

Francis Giffen Memorial Hall
Main Street, Sudborough, NN14 3BX
Registered Charity Number 1117494

Chair: Toni Holtby, Spring Cottage, Slipton Lane, Sudborough, Northamptonshire NN143BW

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Trustees Annual Report May 2023

Introduction

This is the 16th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the charitable trust, Francis Giffen Memorial Hall (FGMH) which was registered with the Charity Commission on 8th January 2007. All residents in Sudborough over the age of 18 are eligible to be members of the charity and are entitled to vote at an AGM. The charity's financial year ends on 31st December.

In accordance with the Trust Deed, there shall be a quorum when at least 5 people are present at an AGM.

The objects of the FGMH are as follows:

“The property and the trust fund and its income shall be applied for the purposes of a village hall and to provide a children's playground for the use of the inhabitants of the parish of Sudborough without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, nationality, race or political, or religious or other opinions, including the use of the property for meetings, lectures and classes or other forms of recreation and leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the life of the said inhabitants”

FGMH Policies, Hiring Agreement, Risk Assessments

During 2022, all policies, agreements and risk assessments were re-evaluated in light of Government advice on the lessening impact of Covid on operation and use of the hall. All documents were reviewed in January/February 2023 with approval being required at the May AGM 2023.

Management Committee and its operations

The FGMH Trustees have met regularly Ordinary meetings and Event Planning meetings. In mid 2022, with the removal of nearly all Covid restrictions the management committee took the decision to focus all efforts in the short term on running regular village events, increasing the use of the hall by villagers, and creating opportunities for the community to come together for social activities. There were a number of Trustee resignations during 2022. Rather than seek new Trustees immediately, the incumbent Trustees decided to focus on increasing the number of volunteers associated with the village hall to assist with the running of events, maintenance of the hall and garden and as a pipeline for new Trustees.

Trustees

Carol Hatsell, Rhona Rowland and Tammy Gibson resigned in 2022. Ronnie Allison joined as a trustee in August 2022 and resigned in December 2022. Vickie Feather, Jenny Piazza and Chris Featherstone were all appointed as Trustees in 2022

Current Trustees are:

Toni Holtby Chairperson (and Parochial Church Council representative)

Vickie Feather (Co-opted) Booking Secretary

Chris Featherstone (Co-opted) Treasurer

Jenny Piazza (Co-opted) Secretary

Simon Forde (for Sudborough Parish Council)

Business Plan and Budget

The purpose of the business plan is not only to generate income from hirings but also to generate interest in the Hall from amongst beneficiaries (the Villagers) encouraging use of the hall and the running of community focussed events.

As previously stated in mid 2022 the decision was taken to focus on the organisation of hall focussed community events as a way of increasing income and use/interest in the hall. From September 2022 onwards a number of events have been held.

To improve the facilities and awareness of the hall the following significant purchases/investments took place in 2022. A dishwasher and an electronic card payment device were purchased, Full fibre broadband Wifi was installed by Gigaclear as part of their Community Hub programme and the Francis Giffen Memorial Hall website was launched (sudboroughfgmh.org).

Volunteers

We are supported by our voluntary Independent Examiner of Accounts. And we are grateful to be supported by numerous volunteers (in excess of forty) who assist with maintenance of the hall and garden and running of village events. (for example we have a pub night rota).

Insurance

FGMH's insurance policy runs from 1 December and is a specialised village hall insurance provided by Allied Westminster. It covers the Village Hall building and contents, the village garden, the outside tool store, and the play equipment which is inspected annually in June by RoSPA: The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. This inspection last occurred in June 2020. During Covid the garden became very overgrown and the childrens play area is unable to be used. At the time of writing with it is tapped off. A volunteer party carried out a much needed clear up in Autumn 2022. At the time it was identified that the benches were also unsafe and required repair. At the time of writing all benches have been repaired and the identified actions from the 2020 ROSPA inspection have been carried out. The 2023 ROSPA inspection has been scheduled for June and we hope to open the play area after it is carried out.

Activities/Users of the Hall to end December 2022:

The monthly villager café continues to gain traction and for 2022 we have a rota, for volunteers to run this. Good support has been seen not least with a festive best Christmas bake competition and generous cake/bake donations. The café is providing a real opportunity for meeting up and good conversation with newer village members attending.

A Wine tasting event, a band night, a Halloween party for children, a wreath making evening and a Christmas party for both children and adults. As the Vane Arms is currently closed a monthly pub night has been introduced to supplement the monthly Village café. Note; all donations from the Village café are passed through to Thrapston Food Bank. The Café is not a fundraising event for the Hall but is an independent event, the use of the Hall is provided free by the committee for this purpose.

Weekly Boot camp has seen regular support although numbers are low and it would be great to see more at the sessions.

Weekly yoga sessions are well supported.

There have been a number of one-off hires for parties and special interest talks.

Finance

Bank: NatWest, The Drapery, Northampton. NN12EY

Independent Examiner: Jeremy Crouch, 14 Main Street, Sudborough NN143BX

Financial Position as at 31st December 2022

A Covid business rates refund of £2667 was received in March 2022.

The books and accounts have been scrutinised by the Independent Examiner. The income and expenditure account shows a balance in the current account of £14,849.40, with an income of £4599.74 and expenditure of £4566.21, and an opening balance of £14,815.87. The Reserve account stands at £12,026.57.

The reserve account exists thanks to Mrs Giffen's £20,000 legacy received in 2008, left to help secure the future of Francis Giffen Memorial Hall, the construction of which was paid for in 1979 in memory of her late husband.

The electricity fixed term contract ended in October 2022. The new tariff has resulted in monthly payments increasing from £24/month to between £100 - £130/month. This has significantly increase the annual running costs of the hall.

The commencement of regular events in September 2022 has provided much needed income for the hall and the forward plan for 2023 is to ensure that income covers all running costs of the hall to ensure a sustainable future.

Appendix

General update to cover the period 1st Jan 2023 – 15th May 2023.

The use of the hall has continued to improve, with an increase in income. The average monthly income is now starting to match outgoings and the Trust is on a much more sustainable footing.

Monthly village café and pub nights continue to be popular and well attended events in the village and our volunteer network continues to grow. Yoga continues to be a popular activity and the number of enquiries regarding booking the hall is increasing.

The garden area has been closed since 2019. A clear up event in autumn 2022 was well supported and the area was tidied up and much of the overgrowth was removed. In May this was followed up by a further clear up and the ROSPA safety inspection recommendations were carried out (bench timbers replaced, paths cleared and play equipment cleaned and repainted). It is hoped that the garden area will pass its ROSPA inspection in June and we will be able to open the garden, hopefully with an opening event and BBQ.

We have recently been awarded a grant from NNC Community funding of £4,600 to cover 50% of the costs of installation of an AV installation in the hall comprising of an HD Projection system and screen, audio system, control system, hearing loop and improvements to lighting (dimnable Low energy lights). The remainder will be funded from the reserve fund which is ringfenced for maintenance and improvements to the hall. At the time of writing we await the outcome of a grant application to fund improvements to the garden area (storage shed, garden tools, additional benches, bird/bat boxes, wildflower planting and information boards plus improvements to the childrens play area).