

Adastra Hall Hassocks Community Association CIO

Report to the Annual General Meeting

16th September 2025

Chris Hobbs - Chairman

I am pleased to be able to share with you this evening my Chairman's report for the first full operating year for the Adastra Hall Hassocks Community Association CIO. Back in September 2022, when I became Chairman, I outlined a range of priorities for our organisation that focussed on the following points.

- 1) Make sure we are doing the right thing by our organisation, volunteers and staff
- 2) Drive the revenues generated by the hall
- 3) Invest to make our hall more efficient
- 4) Invest to make our hall safer, and more attractive to hirers

Here we are 3 years later and I think we can look back and be extremely proud of what we have achieved for our community. We continue to deliver on every single one of these measures - here are some of the highlights for 2024-25.

- 1) Make sure we are doing the right thing by our organisation, volunteers and staff
 - This is the first full trading year of our Charitable Incorporated Organisation, and this year we finally closed Hassocks Community Association, its fore-runner. This provides our trustees and employees a little more safety in the operation of the hall.
 - The appointment of Bernard O'Rourke as our 2nd employee to manage facilities and meeting and greeting casual hirers.
 - Paying above the minimum wage, offering flexible working arrangements and ensuring that pay is made on time, every month with tax properly accounted for. Providing our staff with the right equipment to do the job - not least working 'phones and computers.
 - Ensuring that we maintain proper documentation as required by law. Be that insurance, risk assessments, having clear hirer policies and procedures.
 - Staying loyal to our contractors, treating them fairly and with respect but recognising these are commercial contractors and we must do the best, always for our charity.
 - Ensuring that we have the processes in place to ensure that our organisation remains "safe" - paying for the right legal advice, and project management resource. Ensuring that our insurances during our building works cover us for what we need, and so on.
- 2) Drive the revenues generated by the hall.

- We continue on our journey of booking and revenue growth with another successful year, despite the Green Room being closed for 3 months between April and June. .
- An 11% increase in bookings to 1149 events; and a 22% increase in booking revenue to £61,930 - a record - at a time when we introduced a reduced price for our regular Monday - Thursday community hirers in the main hall.
- A 45% increase in revenue from Extras to £2,110 - the new projector in the Green Room, the projector screens, and the green room party lights have paid for themselves already.
- We moved from Barclays Bank to Virgin who operate on-line and allow us to bank cash locally. We also earned £744 in interest despite our balances reducing heavily.

3) Invest to make our hall more efficient

- This year we moved further to remove gas from our energy mix replacing the oven in the main kitchen for electric, and the heating in the Green Room to infra-red.
- We moved you an electricity provider, Octopus, who give us 100% green energy.
- Furthermore, we introduced card payment for the table tennis and short mat bowls groups, reducing the amount of cash we have to handle and bank and meaning that those group users don't have to always have cash to play.
- And we introduced Saturday morning weekend key handovers, and a mechanism by which we can charge people more from their deposits if things go wrong.

4) Invest to make our hall safer, and more attractive to users.

- We completed our major project, the Green Room redevelopment in June 2024 at a cost of just under £370,000 and the room quickly filled with regular hirers paying a higher rate than the previous Green Room due to the increased capacity and quality of the environment.
- We replicated the access control arrangements from the front of the building allowing safe access and control of entry for our hirers.
- Following an incident at the hall in February 2024, we extended our access control arrangements to limit access to the kitchen area only to keyholders.
- During the year we applied for and won grant funding from Mid Sussex District Council of £250,289 for the 2nd part of our major hall improvements - the toilet extension. We contracted this work at the end of the financial year and work started in June 2025. 3 months later and I can confirm that the work is now complete.

I am immensely grateful to those people who make this hall run smoothly.

Firstly our staff - Emily and Bernard who go above and beyond to make our hall work for our hirers. We continually adopt, adjust and improve our processes and this is a team effort dealing with hundreds of enquiries and over 1,000 bookings each year. Thank you.

Our volunteers - Heather and Howard who lead the Short Mat Bowls, Anthony and Phil who lead the Table Tennis have done a sterling job keeping these important groups running for us. Thank you, and have a pat on the back for your efforts.

