posting the same on YouTube. The recording was successfully played to the Meeting. This was his fifth report as chairman, a copy of which is attached and the key elements are as follows:
- 4.2) After the significant refurbishment activities that 2009 brought, 2010 had been a slightly quieter year, albeit one which has seen continued investment in the hall. BVH remained an excellent facility for the use of the local community, which is well maintained and extremely well looked after.

- 4.3) Security and safety for the benefit of the users continued to be a major focus for the management committee including compliance with the local fire and safety regulations. Impact on the environment had been monitored and a number of changes were made to improve the environmental footprint.
- 4.4) Booking Revenues bounced back from the decrease seen the previous year (a result of the closure of the hall for the renovation work). In addition the level of bookings had shown a slight increase with a number of new regular bookings in the pipeline. The Committee remained comfortable with the level of bookings and the revenues received. As in previous years a balance has been achieved between the charitable aims and the need to generate funds in order to maintain and improve the facilities.
- 4.5) The success of the Biddenham Village Hall website enabled the taking and managing of bookings on-line. This continued to provide a single place where all information is stored, a single source of detailed information on the Hall and its facilities and simplifies the booking procedure significantly. The Biddenham Bulletin remained a key way to communicate to the local community
- 4.6) The BVH Committee started the year with 14 members and ended with 13. They met on 6 occasions with an average attendance of 12. The decision making process continues to be transparent, is recorded fully and published on the web-site. Urgent actions are agreed via email or by the establishment of small working groups that make recommendations to the wider committee for ratification. This has proven to work very effectively and will continue to be used.
- 4.7) The Committee has monitored Health and Safety very closely and there was only one incident of note during the year. An incident with the floor polisher did not result in any injuries but prompted reinforcement of good practice when using electrical equipment.
- 4.8) Richard Hall tendered his resignation at the AGM. He was pleased to report that the good succession planning that was in place meant that an obvious successor, the Vice-chair, would be putting himself forward as his replacement.
- 4.9) The Chair paid tribute to David Osborne (who passed away during the year) and the significant role he had played in the good running of BVH including the encouragement of succession planning. The Chair ended by thanking the Committee for their support during his time as Chair.
- 4.10) Approval of the Chair's Report was proposed by Heather Marks, seconded by Liz Watson and accepted by all present.
- 4.11) All thanked Richard Hall for all he did during his time on the Committee and in particular his 5 years as Chairman.

5). Treasurer's Report

- 5.1) Liz Watson presented the independently audited accounts for review and was pleased to report that BVH remained in a sound financial position.
- 5.2) Revenue increased during the year with Hire Receipts, Functions and Recycling all up significantly. Exceptional revenue in the year was also received in the form of grants for the Toilet and Bar Refurbishment. Expenditure was higher because of the Refurbishment and an increase in Maintenance & Repairs. All other costs were down partly due to cost savings negotiated on Energy and Insurance.
- 5.3) Approval of the Treasurer's Report and Accounts was proposed by Peter Culverwell, seconded by Phil Inness and accepted by all present.

6). Appointment of Members for 2010/11

6.1) The Secretary proposed the appointment of Elected and Co-opted Members as follows:

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| Elected Members | Phil Inness (Chairman)
Liz Watson (Treasurer)
Richard O'Quinn (Secretary)
Heather Marks (Bookings Officer)
David Watson (Technical Officer) |
| Co-opted Members | Philippa Smith (Environmental Member))
Richard Harris (Asst Secretary)
Fiona Kraus (Recycling Officer)
John Greengrass (Deputy Tech Officer) |

6.2) The Secretary confirmed Representative Members of the Committee as follows:

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| Representative Members | Bridget Cristofoli (Women's Group)
George Metcalf (Gardeners Association)
Tracy Matthews (Toddlers Group) |
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with vacancies remaining for Parish Council and St James' PSA

6.3) Appointment of the Committee was proposed by Peter Culverwell, seconded by Chris Gleave and accepted by all present.

7 Any Other Business

7.1) The Meeting was advised that at David Osborne's funeral friends and family were invited to make donations to BVH funds. The general opinion was that these funds (the amount unknown at the time of the AGM) should be used for a specific project, such as the purchase of new chairs.

