

BINTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Assembly held in The Village Hall, Binton on
Tuesday 16th May 2023 at 7.00 pm

Present: Mike Flaxman (in the Chair)
Richard Cox, Tom Lloyd, Hazel Martin and Colin Taylor
Clerk: Karen Parnell
Three members of the public were present

1) **Apologies for acceptance**

WCC Cllr Piers Daniell and SDC Cllr Manuela Perteghella

2) **Minutes** of the Parish Assembly held in 2022

The minutes were signed as an accurate record.

Matters arising from those minutes

The PC may have to do another housing needs survey in due course.

3) **Chairman's report**

It's been another interesting and at the same time alarming year with the tail end of the COVID pandemic and the continuation of the Ukraine hostilities. Hopefully things have returned to a semblance of normal in the UK although industrial action in the public sector continues to be disruptive and potentially harmful to the public at large.

Parish council meetings have continued in person. The Binton WhatsApp group and the Binton Life Facebook page are quite active and running well. Many events have taken place in the last year largely around the reinvigorated Village Hall. We have continued to maintain the Village Green as well as possible and the Council supports our local church with a small maintenance grant and the Village Hall with a growing contribution to the running costs.

The Village Hall Committee which was re-established in November 2021 continues to revitalise the hall with a considerable number of initiatives. The accounts and the Committee's more detailed report on the Village Hall activities follows this report. I would wish to minute my thanks again to Cllr Bishop for her input to management and support of the hall and to Kate Fisher who has managed the accounts for the Hall in the past year. The committee, chaired by Cllr Bishop until now, must be congratulated by the Parish Council on their remarkable efforts to reinvigorate and improve the hall and for their invaluable work and efforts in such a short time. Laura Hamiton is taking over the Chair role on the committee and I am very grateful that she has stepped up to take this on.

All the improvements to the Village Hall in the past year are well covered in

the reports from Sarah and Kate but I must mention that the Parish Council has had a full survey of the Hall which was quite encouraging. Of the 4 concerns which needed to be addressed in the first 12 months, only action on some woodworm infestation above the kitchen remains to be done. The roof has been overhauled, the electrics tested and certified and an asbestos register created.

Regarding speeding and traffic volumes, there is a report, as part of the annual meeting, on options for conversion to Solar Power for our two speed warning signs. The new Village Approach Gates at the North and South Village entrances, funded by the WCC councillors grant, have been installed and initially appeared to slow approaching traffic. This impact seems to have lessened though. In addition, work continues for the Shottery Western Relief Road with completion, unfortunately now projected to be August 2024 as the Wildmoor end of the road cannot be started until the B439 end is substantially complete and not be done concurrently due to the potential problems for traffic flows. The impact of this alternative route between the A46 and the B439 will be watched with considerable interest once open. We still await a serious attempt by WCC to improve the surface of Church Bank.

The parish council, in setting the 10% reduced precept for 2023/24, set aside a budget of £2,000 for unspecified village improvements. This will be discussed as part of the following meeting agenda as consideration for the funding for the Solar Conversion of our speed warning signs should externally funded sources be unavailable.

All in all, a busy year with the election and a reduced parish council going forward. My personal thanks to those residents who attended our meetings, the Parish Clerk, my Parish Council colleagues, past and present, the Village Hall Committee and our local County and District Councillors.

Mike Flaxman Chair Binton Parish Council.

4) **Village Hall Committee**

BINTON VILLAGE HALL, CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT (APRIL '22 - APRIL '23)

Another busy year for the hall, which saw a 235 % increase in usage and major improvements achieved.

The parish council's funding for a surveyor's report of the fabric of the building late in 2022 was an important and long overdue step forward. We can now be reassured that the hall is not in danger of further movement and that any work to excavate at the rear (to remedy the damp on the back blue lias wall) would be unwise and probably cause more problems in the long run. The roof has been inspected and essential repairs carried out.

