

## **Woodhouse Community Hall Trust**

### **14<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting – 4th October 2021.**

#### **Annual Report**

Good evening to you all, friends, neighbors and patrons of the hall, my name is Rod Darby and I am Chair of the Woodhouse Community Hall Trust. I am delighted that so many of you could join us tonight and promise not to delay you too long with undue discourse.

There is a signing in sheet circulating, I would be very grateful if you would sign so that we have a record for the minutes. We have apologies from Mark Woodland who tragically went down with a cold just days after going out to buy the wine for tonight, and Mr and Mrs Reese who are otherwise engaged, anybody else?

Minutes of the last AGM (30<sup>th</sup> September 2020) were published and agreed at the management committee that followed in October in that year, Jane can send you a copy of those minutes if you are interested in seeing them.

Now Jane, trust secretary, over to you to run briefly through our constitution which reminds us who we are and what we are doing here.

I will now briefly read to you my annual report which covers the period from the 6th April 2020 to the 5th April 2021.

On behalf of the Trustees I would like to welcome you to our 14th AGM and thank you for being with us this evening. I hope you will enjoy a glass or two whilst listening to proceedings, with many thanks as always to Yvonne and the committee for organizing the drinks and nibbles. Yvonne, I should perhaps mention, has very recently celebrated her birthday so many happy returns to you from us all.

What a year it has been. The last time we had the pleasure of meeting face to face for an AGM it was May 2019. Now it is not in the least my intention to make any of you feel old, but at that time we were still in the EU, Theresa May's strong and stable leadership was about to become a little less strong and a whole lot less stable, and the Department of Health, concerned about the possibility of a new viral epidemic, published a document called Guidance on the Control and Clinical management of Ebola. This to me is a reminder of the extent to which time has stood still these last two years.

Before we would be able to meet again in person, life as we knew it changed beyond all recognition, and the AGM of 2020 was first held over until the Autumn to see if the pandemic really would be “all over by Christmas” and was then held online at the end of September. As a consequence, this traditional end of financial year gathering has become a moveable feast like so many other key events (Olympics, the World Cup, Ryder Cup, Woodhouse Community Hall trust AGM...) and it seems likely for years to come to be placed a little oddly, as if as an afterthought in the calendar, for some years to come.

I would like to start by thanking my fellow Trustees, Sandra our Administrator, Amelia our interim Caretaker, our customers both regular and occasional, our Contractors and all of you who do so much to support the hall. Your commitment and hard work have contributed to yet another successful year despite the unique challenges we have faced.

When in March 2020 we announced with regret the postponement of the first Woodhouse village comedy night planned for the following week, very few people could have foreseen the scale of change the pandemic was to bring. That is with the possible exceptions of Manjit and Jane whose day jobs at the department of health could have given them a head start in stockpiling gloves, masks and sanitizer if only their respective husbands had taken their dire warnings more seriously. Almost overnight we were in the throes of a national lockdown with every one of us watching daily news conferences with their updates on numbers and everchanging rules. Over the last year and a half life has been off, then on again, off, and now cautiously back on. The toll this illness has taken has been terrible, both in physical health terms, but also for mental health. The hall closed its doors, the social life of the village came to an abrupt halt, and as a consequence we retreated to our homes to school our children, dust off our jigsaws, and find TV keep fit gurus and online classes to replace what we had long taken for granted. It will surely be many years before we make anything like a full recovery.

Driven underground by covid the Management Committee resorted to meeting on line via Zoom every two or three months during the year. Virtual meetings have become a part of all our lives, and something I think that we will all be happy finally to let go once it is safe to do so. There are few advantages apart from the necessity for everyone to bring their own drinks. Today is just the second in person meeting we have held since covid struck and I am yet fully to adjust, so please don't be alarmed if you hear me calling out “Jill, you're on mute!” or “Alison, have you got your hand up or is that a legacy hand?” occasionally during the evening. I will be interested to see how many of us

wave inanely at each other as we leave tonight in the same way that has become the fashion as we log out of our online meetings.

