

Ramsden Bellhouse Village Hall AGM

26th January 2025 3pm

In attendance: 32

1. **Apologies:** Rob Mitchelson, Ann Wellborne, Richard Wellborne
2. Jamie welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no issues raised with the minutes of the last meeting.
3. **Chairman's Report** – this year has been very positive, with two successful events - St George's Day Breakfast and the Christmas Bazaar. Jamie thanked all the people that helped, planned and participated to make these events a success. There have also been many changes as part of the overall refurbishment and updating of the hall. The online booking system is now fully complete and is operating very successfully, thanks to Carol. The transition to online banking is also complete which has greatly improved control over the finances and removed the need for cash and cheque payments. A card reader has also been used at the Bazaar to take payments.

Jamie thanked Barbara Stanton who has resigned from the committee after serving as website administrator for 13 years, giving us her time and experience and always supporting the events. It is hoped that Barbara will still be an integral part of the team for future events. Barbara was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

Jamie thanked Leigh Woodward, who organised the Social Dance classes at the hall. She has now stepped away from this as a section and resigned from the committee. Leigh has helped out this year to support the treasurer and played a part in preparing the accounts for the Charity Commission and the audit. Leigh organised the Christmas Tree Lighting event this year as well as supporting other events. Leigh was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

Jamie also expressed his thanks to Ann Wellborne, who unfortunately could not be present at the AGM. She has supported the village hall on the committee but also with the social secretary role. She has very successfully organised several events such as the long-standing St George's Day Breakfast and the Christmas Bazaar.

We will not be replacing the role of Website Administrator for at least a year. This is due to us using an external provider to produce a new website for us to match the changes in the hall. We hope to be able to encompass the history of the old website with a modern face. As soon as we are ready we will share with you the launch.

The plans for the coming year are to continue decorating the hall internally as well as some improvements externally. We are looking to improve our lighting externally, car park facility and replace fascia boards there will also be some new additions as there have been this year, such as a fridge and internal party lighting.

Jamie thanked the committee for continuing to give up their free time to make the village hall the success it is, especially to Melvin as vice chairman and Carol for stepping into several roles when needed.

4. **Treasurer's Report** – Carol introduced herself and explained that the person replacing the previous treasurer had to resign so she and Leigh had taken on the role. Carol thanked Leigh for her contribution, and her work in providing the financial documentation to the Charity Commission. Leigh is unable to continue in the role so Carol will remain treasurer for the time being.

The priorities in the last year have been to maintain the hall, increase usage and fundraising efforts. There has been significant progress as you can all see. Last year IMF Coult were appointed as auditors for the accounts, which have been audited successfully with no issues. It is intended to appoint IMF Coult again this year.

During the year, the Village Hall generated income from a variety of resources which are included in these figures. We have purchased equipment this year and have been renting items such as our 1100 litre bin, the car park, the backdrop and selling anything unnecessary in the hall:

- **Hall Rentals:** £25,798.22 a significant increase over last financial year which was around £17,000.00. This increase is due to increasing our hourly rental rate to private and regular hirers, charging for additional items and generally a rise in bookings. Our figures cover rentals for private hire, sections and regular bookers and this is broken down in the figures.
- **Fundraising Events for village hall/charity this year:** £3,636.50 this included St. George's Day Breakfast, History of Ramsden and the Christmas Bazaar and events such as quiz nights, race nights hosted by the sections
- **Total Receipts:** £33,146.23.

Our key expenses included:

- **Utilities:** £6,283.80 this is up on last year as our previous contract expired and we had to enter into a new agreement
- **Maintenance and Repairs:** £7,961.17 for decorating the committee room, refurbishment and upgrade of the entrance hall and repairs to the doors etc along with some general repairs to plumbing
- **Cleaning:** £5,361.31 we have moved to a cleaning company as our cleaners retired at the end of last year. We reduced the costs slightly by scheduling the cleaning around events rather than every day however this has still amounted in a slight increase but we feel the hall is being well maintained.
- **Loan:** You will notice on our accounts we have stated a loan this was due to being locked out of our bank account and the Chairman kindly loaned his own money to ensure the hall remained running. This is all accounted for and paid back in full.
- **Total Payments:** £27,444.75.

