

BOTESDALE VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Registered Charity No 1033068

Annual Report 2023-24

Botesdale Village Hall, originally the Church Rooms, is leased by Botesdale Parish Council from the Diocesan Board of Finance and the Parochial Church Council and administered as a charity by a Committee of Trustees, representative of the hall users, together with independent elected or co-opted members. In June 2020, the committee amended the terms of the lease, with the agreement of the Charity Commission, to recognise the current user groups and increase the flexibility to recruit additional trustees by increasing the number of elected members from three to seven. In the past year there have been nine trustees, although some resignations are expected at the AGM.

The Hall is used each weekday during school terms by the Rickinghall and Botesdale Pre-School. The numbers of children using the facilities has increased to the point where there is a waiting list to attend. The proximity of the Hall to the woodland area and the provision of the log-cabin has meant that the pre-school children are able to play outside during most of the day even during the winter.

Our local drama group WARTS have produced two performances this year, Dick Whittington in March 2023 and Gas Light in March 2024. The Ballroom Dancing and Yoga Instructors continue to use the hall as previously. The Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee have also been able to hold their regular meetings in the Village Hall.

The Committee has not employed a Hall Administrator this year, the duties being shared between the Pre-School and the acting Treasurer. The requirement to employ a Hall Administrator should be reviewed routinely, particularly when permanent replacements for the officials are in post. The Hall bookings are principally of a routine nature, Trustee Organisations or Regular Bookings and the requirement for an additional committee role is of limited benefit. The two main requirements are to manage the calendar and to invoice hirers. As acting treasurer, William Sargeant had been able to manage these activities but after many years of commitment he will be stepping back from all Village Hall activities. The trustees and I would like to thank William for his dedication and support over the years.

The key tasks of the two members of staff employed by the committee are routine cleaning and minor maintenance, and we are fortunate in their efficiency and reliability. We are also fortunate to have good relationships with specialist local professionals who maintain the plumbing and electrical systems.

The income from hiring the hall is similar to the pre-pandemic value while the expenditure has been constrained with no major project costs this year. The finances remain healthy, with reserves greater than £10,000. The hall will require external decoration in the coming year and some refurbishment of the kitchen is planned.

Botesdale Village Hall provides an excellent venue for the community and is normally well used throughout the year. By the nature of the core trustees being drawn from the user groups, most have additional time-consuming commitments. The committee sometimes has difficulty in filling the official roles and would welcome additional trustees to support this valuable local facility. Please make contact with any questions on this.

As current Vice Chairman I would like to thank all the Trustees, the outgoing Chair, William, our staff and the local professional tradespeople, who have assisted with the running and maintenance of the hall, for their efforts and support, so necessary for the continued success of the Village Hall.

Andy Edwards
Vice Chair