

EYNSFORD VILLAGE HALL (Registered Charity No 302737)

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2023

Object of the Charity

The provision and maintenance of a Village Hall for the use of the inhabitants of the Parish of Eynsford without distinction of political, religious or other opinions, including use for meetings, lectures and classes, and for other forms of recreation and leisure-time occupation, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants.

That public benefit was delivered in 2023.

Management Committee

As at 31 December 2023 the members were:

Chairman:	Mr M G Physsas
Hon Secretary:	Mr J Staniland
Hon Treasurer:	Mrs B Storrar

Other Members: Mr J Cairns, Mr J Mesnard, Mr D Ketley, Mr B Newton

Charity Correspondent

Mr M G Physsas, 54 St Martin's Drive, Eynsford, Dartford DA4 0EZ
Tel: 07968 056481

Governing Document

A Scheme for the regulation of the Charity sealed by the Charity Commissioners on 27 March 1997, as amended in October 2015.

Governance

The Charity is governed by a Management Committee consisting of Trustees elected annually by local residents at an Annual General Meeting, and of Representative Trustees appointed by regular user groups which hire the Hall.

Day-to-day management is delegated to the Officers (Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary), all trustees, who report to the Management Committee at its meetings, usually ten times a year.

Finance

Details of the financial activities are summarised in the attached accounts.

During 2023, net letting income increased by 48% compared to 2022 at £ 21,991 which exceeded the cost of running the hall by £2,380. The cost of running the hall was £19,611, £2,591 lower than 2022. The reduction was predominantly due to lower energy costs, which decreased from over £12,000 in 2022 to £8,403 in 2023. Income to the Rescue and Renewal Fund increased to £66,000; however expenditure also increased to over £79,000 being mainly professional fees in connection with the plans for the new hall. The closing balance was £345,902.

The policy on financial reserves is to aim to hold a minimum cash balance equivalent to twelve months of letting income. This is to guard against the risk of an event that requires the hall to be closed temporarily.

Bankers

Main account: Santander UK plc,
Bridle Road,
Bootle,
Merseyside L30 4GB

No 2 account (Rescue and Renewal): The Co-operative Bank
P.O. Box 250, Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT

Rescue and Renewal funds are also held in deposit accounts with the Shawbrook, Virgin, United Trust banks. The balances are spread to keep each account within the FSCS compensation limits.

Independent Examiner

Mr Thomas J Phillips B.Sc. FCA
Station Road
Eynsford
Kent DA4 0ER

Serious Incidents

There were no serious incidents during the year.

Transactions with Trustees and Payments to Connected Persons

None.

Chairman's Review of the Year's Activities

The main focus of the trustees has continued to be the drive to raise funds for a new hall to be built on Harrow Meadow. We have again been hugely assisted by the Parish Council with grant applications and other support, and by volunteers from the local community.

We had hoped to start work on the football pitch in early 2023 but this was delayed as a result of the extent of the archaeological investigations required by Kent County Council. The excavation work required for the new pitch eventually started on 22nd August 2023 and the last operation in October 2023 was to sow the grass seed and then wait for nature to do its work. It was expected that with the right mix of rain and sunshine together with mowing on a weekly basis the pitch would be ready in time for the start of the 2024/25 season.

A number of fund-raising events have been organised by both trustees and other residents and the Parish Council, including a very successful Garden Safari and the annual Eynstock event on the village cricket pitch. My thanks to all those who have helped and supported the hall over the year.

With regard to more day-to-day matters in respect of the running of the hall, the letting income is now at close to pre-pandemic levels, however this is largely as a result of the increase in hiring rates agreed at the beginning of the year and the number of bookings has declined. The hall still relies on loyal local users or those that have been hiring for many years, as 'one-off' bookings are fairly low. As mentioned in last year's report, this may well be because the hall is now showing signs of age and its facilities cannot match those of other local and more modern halls. This only demonstrates even more clearly the need for a new hall.

Last but not least, the decision was taken towards the end of the year to incorporate the Village Hall into a company to help us attract more trustees and to improve our prospects of securing significant grant funding. This will be taken forward during 2024.

Mark G Physsas
Chairman