In summary, the net surplus of receipts for the year is positive at £5,701.48, up on last year due to all the items mentioned above and we managed to save some money to continue updating the hall and providing our users with the best facilities possible.

Key points for the financial outlook for 2025:

- Key anticipated expenses: £20k old hall refurbishment, £850 heating control, £3k Church Road entrance, new lighting, signage and painting.
- Potential new revenue streams: We believe we have made good progress this year and will be using social media and a new website in 2025 to help us promote and grow the use of the hall more.
- Current grants or funding applications: We don't have any now but have been in discussions last year with Ramsden Parish Council and the RCCE to understand where we can get support.
- Consistency on storage charges for all users paid annually and general invoices raised and paid monthly to reduce administration.

Carol thanked everyone who has helped out through the year, from the villagers who helped her to cut back the hedge in the summer, to all the volunteers at the hall events. If any of you would like to help out, then let someone in the committee know. It's a great opportunity to get involved in your local community.

5. **Bookings Secretary's Report** – Carol gave us a report:

The Booking Stats:

- Total Number of Bookings: 989 for the financial year 23-24 compared to last year which was 944 a slight increase but the main success has been with booking more than one hall meaning a booking has either booked the whole hall (all three rooms) or the old and new hall together so if we look at those numbers the halls have been booked 1142 times.
- Average Monthly Bookings: 82 times
- Peak Booking Periods: October and November with 104 bookings each.
- Section Users:
 - Ramsden Bellhouse Dog Training Club, Horticulture, Scouts, Cubs, Tea and Toddlers and Bowls. This year ended the section for Dance but they continue to rent the hall for now. A section gains a lower rental rate in exchange to raise funding and support the village hall events throughout the year.
- Regular Users:
 - We have a new regular user the Salsa club, as well as several badminton groups, various table tennis clubs, yoga, Boxer dogs, Sanguine Bowls and Pilates.
- One-off Events:
 - We hosted our first wedding at the hall this year which was amazing as well as a graduation party, auctioneer/valuer, flower arranging, several birthday parties, Halloween party, poem reading, Christmas tree light up event, Christmas Bazaar, St. George's Day Breakfast, A rental for a Christmas Day Dinner Party on Christmas Day and a 50th Birthday held in the hall on Christmas Eve plus many more.

We have achieved this through a variety of solutions;

- A new booking system which is now all operationally and working with last financial year being our first full year. This also provides an invoicing system and a monitoring system for all our numbers and attendance.

- Purchasing new equipment and utilising existing equipment renting it out to our users. This involved waste removal from parties, cleaning, back drop, kitchen usage, garden usage amongst various others.
- We also instigated a price increase for all new bookings.

Challenges:

- Availability Constraints:
 - It is imperative that people continue to use the online booking system for their bookings especially those booking regular slots as the system will allow bookings to take place if the slot is free. We do not place regular bookings on for people anymore this is the responsibility of the booker.
- Maintenance and Upkeep:
 - We expect to renovate the flooring in the hall this year and will be marking out dates for this to happen. Where possible we will avoid busy slots.

Conclusion: This year has shown a successful increase in the usage of the hall and we look forward to continuing to serve the community by providing a versatile and welcoming space. We are confident that with the recommended changes and ongoing support from the community, we can ensure even greater success in the coming year.

Acknowledgements: We thank all our users, volunteers, and committee members who have contributed to the smooth running of the village hall this year.

6. **Facilities Management** - Melvin presented a summary of the work that has been undertaken this year. Firstly, he acknowledged all the routine tasks that take place such as maintaining supplies, gardening, fire certificates among others. The Christmas tree was erected together with a new permanent light control box.

Repairs and replacements included

- New Hall door glass replaced after accidental damage
- Dishwasher faulty, 10 years old, replaced it with a lease scheme
- Old Hall main doors painted; letter box removed; new door handle fitted
- Toilets - seats repaired, aged urinal pipework leaking, replaced
- Storeroom cupboard door fixed
- New drain manifold installed in car park to address long standing flooding issue
- Rear lighting added to illuminate rear car park
- