

OTHERY VILLAGE HALL

Registered Charity 304604

ANNUAL REPORT

For the year ended 30th June 2023

otheryvillagehall.org.uk

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT 1st July 2022 – 30th June 2023

Secretary to the Management Trustees: Bridget Gander

Miller's Orchard, Main Road, Othery, Bridgwater, Somerset TA7 0QE

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Management Trustees:

Stephen Richards Bond	Chair
Bridget Gander	Secretary and Treasurer
Ella Jennings	Booking Clerk
Andy Wright	Maintenance Officer
Neil Anderson	
Hannah Pinder	
Rachael Soutar	
Chris Shepherd	
Ian Philip	

The expressions Management Trustees and Committee are used interchangeably in this document and are the same thing.

Bankers: Charities Aid Foundation Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

Independent Financial Examiner: Shannon Betty

Insurers: Ansvar Premier Way, Romsey, Hants SO51 9DF

Governance

Othery Village Hall was established by a Declaration of Trust dated 17th June 1958. The grand opening of the Hall was believed to be at a ball on 20th October 1962 after a fundraising campaign to recoup the money involved in the original purchase of land and building costs.

The Hall was extended and improved in 2005 with help from The National Lottery, Viridor Credits, Sedgemoor District Council, Othery Parish Council, and many private donations. The Hall and land are held nominally by The Charity Commissioners Custodian. The committee take responsibility for all aspects the operation of the Hall, its finances and for its upkeep and development. The Hall comprises of the main hall, foyer, storage rooms, toilets, catering kitchen, bar, archive room, stage, chair store and car park.

Appointment of Trustees

The Trust Deed governs the appointment of trustees and the management of the charity. Trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting which is to be held in October upon at least one week's notice. The Parish Council have the right to nominate one of its members to be a committee member before the AGM and that person will form part of the newly formed committee of nine management trustees. The other members are voted in at the AGM. The committee shall have the power to co-opt not more than three additional members to represent interests in Othery and the neighbourhood not represented by any organisations. The committee meets monthly, at present, on the third Tuesday of each month, in person or by Zoom, inter-committee member communication, information sharing and occasionally decisions are made by using WhatsApp and email communications.

Objectives of Trustees

The Deed of Trust requires the charity to provide "a Village Hall for the inhabitants of Othery and the neighbourhood without distinction of sex or political, religious or other opinions and in particular for the use for meetings, lectures and classes and for other forms of recreation and leisure time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants"

Principal Activities in pursuit of Objectives

The Hall is used throughout the year for a variety of activities including a children's pre-school group, pilates, zumba, astronomy (Somerset Levels Stargazers), gardening club, the Somerset branch of the Western Front Association, short mat bowls club, Playford Dance Group, church events, Parish Council meetings, school performances, PTA, community information events, music nights, craft fair, fundraising activities including quiz nights, brunches and music performances, children's Christmas party, harvest suppers, plays, training events, elections and annual village Street Fayre parking.

The Hall houses the village archive.

The future of the village pub the London Inn which closed in January 2022 remains uncertain. The Hall now runs a pub night each Friday as a service to the community within its fundraising activities.

The Hall is available for hire for anniversary and birthday parties, funeral wakes, community social functions and fundraising events.

Hiring Agreement

Booking use of The Village Hall is accessed via the website. The hirer acknowledges they are bound by the standard hiring terms. The hiring agreement states that the hirer has read the Hall's terms and conditions and forms a contract between the parties setting out their respective responsibilities. One off hirings are paid for online at the time of booking and no deposit is taken,

Licenses

The Hall has a premises licence issued by Sedgemoor District Council governing the provision of entertainment to the public and sale and supply of alcohol. The licence is held by the Trustees who are collectively responsible for its administration. The Hall is licensed by the Performing Right Society for live music and has a PPL licence.

Risk Management

The committee are conscious of its wider risk responsibilities and reviews its risk assessments periodically.

Insurance

The committee recognises that it is under a legal obligation to protect the building, its hirers, and employees through adequate and appropriate insurance

The Hall is insured by Ansvar Insurance through the brokers Norris and Fisher. with respect to property damage (£637,030) for contents (£40,078) electronics (£11,654), stock (£662) public liability (£5 million), employers' liability (£10 million), trustee indemnity (£250,000) and legal expenses (£250,000)

Subject to certain conditions, hirers who have no public liability cover of their own are included under the Hall's public liability insurance. This cover does not extend to commercial hirers.

Maintenance Matters

All portable electrical appliances are tested by qualified personnel periodically as required by law.

Safety Risk Assessments are carried out regularly.

Firefighting equipment is checked annually and the certificate displayed on the notice board.

The Health and Safety Officer carries out weekly checks on the fire exits, firefighting equipment and alarms, contents of the first aid box and accident book and replaces anything needed. He also checks the defibrillator provided by the Parish Council.

The Maintenance Officer and trustees carry out regular maintenance checks and hirers are asked to note any faults and defects in the maintenance book in the Hall or telephone/email to the Committee if urgent so it can be rectified immediately (leaks etc).

Hirers are asked to record all accidents in the Accident Book

The Hall pays for the services of a cleaner and a gardening company.

Financial Strategy

The committee have adopted a formal Financial Policy which sets out their responsibility for the prudent management of Hall funds. The trustees set a hire charge which ensures the basic running costs of the Hall are met. The electricity charges are reviewed, and companies changed if a better deal is found, as are insurance costs. A minimum reserve of £5,000 is to be held in the bank.

Volunteer's Efforts

The running costs of the Hall are kept as low as possible by the voluntary work of the trustees.

Routine tasks undertaken by the Committee include meeting and greeting hirers, updating social media, checking the Hall and car park, buying bar stock, staffing the bar, putting out recycling and rubbish bins, bookings, processing payments, raising invoices, correspondence, changing key codes, management Committee administration, maintenance matters, monthly parish magazine reports, marketing fundraising and answering enquiries.

We also have a group of volunteers of all ages who help with events, which include preparing food, working behind the bar, making cakes, helping put up tables, selling raffle tickets and serving hot drinks. Our website is maintained by one of our volunteers. Volunteers are encouraged to attend and to contribute at Management committee meetings.

2022/2023

The Committee's mission is to promote the use of the Hall and to make it as affordable and attractive to as many users as possible. The Committee want to make the Hall the obvious first choice venue for residents in the village and to give each a sense of ownership of this resource.

The Friday pub night represents the corner stone of the committee's promotion of the Hall. Many of the new events promoted by the Committee are based around it.

In the period covered by this report these have included a Halloween party, quiz nights, a Mexican night and Coronation celebrations. Other events have included a Sunday brunch, craft fair and a children's Christmas party. In broad terms, the Committee would like to hold at least one event each month to augment the other activities for which the Hall is used.

A general programme of refurbishment of the internal arrangements in the Hall, remains in progress. The archive room, the foyer and the toilets have all been painted.

A rationalisation of the storage rooms has been undertaken, this remains a challenge because there is limited space and increasing demand.

The stage curtains have been replaced. These together with sound deadening acoustic baffles which have been installed have significantly reduced the Hall's echo.

Improvements have been made to the accessibility of the Hall's audio and projection facilities. The installation of a Bluetooth connection makes it easier for hirers to use the audio equipment.

An application for grant funding to cover part of the cost of renovation the main roof to the Hall and the flat roof of the ancillary buildings was successful. This work will include, at the same time, the cost of installation of solar panels, battery storage and an EV charger. This is a major project with a budget of more than £40k. Over 60% of this project is grant aided. This innovation will enable the Hall to manage its ongoing energy expenses and increase its resilience. This work will be completed by the end of the year.

The committee will continue to seek grant funding to underwrite the cost of improvements to the Hall.

The Hall has been awarded Hallmark Level 1 Accreditation and will be aiming to obtain levels 2 and 3 in 2024.

What we plan

The rise in the cost of living has impacted on the activities of the Hall in the same way as it has on any other organisation. We will prioritise resources and make economies where necessary.

We will do all that we can to continue to provide the same service to the community and to meet your expectations.

Acknowledgement

The trustees would again like to thank the residents of Othery for their support for the Hall. Most of the Hall bookings come from the parish and its many and various clubs, societies, and organisations. Our Hall, unlike many other village halls, receives no regular grant support from the parish council towards running costs.

The trustees would like to thank our volunteers for their efforts to help the Hall run smoothly throughout the year and in making the Hall a welcoming place to come to.

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above. Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signature

Full name: Stephen Richards Bond Position: Chairman

Date: 15/09/22