

The Baxter Hall Charity Trustees Report 2024

The Baxter Hall Charity (BHC) was set up in March 2021 to protect the Baxter Hall as a community facility. In September 2024, just after our official year end, we received the fantastic news that, as from 11th September 2024, the Baxter Hall Charity was legally solely responsible for the hall, and it had been transferred back to local ownership after twenty-seven years and the threat of losing it for ever. This achievement has only been possible thanks the hard work and dedication of BHC Trustees, with much time spent during the year liaising with solicitors, the Diocesan Board of Education and the Charity Commission in order to achieve the transfer. Having ownership of the hall will make it easier from now on to secure grant funding for developments and improvements.

Over the past twelve months, The Baxter Hall Charity has continued to meet its aims to establish and run a community hall, to improve conditions in the hall and achieve financial stability and resilience to satisfy the needs of the community for space to meet, socialise and learn. This is helped by an efficient trustee overseeing bookings, and, when problems arise, by trustees concerned with the general management of the building. We are very lucky to have local skilled workmen we can employ, who assist by being available during school holiday periods. We currently have a full complement of trustees following the appointment of Nick Robinson and Sheila Grocock during the year.

The Baxter Hall has provided a dedicated space in the lower hall for the village Playgroup, Little Explorers and the community hall has provided a safe and well-maintained space for Smiles before and after school care, an essential service for working parents. A variety of other groups have used the community hall including regular Pilates, dance, art and craft, music, W.I., community coffee mornings, committee meetings and private parties. St Margaret's Church has used the hall for events such as the Snowman Festival. We organised a very successful gin-tasting with music evening which took place last November, raising essential funds to help to keep the hall going.



The Baxter Hall Garden continues to thrive and provide an attractive green space for the Little Explorers' Playgroup and Smiles before and after school club. The children have enjoyed spending time in the garden, planting seeds and watching them grow. Smiles children learned how to weave with local weaver Chaz Friend and made a huge, friendly-looking caterpillar which is now residing on the garden fence and has

been named Gaston by the children from Little Explorers. The garden has been opened for the community and a memorial plaque has been placed in honour of Sally Zelenczuk, garden designer Pete's daughter, who sadly died earlier in the year.

The strip of land at the back of the Baxter Hall has been transformed after some hard-work by trustees and volunteers to remove the weeds and professional landscaping by a local company.

BHC takes maintenance and safety of the whole building very seriously and over the past 12 months has provided new fencing for the School House, fencing for the lower hall, landscaped the garden area behind the hall, had the community hall floor professionally stripped and resurfaced, organised internal painting and repainted the main door. All 3 gas boilers are serviced annually to ensure gas safety and regular checking and servicing of the fire alarm system and fire extinguishers in the two main halls is done by a professional company.

We are always looking to improve accessibility in the hall and this year 2 ramps have been purchased which enable a manual wheelchair to be pushed into the porch area and community hall.

Challenges Ahead

The Baxter Hall is an old building, and maintenance will always be a significant challenge. As legal owners of the building, we will need to agree a long-term maintenance plan, looking at the fabric of the building including brickwork, roofing and windows. This will all need to be costed and funding identified and applied for.

We need to ensure we are meeting the needs of the local community by consulting with them to understand their requirements and by advertising our facilities particularly using social media. Our website needs improving and regularly maintaining. We need someone with these skills to help us, preferably by becoming a trustee.

Financial Situation

The Baxter Hall Charity is in a satisfactory financial position with a bank balance of £31,443.15 at the end of the financial year.

The end of year accounts have been independently checked and approved and will be submitted to the Charity Commission.

Despite a drop in donations and another year of high legal costs, income exceeded expenditure by £4020.87

After 2 years of high legal costs, we were finally able to conclude the successful transfer of the Baxter Hall back to the local community.

Notable changes in the year were a significant increase in community rentals and a significant drop in energy costs which were fixed for 2 years at the start of 2023.

Our anchor tenants (School House, Smiles and Little Explorers) provided the bulk of our income and remain key to our future viability.

The regular income from community use allowed us to continue a high standard of maintenance and repairs and improve our overall financial stability.

The Baxter Hall is an old building and maintenance plus major unexpected repair costs will always be a significant financial challenge. As part of our management of these financial risks we reviewed and updated our financial reserves policy. We will keep this policy under review as we develop our long-term maintenance plan and seek grant funding to support this.

Thanks and Acknowledgements

To BHC trustees for their support, hard work and enthusiasm during the year and for making a real difference to the community by making sure the Baxter Hall will be here for many years to come.

To our funders, as detailed in the treasurer's annual report, enabling us to develop and improve our facilities.

To our website Hosts 34SP, who not only continue to provide free hosting for the Baxter Hall website but are always more than happy to help when we need it.

To everyone in the local community who has helped us during the year.

We can now look forward to many more years of the Baxter Hall in Stoke Golding, providing our local communities with an attractive space to meet, socialise and learn.

The Baxter Hall Charity

Accounts for Financial Year 1st September 2023 to 31 August 2024

Income	2023-2024	2022-2023	Notes
Donations from Private Individuals	£0.00	£25.00	
Gift Aid Claimed	£0.00	£1,283.48	
Donations from Local Charities	£0.00	£3,971.47	
Grants	£439.00	£1,195.00	Rural Community Grant
Interest from Bank Account	£60.70	£60.29	
Regular Rentals (House, nursery, after school)	£18,183.05	£16,395.00	
Community Rentals	£3,141.00	£1,941.00	
Sales of Tickets to Fundraising Events	£630.00	£622.00	
Deposits received	£200.00	£100.00	
Refund from LDJ Solicitors	£0.00	£40.00	
Total Income	£22,653.75	£25,633.24	
Expenditure	2023-2024	2022-2023	
Legal & Other Fees to obtain Lease from LDBE	£3,115.20	£5,301.10	
Regular Maintenance & Materials	£2,601.80	£1,311.88	
Repairs to Building	£5,287.37	£6,680.57	
Bank Fees	£60.00	£60.00	
Baxter Hall Insurance	£1,317.14	£926.23	
Utility Bills	£3,561.23	£5,250.55	
Weekly cleaning fees	£1,332.00	£1,270.00	
Stationary & IT	£166.66	£157.39	
Returned Deposits & Hire Fees	£200.00	£200.00	
Sundries (including gifts & expenses for fundraising)	£131.04	£241.56	
Hall Improvements (From Grant Funds)	£860.44	£10,084.32	Garden + Kitchen Projects
Total Expenditure	£18,632.88	£31,483.60	
Cash at Bank	2023-2024		
Opening Balance	£27,422.28	<u>Operational Cash Flow Analysis (Viability Check)</u>	
Plus Income	£22,653.75	Operating Income (Regular Rentals)	£18,183.05
Minus Expenditure	£18,632.88	Operating Costs (excl legal + grant funds)	£14,657.24
Closing Cash at Bank	£31,443.15	Operating cash flow	£3,525.81