

Hildersham Village Hall Trust – Chairman’s Report, 2024 – 2025

HVHT has had another steady year under the continuing guidance of Helen Humphrys (Treasurer), Jill Heale (Secretary) and Jenny Logan (Chair). We were fortunate to welcome a new Trustee (Jackie Parker) to the Trust following the AGM on 28th June 2024 and we would like to thank her for the contribution she has already made to the Trust.

The hall has been well used over the last 12 months with private parties, ongoing bookings with the dance school and the arrival of Inspire, an organisation which sources temporary classroom accommodation for young children with special educational needs who, as a result of their needs, cannot be supported in mainstream school. The teaching staff and pupils use the hall 4 days a week during term time. The village Lunch Club filled the hall with a lively Christmas event and another successful quiz night was held in March, raising a healthy profit for the Trust.

Ongoing maintenance has not been too onerous over the year but a burst pipe in the kitchen and a dripping toilet resulted in a very large water bill. Whilst the Trust was disappointed by the lack of sympathy from the water company, it is thankful to Jackie Parker for spotting the leak and for the fact that no internal damage to the hall was incurred.

Electricity usage is constantly under review due to the changing tariffs & significant increases in unit cost. We thank Helen for her efforts in identifying the best deals for the Trust and for Jill who diligently sets the heating for the users and ensures it’s turned off when they leave.

A number of kitchen items have been replaced, including the cooker which was kindly donated by a village resident. Wheelie bins have been replaced, washed away in floods, replaced again and then rescued from downstream in Abington! They are now chained to the village hall so they hopefully won’t be washed away again.

The Trust continues to take advice and guidance from Cambridgeshire ACRE who carried out an audit of the hall facilities in 2024. Although we have made use of their documentation for updating the HVHT Safeguarding Policy, ACRE hasn’t offered any practical or financial input to suggestions they made for potential hall improvements.

Whilst the village hall continues to serve our community well the Trust decided it was time to undertake a structural review of the building to ensure its longevity. The review was carried out by Andrew Firebrace Partnership and the outcomes will be discussed once the findings have been reported.

Finally, the Trust offers its thanks to Hildersham Parish Council for its ongoing support of the members and the building. As Chair, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Helen, Jill and Jackie, without whose hard work and ongoing commitment the hall could not continue to operate.