



Fritwell Village Hall CIO

Chair's report

March 2024

Welcome to the Fritwell Village Hall CIO AGM.

I would like to start this Chair's Report by thanking all of those people who have given up time to support the Village Hall over the last 12 months. That includes the Trustees of the Hall, those who have joined our subcommittee and the Friends of the Hall who regularly give their time to help with and support our activities. A lot of work has taken place in the last 12 months and it is only possible with the time, dedication and support of all these people. Much of this work goes on behind the scenes but is necessary to ensure that the CIO is not only run effectively but also that trustees carry out their legal responsibilities. To get a full overview of the governance involved you can see all of our policies on the website.

I would also like to thank the Parish Council, Playing Fields Committee, Community Fridge and other village organisations who have been supportive of the work that the Trustees do over the last year. It has been great to see the village organisations come together and work in collaboration more.

The past 12 months have seen the Trustees continue to focus on progressing plans for a new Village Hall. With planning permission approved in early 2023 we then convened a New Hall subcommittee to focus on the next steps. One of the first key tasks undertaken was to get an outline cost for building the hall as per the plans. This was to enable us to have a clear target for the fundraising. The outcome from the multiple quotes received was that we set a fundraising target of £600k for the New Hall. This is higher than our original target, but with the rising costs of materials over the last few years, this was not unexpected. I would like to thank David Williams particularly for his help with this part of the process, he was instrumental in getting this information.

Once our target was established, we focused on putting together a Business Plan, which will form the backbone of the grant funding applications that we have lined up to make during 2024. A big thank you must go to Ian Critchley for doing the lion's share of research needed to create this document and indeed for pulling it all together – it has been a huge task.

In the second half of 2023 the focus was very much on fundraising, with the development of a fundraising strategy which identifies the various means of fundraising and the amounts we

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hope to raise from each. Some of these were already up and running at the end of the year, with crowdfunding page and Buy A Tile Campaign. The New Hall subcommittee had several new volunteer members and will focus on fundraising, with particular emphasis on the grants that are available. It is good to have more hands to share the work with. Again, all this work has taken place behind the scenes and has involved very many hours of work for many people, but I'd like to thank Gail Barnhill in particular for the huge amount of work she has put into the fundraising strategy and fundraising planning. I'd also like to thank all those that have volunteered to help with the fundraising throughout 2024.

This also seems like a good point to update on how we are progressing against our target, and I am pleased to announce that we have recently passed the £100k mark, a massive achievement and one that has taken involvement from many trustees, past and present, and members of the community, both supporting events and attending them, as well as making donations. For all of this myself and the trustees very grateful.

Throughout 2023 we have seen continued community use of the Hall. Regular hirers such as the Baby and Toddler Group, Keep Fit group and Table Tennis Club have continued and the 'Live Nights' have provided excellent live music and entertainment. The Trustees continue to run a number of events. The Thirsty Thursday Quiz continues to be very successful and I'd like to thank Dave Barnhill for continuing to take on the Quizmaster role on a weekly basis. Cushion Club and Pub Night have also continued, albeit with fewer attendees than we might have hoped for. The bingo nights have been very popular and we look forward to the next one at the end of the month. 2023 also saw Race Night return to the village hall and I would like to thank Kirsten Phipps for running this event – it was a real hit with the families that came. Our Flower Show and More was a smaller event this year than we would have liked, and we are giving consideration to how we take this forward.

The Coronation of King Charles was celebrated by events organised to bring the community together. We held a Coronation Cocktail Party with live music, the Community Fridge and playing Field joined us run a family day with activities and races for children. Finally, the coronation was shown on the 'big screen' and a buffet lunch provided. Other big screenings included the Lionesses attempt to reach the Final of the Women's World Cup.

In November the Village Hall also hosted a 'Village Update' an event that saw many village organisations including the Parish Council, Playing Fields, the Scouts, the Community Fridge, the Church and the Wesleyan Chapel all provide updates to residents. Hopefully such combined events will continue in the future.



There are many other event ideas in the pipeline for 2024 but if you can think of events that would interest you or your friends, please let us know, as we want to reach and serve as many residents as possible.

The Village Hall is also happy to continue to support the Community Fridge with its work to distribute food, otherwise destined for landfill, to the community and we look forward to continuing to collaborate going forward.

In 2023 we continued with our work to maintain the hall and keep it as a going concern until we get our new hall. Particular thanks go to Daniel Kimber for helping patch a leak in the roof. As ever, we continue to monitor the expenses of running the hall and electricity costs are a particular challenge. With the inefficiencies of the building and the rising cost of electricity this had a significant impact in 2023.

One area that the Trustees are very conscious of improving is our communication on progress with the hall plans. We aim to communicate in person via the Update meetings, via our website and emails and via social media with our Facebook account. We also have plans for the hall up on the noticeboard and inside the hall. Any further suggestions for means of and frequency of communication are gratefully received.

To conclude I'd again like to extend a final thank you to all involved with the hall, including all the volunteers who help at events, but reserving most thanks for the residents who use the hall and continue to make it an important asset in the community.