And finally our 9 trustees - a very big thank you indeed for your work, on behalf of our community. Even if your contribution extends to only attending a few meetings, thank you. Your votes and direction are important. However, I would like to extend additional thanks to a few of our trustees. Sue Hatton and Stella Jenner, who has been involved in decades of AGM's as trustees, and special thanks to Stella who stepped forward to help deal with the cash transactions this past year. Next - Debbie Harris, who quietly gets on with the tedious task of making payments, receiving payments and managing our accounting function. And finally to Carolyn Barton who after 4 years is stepping down from the role of Secretary. That really, really underplays what you have been doing for us. My sounding board, the voice of reason, proof reader of grant applications, chaser of grant funds, building specialist, maintenance guru, finder of good value architects and critical eye over details. We will miss you and all wish you well in your many many other projects.

We mustn't of course, forget our hirers who have been on this journey with us. They are at the core of everything we do; if we don't have hirers we don't have a hall and we can't deliver our facility to the residents of Hassocks if there is nothing to put in it. And nothing for the residents of Hassocks to come and enjoy, or learn, or meet.

I remember one day, early in 2024 standing in the pouring rain as the Green Room extension progressed with some exciting drainage survey work. In the main hall, the Dementia Choir was singing, and dancing. I was totally moved by what I saw and heard. This is why we do what we do. We provide a quality environment to bring communities together. Somewhere safe, somewhere warm. Be it youngsters coming to play toddler football at Tiny Tekkers on a Friday, the Youth Club on a Thursday, Monday morning Hartbeeps, Drama on a Wednesday night, or ballet on Monday and Tuesdays. Those who come to learn piano, guitar, art, how to save lives, or Jive, or learn ballroom. Those who come to socialise at WI, U3a, Friday night Bingo, Games club, Monday Natters, Craft, or those who come to vote, or give blood, or exercise, or learn to look after their baby - or party - engagement parties, weddings, baby showers, 1st birthdays, 2nd birthdays, 5th birthdays, 30th, 40th, 50th, 60th, 80th birthdays. And wakes. Thank you and whilst we hope you really enjoy your hire, we just hope that you recognise that our charity, our volunteers do this for you.

In summary - an exceptional first full trading year for our charity and we continue to be well placed to deliver for our hirers and our residents for many years to come.

Adastra Hall Hassocks Community Association
Receipts and Payments for the Year ended 31 March 2025

ITEM	31 March 2025	31 March 2024
Receipts		
Hall Hire	61,930.00	48,440.63
Grants/Donation (list1)	160,633.63	172,566.72
Table Tennis, Short Mat Bowls	7,323.45	6,069.79
Extras inc Lights, AV, piano	2,110.00	1,180.00
Other receipts	1,002.52	4,189.23
Interest, cashback	744.41	855.26
Transfer		
Total Receipts	233,744.01	233,301.63
Payments		
Cleaning staff inc window cleaners	8,384.50	7,905.00
Cleaning Materials	1,116.41	1,810.33
Waste	1,815.23	1,675.18
Hall staff inc Booking Sec, Maintenance and locking up	11,358.68	7,012.93
Licences	1,314.76	1,260.76
Insurance	2,082.67	2,095.82
Energy	4,522.48	5,228.69
BT/WiFi/Mobiles/Ionos cloud	695.81	526.55
Water, sewerage	1,380.85	630.55
Table Tennis tables	1,349.99	0.00
Maintenance (list2)	7,989.67	6,782.95
Hall improvements	5,040.94	0.00
Hearing Loop	0.00	1,187.22
Solar Panels and Batteries	0.00	38,544.71
Toilet Extension	1,201.80	0.00
Green Room build/Finish	254,673.84	115,180.03
Admin inc Hplnk, card reader, conference, sundries	515.39	0.00
Various Misc expenses		1,144.46
Defibrillator Contribution and AV equipment	1,729.54	
Total Payments	305,172.56	190,985.18
Profit/(loss) for the Year	(71,428.55)	42,316.45

Bank Balances		
Balance as at 31 March 2024	85,522.00	43,205.55
Balance as at 31 March 2025	14,093.45	85,522.00
Movement in Bank balances	(71,428.55)	42,316.45
Made up of		
Current a/c	9,084.68	85,522.00
Savings a/c	5,008.77	

Independent Examiners comments

I have examined the accounts for Adastra Hall Hassocks Community Association and can confirm that the Receipts and Payments listed above accurately represents the transactions for the year ended 31 March 2025.

A full audit was not required but due to the large sums of money involved with building work I have checked that all payments to the main contractor are supported by Invoices and confirm these match to the expenditure recorded.

Richard Wolff ACMA 14 August 2025

List 1

MSDC S106
 Rotary club
 W.I.Hassocks

List 2

Elements Heating
 Pyrotec
 HPW Electrical
 Handyman
 Danfire
 Doors/locks/keys
 Garden/tree work
 General sundries