I am delighted to report that the committee have again successfully managed the assets and financial resources of the Trust. It has been my fourth year as Chair and I would like to extend my warm thanks to the Trustees for their contributions at Committee meetings and even more importantly, between times. This year, whilst quieter than many in terms of hall activity for obvious reasons, has been more challenging than any that went before. As a committee we have had to wade our way through regulation, guidance and protocol like never before, and we all feel as though we have become unwilling experts in risk assessment, infection control and health and safety. Our priority has been and remains to keep our hall users safe, and as responsibility for the regulation of our activities has passed from us as trustees to our clients as bookers, we have been available to pass on our advice and expertise. I am very grateful to the committee for their patience and expertise in helping me to navigate through this minefield. In particular we owe a tremendous debt of thanks to two trustees, Steve Hicks and Bob Evans, who have decided to step down after this AGM.

Steve was recorded as the Treasurer at the first meeting of the Hall Trustees on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2007 and held the Office until 2019. During that 12-year period he prepared the annual budget, kept tabs on our financial position and reported to the AGM each year. He was responsible for our move into the internet age, designing and maintaining our website, and helped us to keep up to date with the operational requirements of managing a small enterprise. I am delighted that he has passed his keenness to find a bargain and get the best deal to Mark, his successor as Treasurer. But equally important to us has been Steve's energy and practical skills (and extensive tool kit) as he shared the essential role of odd job man with Bob Evans, who is also sadly leaving us this year.

Bob's involvement with the community hall started as far back as 2002 when discussions first began. It has been suggested that his work background made him the automatic choice as project lead in the early days, but I can tell you that having asked almost everyone here tonight about his CV without success, such is the shroud of mystery surrounding Bob's past career I shouldn't be at all surprised if it were to transpire that he worked for the secret service. For those of you not familiar with the story of the hall, under Bob's chairmanship of the steering group from 2003, plans for a modest annex to the church got rapidly out of hand such that by 2008 the project had delivered a stand-alone, purpose built, state-of-the-art community space. Under his stewardship the committee took the project through planning, from design to build, and on the back of tremendous support and generosity from the village, it opened in July 2008. Job

done, Bob passed the chair to David John, but he has remained involved at the heart of the project ever since. As you all know Bob and Libby are retiring to Devon to enjoy sea air and grandchildren, and they go with our very best wishes. I can confirm that Bob has now surrendered his bunch of hall keys and that they do indeed carry the tag numeral 007.

Bob and Steve have been extraordinarily generous in giving both their time and their expertise to the hall over a period of 15 years, and they will be very much missed. As a small token of our gratitude the committee would like to present you both with a gift in recognition of your hard work. I am very conscious, however, that I sound like I am talking to a pair of nine year olds when I say “Your main presents haven’t arrived yet, I’m afraid you will have to wait another few days”.

Bob and Steve will leave behind them a tremendous gap as well as a proud legacy, and I am delighted that we have had some interest from volunteers to fill their seats around the committee table. I am very pleased that Manjit has agreed to take over the health and safety lead from Bob, that Jill will be managing weddings for the coming year, and that Alison has agreed to continue as HR lead.

I would also like to formally record the Trustees thanks to our employees for their ongoing commitment and hard work.

Shortly after we last met here, our caretaker of five years standing Alan Orr retired from his post, leaving behind him a trail of good wishes and fond thanks for all his hard work. We were delighted soon after to recruit “Allan Two”, not least as the appointment carried with it the potential to save money on new signage for the hall. Sadly, Allan befell considerable personal tragedy and in his turn he left us too, again taking our very best wishes with him. We were very lucky to have Lynn Hammond fill in for us as caretaker as the hall began to reopen during the spring of this year, and the caretaker’s slippers are currently being worn by Amelia Darby who continues to keep the ball rolling whilst we try to recruit a permanent replacement. If any of you here tonight know anyone...