The new kitchen has improved the hall considerably. The units were donated by Laura Hamilton's partner's gaming company in Leamington. The new sinks, taps, works

surfaces & installation were paid for by the VHC. The kitchen is now much better equipped (new water urn, coffee machine, new cutlery, wine glasses etc) and far more functional than ever before. The VHC has paid for the old splintered floor in the main room to be professionally sanded and lacquered and members have renovated 19 second hand wood and chrome chairs which look far more attractive than the old plastic brown ones – some of which have been sold and some which remain in the hall. The VHC members have also replaced the decades old cracked and smudged black toilet seats with hygienic white ones.

Thanks to a grant from Warwickshire County Council for nearly £900, the VHC was able to purchase new electric radiators. While they are effective & programmable (plus cheaper than the old Infrareds to run) much of the heat is still going upwards through the uninsulated roof, so the VHC has reinstalled a couple of the old Infrareds to provide some ambient warmth. With the current high costs of energy, the cost of heating, especially through the cold winter months, remains an ongoing cause for concern. The electricity costs are now over £1,300 per year (and this is after the government grant of £150 has been taken off) and we also have the annual water bill of c. £260 plus mandatory annual fire extinguisher checks & albeit reduced annual rates. The VHC has talked about closing the hall for December and January when temperatures are very low and is currently exploring options for laying insulation over the roof space above the kitchen and toilets. Painting the timbers with woodworm treatment - which was highlighted in the surveyor's report - would be carried out at the same time.

In terms of clients, the VHC is delighted to see a whopping 235 % increase in usage – everything from a photoshoot for pole-dancers from Coventry to willow-making classes and a big New Year's Eve Party for the Lunar Society of Caravanners. Rebecca Judge's popular Gouache Resist art classes have now doubled and run back-to-back on Tuesdays. The hall has also benefited from the recent sad demise of Bonds and welcomed Rachel Harwood who runs willow making classes. But the cold temperatures this winter made the Stratford Scribes decide to leave and find alternative premises. Nicki McGinn's Pilates classes also went online during the cold but have now resumed. It's important to note that people who live in the village attend all these regular classes.

The increase usage of the hall has in part been down to positive word of mouth from people who have used it. The pop-ups have also had an impact: our regular cyclists from Hockley Heath - impressed by what the hall now offers - changed the venue for the refreshment stop on their annual charity ride to Binton.

Other one-off bookings included the village's first ever Art Exhibition (organised by Lizzie Bentley & to be repeated later in 2023) Binton magician Angus Baskerville's Magic and Wine shows and numerous birthday and christening parties.

The regular monthly pop-up cafe's go from strength to strength - they are now an integral part of village life and provide a vital community hub for Binton. In recent months, it's been heartening to see new people have volunteered to bake and help run the pop-ups. The VHC see the pop-ups primarily as a way of bringing the village

together. Conscious of the cost-of-living crisis, it was decided to keep prices static during the past year (while increasing the “baking fees” paid to volunteer bakers) so profits have taken a slight dip. Similarly, the VHC has kept rental prices static too in a bid to attract new clients. With no apparent easing of energy prices, this may need to change in future – or there may need to be a separate winter and summer tariff.

The past 12 months has also seen the VHC organise two hugely successful village events - the summer garden party (courtesy of Vicki and Keith Robson at Church Bank House) and the Christmas Fayre. Not only did they bring villagers together but collectively raised over £1,700 for the village hall.

I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to the VHC (Laura Hamilton, Vicki Robson, Diana Scott, Kate Fisher, Sue Joyce, Lizzie Bentley & Alex Finch). They have been fantastically enthusiastic and hard-working. Their work on the hall and on fund-raising events has brought new life to our village and I believe turned it into a much better, more connected place.

Having driven over 18 months of transformation, I feel now is a good time for me to stand down from the VHC and step back from the day to day running of the hall. VHC member Laura Hamilton has kindly agreed to take over as chairman, with Cllr Alex Finch remaining as deputy.

Sarah Bishop, outgoing chairman of Binton Village Hall Committee

Binton Village Hall

Annual Report for year ending 5th April 2023

(Kate Fisher VHC member and accountant)

The committee’s goal for the year was to rejuvenate the internal aspects of the building and to replace the expensively run radiators. This was to be achieved by investing in more energy-efficient heating systems, such as modern electric radiators. Additionally, it was planned to focus on renovating and refreshing the internal décor and furnishings to create a more inviting and comfortable environment for the residents and visitors of the building. The committee believed that these improvements would not only enhance the overall appearance of the building, but also make it a more functional and cost-effective space for everyone who used it.

