

**Ferring Village Hall**  
**Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting**  
**Held on Wednesday 17 May 2023 at 7.00 pm**

**Present**

Simon Cornish (Chairman); Bernadette Griffin (Secretary); Betty McCann (Treasurer)  
Keith Cockram; Debbie Dilks; Carole Fordyce; Tori Monroe and Richard Sims

**Public attendees**

Pat Atree (FADS); Graham Batchelor (FADS); Wendy Dickens (Arun Art Society);  
Jim Gray (Ferring Gardening Club); Linda Gray (Ferring Gardening Club);  
Lilian Holdsworth (Glebelands Centre); Chris Jackson (Glebelands Centre);  
Ed Miller (Ferring Conservation Group); Jeanette O’Sullivan;  
Jon Rayfield (Ferring Community Cinema); Sally Rayfield (Ferring Community Cinema);  
Valerie Simpson (Ferring Retirement Club); Mark Turner (Arun District Council)

**Apologies**

Richard Curtis; Andrew Jackson and Jo Tuck (Trustees)  
Ruth Arnold (Ferring Parish Council); Jane Crathern (Independent Examiner) and Christine Elkins

**Welcome**

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed those present. In a change to previous years, the Chairman reported that all AGM documents and the accounts could now be found on the Village Hall website. These would continue to be available to view going forward.

**Minutes of the 2022 AGM**

The minutes of the 2022 AGM were taken as read, duly approved and signed by the Chairman.

**Matters arising**

There were no matters arising

**Chairman’s report**

The Chairman reported as follows:

“Moving now to my report for the past year, I would like to take this opportunity to comment on how we have emerged from the dark days of Covid into what has, certainly to date, been a thriving and busy time for the Village Hall. 2022 was largely free of Covid restrictions, and things here at the Village Hall returned to normal. Sadly, a couple of our hirers have not survived the pandemic, but we have been active in recruiting several new regular hirers during the year: Latin & Ballroom Dance, Spanish Lessons, Stretch & Mobility, and Trainmaster to name just a few.

We have also been successful in increasing the usage of the hall for private hires – things like children’s birthday parties, family events, and even a wake. This we believe has been

achieved by raising the profile of the hall both on social media, and by having more Village Hall events such as the Christmas Market, Jubilee Market, Expo etc., which bring people in that wouldn't normally come to the hall. We still have availability for regular hires particularly in the Griffin Room and will continue to work hard to promote this.

During 2022, we have made a number of improvements to the hall:

- The Main Hall was re-wired in February 2022
- Stage curtains and valences were fireproofed
- Decoration of Main Hall and Club Room
- Refurbishment of Main Hall floor
- Griffin Room is now equipped with a large laptop screen, and can be used as a training room, thanks to a generous donation from Ferring Community Cinema
- Programmable heating controllers have been installed
- New emergency lighting inside and out
- All lighting throughout the whole complex has been upgraded to low energy LED lighting
- Outside lighting has been renewed

So far in 2023, we have replaced the water heater serving the Club and Griffin room kitchens, and the behind stage toilets. We have replaced the old gas model with a modern, efficient electric heater. We have plans to replace the old gas heater serving the Main Hall kitchen and toilets in the months to come – again with a modern electrical unit. We've also had some new storage installed for regular hirers in the form of wall cupboards in the boiler room.

Our much publicised focus for 2023 is going to be the installation of solar panels and insulation of the Main Hall and stage. We have been successful in raising significant funding for these projects, including a successful funding application to the Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Improvement Grant scheme, set up last year to commemorate her late Majesty, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Thanks go to all those who have contributed – details can be found on our website – the shortfall will be met from Village Hall reserves. We have also committed some funds to the provision of a bike rack under the overhang by the Club Room door, and I would like to think that we can progress some more hall upgrades with the internal decoration of the corridors, and Griffin Room.

Financially, 2022 was a good year. We were able to deliver all the improvements I've mentioned, and our reserves have only decreased by £10,000. We took the decision to increase hire rates in October (the first increase in five years) at a time when energy costs looked as though they could well overwhelm us. In retrospect this was the right thing to do, but we did take other measures to minimise the effect of the energy increases; we signed up for a new three year deal with our energy supplier, so our energy costs per unit are now fixed for that period (despite being significantly higher than 2021), and we have been able to control our gas usage more effectively with the installation of the new heating controllers mentioned earlier. I don't envisage hire charges having to be increased in the foreseeable future.

