

Rode and District Memorial Hall

Annual General Meeting 20th May 2024

Annual Report

Chair: The Hall continues to be a valued asset of the Village. Hire fees were revised for the first time in many years when reintroduced (post-pandemic), while retaining the principle of discounts for locals. We took the opportunity to simplify hire arrangements from blocks of time to hourly rates, in line with the practice of other local village halls. This has optimised use of the Hall by providing additional clarity regarding when it is available for hire and freeing more times for those wishing to book the facility.

2024 has been a year of renovations. We were grateful to Andy Hooker for a large donation of kitchen crockery and to Alex Sing for her advice regarding kitchen equipment. The hall floor has been completely renovated, with very positive feedback and making it more suitable for exercise and dance classes. The Hall 'Ops Team' have been busy flagging and fixing minor repairs and we look forward to the gable ends being painted when the weather is more settled.

Sue Shannon, our excellent Secretary, has also been busy publicising the Hall in the Link and we have been grateful for Mark Dymond and Anthony Battersby's work as part of a joint committee with the Playing Fields and Scouts, exploring the potential for a future joint facility in the village under the leadership of the Parish Council.

Bookings: As the accounts show, bookings have increased significantly over the year, possibly a sign of life around events and gatherings returning closer to pre-Covid normality. The hall was booked for a total of 397 occasions, so on average is in use at least once a day which suggests it is fulfilling its role as a community asset. In the second half of the year there was a noticeable increase in regular bookings by a variety of activity-based therapists, and while not all of them attracted sufficient customers to enable them to continue, some did and we are therefore able to offer a wider range of activities to residents of Rode and beyond. What's more, all of our long-standing regular voluntary and commercial bookings have continued, including the weekly prescription distribution by Beckington practice which we had been unaware of but which it seems has been running for decades!

With the idea of a new, combined facility in Rode being considered bringing together the hall, scouts and sports pavilion, we surveyed one-off and regular users of the hall for their views on our current facilities and what, if anything, they would like to see different in any new building. Two-thirds reported they found the current hall size good or very good, while over half said the same about the committee room. The kitchen feedback however was less positive both in terms of its size and equipment. Overall, the survey generated some very helpful data to feed into the design of any new facility.

Treasurer: Financial Position: The Hall still has a healthy financial reserve.

At 31st March 2024 the General Fund stood at £40,790.87.

For the year ended 31st March 2024, there is a deficit of £821.79, having had the main hall floor repaired at cost of £2,349.75.

The new hire rates have meant that without the expenses for the floor, there would have been a surplus of £1,527.96. Hire fees 2024: £11,285, (2023: £5,699).

Bookings continue to be good for the coming year, it is hoped that allowing for any extra ordinary expenses that the Hall will return a surplus for year 2024/25.

Thank you to Liz McCauliffe for her role in reviewing the accounts.

Kate Robinson (Chair), Martin Long (Bookings), Mark Dymond (Treasurer)
April 2024