7.2) Bryan Norris informed the meeting that he was coordinating responses to a Police Safety Questionnaire and that already included on the submission were the issues of: speeding cars; use of the village as a rat-run; and burglaries. Bryan asked that the Committee consider and advise him of any other issues. The Committee agreed to discuss at the Management Meeting immediately following the AGM

Signed (Chair) Date

Biddenham Village Hall Chairman's Report - 2010

I think I can safely say that this is the first time that the Biddenham Village Hall Chairman's report has been delivered by the delights of modern technology from over 6500 miles away. 2010 has been a significant year for both the Village hall and for me personally, and as you can see, unfortunately I am unable to be at the AGM in person, as I have relocated to Singapore this year due to work commitments.

Tonight is the fifth time that I have had the pleasure of reporting the status of the hall on behalf of the committee. It seems like only yesterday that I accepted the role of Chair; I cannot believe how quickly the time has passed.

After the significant refurbishment activities that 2009 brought, we have had a slightly quieter year in 2010 albeit one which has seen the committee continues to invest in the hall. We provide an excellent facility for the use of the local community, which is well maintained and extremely well looked after.

As ever security and safety for the benefit of our users continues to be a major focus for the management committee and we have continually ensured that we comply with the local fire and safety regulations. We have continued to monitor our impact on the environment and have implemented a number of changes to improve our environmental footprint. This will continue to be one of the committees continued focuses over the next 12 months.

Management Committee

A significant change was made to the Committee at last year's AGM with the creation of a new post, that of Environmental Officer. Accordingly Philippa Smith took stood down as the representative of St James' School PSA and took on the role.

Unfortunately a replacement representative for St James's was not forthcoming. Consequently at the start of the year the Committee numbered 14.

Terry Allen the representative of the Parish Council resigned from the Committee in May following his resignation from the Parish Council. Terry had been a valued member for 6 years and the Committee thanks Terry for his commitment to BVH and will miss his contribution.

A replacement for Terry has not yet been forthcoming and therefore the Committee ends the year numbering 13.

The Committee met on 6 occasions, in line with normal practice, and on average 12 members were in attendance.

In recent years there has been a strong focus put in place on good succession planning, a topic I will cover in a little more detail later...

Communications and Bookings

The continued success of the Biddenham Village Hall website enables us to take, and manage, the majority of our bookings on-line. This has the primary benefit of providing a single place where all information is stored, provides a single source of detailed information on the Hall and its facilities and simplifies the booking procedure significantly. We have and will continue to invest in this capability as it has proven to be a great asset to the Village Hall. We also continue to use the Biddenham Bulletin as a very effective tool in managing out communication to the local community. We have again been able to call upon a number of different contributors this year. A big thank you to all who have contributed.

Booking Revenues have bounced back from the decrease we saw last year as a result of the closure of the hall for the renovation work. In addition our level of booking has shown a slight increase with a number of new regular bookings in the pipeline.

We continue to be comfortable with the level of bookings and the revenues received this year. As in previous years we continue to seek to achieve a balance between our charitable aims and the need to generate funds in order to maintain and improve our facilities.

Grant Funding

After the significant amount of Grant funding we were able to secure last year for the refurbishment work we have not sought to secure any further funding at this point however we will continue to look at opportunities in the future should there be a need for any further major repair or refurbishment work. The accounts for 2010 will show a significant Credit for Grants, however this was for the toilet refurbishment work carried out last year.

Cost Savings and Revenue Increases

A thorough review of the Hall's Insurance was carried out by Richard Harris and a significant 12% saving was achieved with the incumbent Insurer, at the same time as increasing the level of cover.

Following some exceptional increases in the charges for our electricity in 2009, Richard O'Quinn conducted a review of suppliers and managed to secure a 51% reduction in rates from April 2010 whilst remaining with the existing energy company.

In addition to the savings detailed above we have been able to realise increased revenues in a number of ways, namely the renting out of one of the disused Hall Barns to a neighbour, the paper recycling credits have been restored to their previous level after some delays from previous years and we were able to realise an increase in profits from the social functions put on by the committee.

Reserves Policy

In line with recent years, the Committee proposes maintaining reserves at a level suitable for dealing with significant emergency repairs to the fabric of the Hall.

Therefore the objective is for the level of reserves at the end of the 2011 financial year to be around £12,000 plus the cost of major repairs and improvements planned for the forthcoming year.

Health & Safety

In June, the flex of the floor polisher became entangled in the polishing head, damaging the flex and a socket on the wall of the hall. The socket and polisher have been repaired and the individuals who were using the polisher at the time have been reminded about the safe operation of the polisher. There were no other incidents involving Village Hall equipment during the year.

The programme of regular inspections has been undertaken (including the monthly checks now done by members of the committee), and any resultant issues resolved. The five-year test of the wiring was completed, with no major defects found.

An independent audit of health and safety performance will be undertaken before the end of the year.

Repairs & Maintenance

As usual, a number of minor repairs have been carried out during the year, including minor repairs and adjustments in the newly refurbished toilet area. A leak in the roof has been repaired. It is likely that further repairs to the lead on the roof will be required as the lead is now getting old. The kitchen has been repainted. The annual maintenance weekend was well attended, (mainly by members of the committee), and a great deal of work completed.

Other Work

The new cooker hood was installed in December.
No major maintenance/improvements are planned for this year.

Administration

Once again over the last year we have again been very fortunate to have a highly committed group of committee members which has enabled us to spread the workload as much as possible.

Our decision-making processes continue to be transparent, are recorded fully and published on the web-site. Where necessary we are able to agree to urgent actions via email or via establishing small working groups

that make recommendations that are then presented to the wider committee for ratification at the next scheduled committee meeting. This has proven to work very effectively and we will continue to operate in this manner.

BVH's community role

We consider ourselves to be the guardians of an important community asset. We will continue to ensure that the hall is run with the best interests of the community at the heart of our decision making.

We will continue to run the hall in an open and accountable manner, are committed to continually improve the facilities and to ensure that we maintain the delicate balance between hire charges and revenues and our role in organising and supporting Village events.

We have continued to organise a small number of social events annually such as the quiz night, which is always well attended and continues to be a very effective fundraiser for the Village Hall.

We have also continued to supplement our income through our re-cycling project and periodically publicise this activity in order to maintain current levels of performance.

Concluding Comments.

As I mentioned earlier, I would come back to the topic of succession planning. Due to my relocation to Singapore earlier this year I will no longer be able to continue as Chairman of Biddenham Village Hall, I am therefore rather sadly tendering my resignation as Chairman and member of the Biddenham Village Hall Management Committee.

However the strong focus we have put on succession planning over recent years means that the Committee can remain strong after my departure as Chairman. Phil Inness, who has been a patient Vice Chairman for the past 4½ years, is putting himself forward to become Chairman for the forthcoming year. I'd personally like to thank Phil for his support over the last year as I have not been present at all meetings and I'd like to wish him well in the role in the future. As I have said on a number of occasions in the past, he will be supported by an exceptional group of committed and dedicated committee members who offer unstinting support and hard work to ensure that Biddenham Village Hall is well maintained and contributes fully to the community of Biddenham.

Unfortunately 2010 also brought us some very sad news. David Osborne, one of life's great achievers sadly passed away on 22nd September. On behalf of the Village Hall Committee I would like to pay tribute to David and his tireless dedication to the Village and the Hall in particular. Even at the age of 82 David had lost none of his drive and enthusiasm. Our AGM today, and all of our future AGMs, will be the poorer without him.

David joined the Committee in December 1996 as Secretary, was co-Chairman for a substantial time and devoted considerable commitment and endeavour until retiring in November 2004. His list of achievements was extensive. Early on he inspired raising the profile of the Hall, resulting in a new logo, articles in the Bulletin and the introduction of advertising. He also actively embraced technology and was the driving force behind the operation of the hall becoming more efficient and effective. Even after his retirement he was actively engaged with the hall and recently spent a considerable amount of time writing a series of articles about the history of the hall. He was always an active presence at our AGM's and was always extremely supportive of the work we were doing. His unstinting dedication to the village and the hall will sorely missed by all.

David will be greatly missed but certainly not forgotten.

The village hall continues to prosper, continues to provide a value for money facility for the use of the village and continues to be a focal point for the Biddenham Community. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the committee members and also members of the village, and the parish council for their support in ensuring the smooth running and securing the future of Biddenham Village Hall as a facility that we can all be truly proud of.

In conclusion I'd like to personally thank each and every one of the management committee for their help, support, encouragement and fun and laughter that we have shared over the last five years. I wish you all the very best for the future, and who knows when I return to the UK in the future, there may just be a spare slot on the committee!

Richard Hall - Chair, BVH Committee.