Sandra Sanderson started as hall administrator on a short trial basis in 2010 and although she is no longer resident in the village, the advent of modern technology has allowed her to continue to do an excellent job of managing our bookings from afar. Her priority remains an efficient administration and the maintenance of good relations with our many bookers. The website has recently been updated with new web hosts and as soon as some early hiccups are

overcome we hope to be fully functional with a real time availability calendar and internet booking facility.

Sandra reports a summary of bookings to each committee meeting and I am delighted to report that as lockdown has eased, our regulars have begun to return. Events such as parties have begun to find their way back into the calendar. As part of our commitment to help to restore some normality to community life, we were delighted as a committee to offer a half price booking fee this year as a means of encouraging activity back into the village. This gesture was very warmly received by our regular bookers, seven out of nine of whom have now returned. We are also very pleased to have received enquiries from several potential new regulars, four of whom will be starting classes soon (or have done so already): adult art classes, country dancing, lace making and a choir. Whilst the people running these classes are in some cases from further afield than Woodhouse, to have a range of activities available on our doorsteps is of tremendous advantage to village life as we open up.

Local events are once more being booked as confidence increases: a McMillan coffee morning last week was well attended, the church coffee mornings to follow, the WI fish and chip supper and the Remembrance parade in November. These events sit side by side in the diary with the ever-popular children's (and grown-ups) family parties, nine of which are booked in for October alone. We don't know yet what the winter will bring but this level of renewed interest in the hall gives me strong confidence that our future is solid going forward.

A sad consequence of covid for many, of course, has been the necessary postponement of their nuptials. We are very pleased to be able once again to offer the hall to celebrate weddings taking place at St Mary in the Elms Church, or where there is a strong family connection to the village. Sadly, three such weddings were postponed during the covid period, one until next year and one yet to make a reappearance on the calendar. The third, however, having been pushed back twice by the regulations, finally took place in September and I am sure you will agree looking at the photos on your table, the hall did us proud. The blushing bride sent us feedback typical of our happy bookers: "The hall and setting for the wedding reception were perfect. Family-friendly and enclosed, set back from the road with space for the children to play. The hall has absolutely everything you could ever need for an event".

As one might expect, this last year has been a quiet one for major new infrastructure as our focus has been on the installation of covid signage, soap and sanitizer dispensers rather than new projects. That said the hall doesn't keep itself in good order all by itself, and with a combination of our own input as a



committee and the support of local contractors we have maintained, repaired and upgraded the lighting, the plumbing, the grounds and the shutters. We have procured a set of children's tables and chairs and have repacked and manualized three garden marquees which remain available for loan. We have reviewed, simplified and published our pricing structure which remains highly competitive. And as noted, time has flown and we may have left the EU, but not before Alison treated us all to GDPR training.

The project of which I am personally most proud, however, stands not within our grounds but just outside the gate. In December 2019 the committee were first approached with a proposal to help fund a memorial to three young airmen who lost their lives when their Wellington bomber crashed on a training flight in October 1943, just yards from the where the hall now stands. The trustees agreed to support the project with funding on behalf of the village. A wrought iron bench to a bespoke design depicting the crew, their wounded airplane, the church, and Beaumanor Hall now sits proudly outside the hall alongside a brass plaque which bears their story. A memorial booklet carries further information and pictures from our past, and is a fitting tribute to this young aircrew. I am sure you will agree we can be very proud of our substantial contribution, without which this village focal point and celebration of these young men would not have been possible.

Moving to plans for the coming year, we will of course prioritize the safe reopening of the hall and a return to "business as usual". We will once again canvass our regular clients and listen to feedback from neighbors and ad hoc users of the hall who may wish to propose changes or additional facilities. Suggestions made thus far and in various stages of discussion include wireless internet connectivity, upgraded sinks in the toilets and perhaps updated kitchen and hall cupboard doors.

This is now our 14th AGM and it is with pleasure that I advise you that as we are about to hear from Steve standing in for our Treasurer Mark Woodland, the Charity is as viable as it has ever been, not least thanks to his excellent work in securing coronavirus grants and start-up funds to help us to maintain and then re-launch the hall. The accounts are prepared quarterly and prior to the annual submission to the Charity Commission we are very lucky to have Mr Richard Rees cast an independent eye over them for us, so many thanks indeed to him. With the energy and commitment shown by a great many villagers I am pleased to report that we have come out of at least this stage of the pandemic safely and in good shape. As I mentioned earlier in my talk, there is now potential for new volunteers to join us on the committee and if you are either a resident of the village or a regular user, we would be very keen to talk to you about how you

might get involved in the management and running of this excellent village resource.

Thank you all once again for being here this evening and a very big thank you for your patient attention.

# 2020/2021 YEAR END ACCOUNTS SUMMARY

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

	2020-21 £	2019-20 £
<b>Receipts</b>		
Booking Fees	2,168.60	15,906.26
Add: Booking deposits	3,012.39	3,012.39
Less: Deposits refunded	-350.00	-3,012.39
Less: Booking fee refund	-1,200.90	-327.00
Covid grants	24,836.00	0.00
Other income	1,392.50	187.13
<b>Bank interest</b>	<b>292.78</b>	<b>8.55</b>

## OTHER INCOME £1392.5 INCLUDES:

- £300 DONATION BENCH PROJECT FROM CBC  
- £942.50 DONATION BENCH PROJECT FROM PARISH COUNCIL  
- AND £150 COMPENSATION FROM NATWEST

<b>Total</b>	<b>27,138.98</b>	<b>15,774.94</b>
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	2020-21 £	2019-20 £
<b>Payments</b>		
Water	480.24	434.58
Gas & Electricity	818.13	790.96
Mobile phone	171.63	695.23
A Orr monthly pay	2,612.20	2,335.78
PAYE	598.60	0.00
S Sanderson monthly fe	2,502.72	2,543.64
Hall Expenses	4,196.85	2,684.79
Furniture/Contents	0.00	193.48
Contractors	3,245.20	4,931.00
Lease	250.00	250.00
Insurance	568.37	514.72
PRS	183.35	207.95
Internet	76.79	93.70

<b>Totals</b>	<b>15,703.08</b>	<b>15,675.83</b>
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## Net Income / (Expenditure) for Financial Year

	<b>11,435.90</b>	<b>99.11</b>
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## Analysis of hall expenses:

- Bench project	2,451.60	0.00
- Other hall expenses	1,745.25	2,684.79

## STATEMENT OF RESERVES

Bank balances at 5 April 2020	
Current Account	5,775.79
Reserve Account	0.89
Redwood deposit	17,000.00
<b>Total bank balances</b>	<b>23,776.68</b>
Add: Surplus for year	11,435.90

<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>35,212.58</b>
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Current Account	5,918.91
Reserve Account	0.89
Redwood deposit	29,292.78
<b>Total bank balances</b>	<b>35,212.58</b>

Representing:	
Current reserve	5,919.80
Long-term refurbishment	29,292.78

<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>35,212.58</b>
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Mark Woodland  
Treasurer

## EXAMINER'S REPORT

I have examined the accounts of The Woodhouse Community Hall Trust and I am satisfied that the financial records of the charity have been maintained in a satisfactory manner and reflect accurately the affairs of the Charity during the year ended 5 April 2021.

Richard Rees - Independent Examiner  
Signed

Signed

Date

21/7/21

Date 25 July 2021



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Redwood deposit	17,000.00
Total bank balances	23,776.68
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Total reserves 35,212.58

Mark Woodland  
Treasurer

Signed

Date 2/7/21

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Total reserves	35,212.58

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I have examined the accounts of The Woodhouse Community Hall Trust and I am satisfied that the financial records of the charity have been maintained in a satisfactory manner and reflect accurately the affairs of the Charity during the year ended 5 April 2021.

Richard Rees - Independent Examiner  
Signed

Date 2 July 2021