The increase in room hire charges could be attributed to the increasing popularity of the venue and its facilities. As more people learn about the hall through word of mouth and passing vehicles, they are likely to be curious about its offerings and avail of its services. Additionally, the pop-up shops have been successful in drawing in customers and generating interest in the hall as a viable space for events. The room hire has shown a 235% increase from £935.50 from the previous year to £3,177.50 this current year.

The success of the pop-up shops can be attributed to various factors. The sense of community and camaraderie among the bakers and volunteers has contributed to the

success of the events. Throughout the year, this has brought in £2,590.78 which averages at £216 per month. After direct costs, this equates to an average monthly gross profit of approximately £134.

The fundraising events held consisted of the Christmas Fayre and a Garden party. The two combined brought in a revenue of £2,603.04. There were various stall holders at the Christmas Fayre exhibiting their crafts. The majority of the stall holders were from the village although there were some from further afield. After costs, the Christmas Fayre brought in a respectable £347.92. The main fundraising event was held in the grounds of Vicki and Keith Robson at Church Bank House. The event was a huge success which was helped by the beautiful weather. The jazz band, bar and bbq was very well applauded and numerous comments made on what an enjoyable afternoon it was. A raffle was held in order to increase funds further where we received donations from various businesses in the local area. Without the generosity of Vicki and Keith, the village hall would have missed out on £1,402.71 of income. Overall, the two fundraising events held were successful in raising funds for the village hall. The committee was pleased with the turnout and the support from the local community. The money raised will go towards maintaining and improving the facilities at the hall, ensuring that it is a valuable asset for the community. The committee is grateful to all volunteers, stall holders, and donors who contributed to the success of these events. They look forward to planning more events in the future and continuing to strengthen the connection between the village hall and the community it serves.

The donations remained consistent compared to the previous year. £400 was donated from the Parish Council with the remaining £94.45 from sources such as Easy Fundraising, Amazon etc.

Once again, an application to Warwickshire County Council was successful where the hall received a payment of £880.00 for the contribution of some much need energy efficient radiators.

The new radiators have ensured that the rooms are warmer, more energy efficient and comfortable even during the winter months. The refurbished wooden floor has given the space a new lease of life and created a welcoming and attractive atmosphere. The replastering to the walls has removed any peeling paint and unsightly marks, making the building more aesthetically pleasing. Lastly, the new basins, taps, and other fixtures have enhanced the overall cleanliness of the bathrooms.

The successful fundraising has not only enabled the organization to undertake this refurbishment, but it has also demonstrated the community's commitment to the building and its services. The donors and supporters have shown that they believe in the importance of providing a safe and well-maintained space for the community's use.

Moving forward, it is hoped that the continued support of the community will enable further improvements to be made in the future, ensuring that the building remains a vital resource for the local area.

Whilst the water rates have remained consistent, the electricity has increased dramatically to £1,329.73 for the year. From analysing the operational activities within the hall, the electricity amounts to 21% however last year this percentage equated to 15.8%. Without the installation of the new radiators, this could have proven to be costlier to what it actually was.

New equipment was purchased throughout the year. Cutlery, glasses, peddle bins, towel dispensers, coffee machines and a new clock are just some of the items added.

Due to the higher income from the fundraising events, the committee could increase the donation to the church from £250 to £300.

Overall, the committee have made tremendous efforts to raise funds and to make the necessary improvements. After all expenditure for the year, leaves a surplus of £1,009.86 with a closing balance of £3,046.03. This surplus will be retained in the village hall's account and will be used for future repairs, maintenance and improvements to ensure that the building continues to provide a comfortable and functional space for the community. The committee would like to thank everyone who supported the fundraising events and those who contributed to the donations. They hope that the improvements made will be appreciated by all who use the hall and that it will continue to be a valuable resource for the village.

5) **District Councillor' s report**

SDC Cllr Manuela Perteghella will give her full report within the annual meeting of the council.

6) **County Councillor's report**

WCC Cllr Piers Daniell conveyed apologies

7) **Open forum**

Not required

Meeting closed 7.10pm