Income is up so far in 2023, due to strong regular hires and more frequent private hires, although we will take a small hit when we close the Main Hall for the duration of August in

order to install the solar panels and insulation. However, we should have a healthy surplus at the end of the year, which will be carried forward to deliver more improvements in 2024.

This year will see four events hosted by Village Hall trustees – The first was the Coronation Coffee Morning and Market held last week. We will be hosting a larger market as part of the Ferring Festival on 8<sup>th</sup> July and, of course, the Christmas Market to tie in with the Parish Council led events. The fourth event will be an open day sometime in the autumn, to show off the hall and, hopefully, the completed works of the solar panels and insulation. It will also be an opportunity for our hirers to show what they are about, and to recruit new members.

Looking ahead to next year, November 2024 sees the centenary of the building and opening of the hall by Mrs Henty. We plan a few events throughout the year to mark the occasion and have set aside Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2024 for the main celebrations.

I would lastly like to pay tribute to my fellow trustees, all of whom have their own areas of responsibility, and this last year especially have worked well together to plan, develop and implement the improvements I've referred to and to deliver a valuable village resource. Without them giving their time, community facilities such as this Village Hall could not exist. We are always on the lookout for new trustees to join the management committee. If you are interested in being part of this important community asset, we would love to hear from you."

Simon Cornish – Chairman

There were no questions.

#### **Presentation of the accounts**

The Chairman presented the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022, which were displayed on screen. He confirmed that the accounts had been independently examined and approved by the Trustees.

There were no questions.

#### **Trustee elections and resignations**

##### **Chairman**

**Simon Cornish** (proposed by Valerie Simpson and seconded by Lilian Holdsworth) was re-elected as trustee and Chairman by unanimous vote.

##### **Secretary**

**Bernadette Griffin** (proposed by Lilian Holdsworth and seconded by Valerie Simpson) was re-elected as trustee and Secretary by unanimous vote.

##### **Treasurer**

**Betty McCann** (proposed by Mark Turner and seconded by Valerie Simpson) was re-elected as trustee and Treasurer by unanimous vote.

### **Trustees appointed since the last AGM**

The Chairman reported that, since the 2022 AGM, the village hall had been fortunate to have three very capable people join the management committee; Keith Cockram, Tori Monroe and Jo Tuck, Sadly, Jo Tuck was unable to continue as a trustee, due to other commitments and was not offering herself for election.

**Keith Cockram** (proposed by Lilian Holdsworth and seconded by Valerie Simpson) was elected as a trustee by unanimous vote.

**Tori Monroe** (proposed by Graham Batchelor and seconded by Valerie Simpson) was elected as a trustee by unanimous vote.

### **Trustees for re-election**

**Richard Curtis, Debbie Dilks, Carole Fordyce, Andrew Jackson and Richard Sims** (proposed by Pat Atree and seconded by Jon Rayfield) were re-elected *en bloc* as trustees by unanimous vote.

### **Appointment of Independent Examiner**

The Chairman reported that, since the 2022 AGM, **Jane Crathern** had been appointed as the Charity's Independent Examiner replacing Independent Examiners Limited. The Chairman commented that Jane had previously been the Secretary and a trustee of the village hall (until resigning with effect from the 2022 AGM). The trustees were delighted, due to Jane's prior knowledge of the village hall's financials, that she had agreed to take on the role.

### **Any other business**

- Hot water supply – a comment was made to the effect that the hot water supply was inadequate. The Chairman confirmed that this would be looked at as part of the overall hall improvements. In the short term, it was noted that there was an urn in place and an additional kettle would be supplied.
- Heating – in response to a question regarding heating, the Chairman explained that the new timers should resolve any issues in that connection.
- Parking – the matter of inadequate parking for event attendees was raised. The Chairman acknowledged that this was a village wide issue and suggested that some information could be added to the village hall website showing the on-street parking locations. A suggestion was made regarding use of the local private off-street car parks. The Chairman commented that this would be something hirers would need to take up with the car park owners/occupiers.
- Christmas tree – a query was raised regarding the Christmas tree that had died and whether this might be due to its location. A suggestion was made that the next tree could be contained in a large pot. of use. It was also noted that the heating would be turned off at the end of May until autumn.

### **Votes of thanks**

- Ed Miller thanked the trustees, led by the Chairman, for all the work undertaken to achieve the various village hall improvements. Ed commented that the hirers are very appreciative of the trustees' work and leadership to ensure the village hall remains a good local facility.
- Valerie Simpson thanked the trustees for their work on the Queen's Platinum Jubilee festivities in June 2022.

### **Closure**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.25pm

### **Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 15 May 2024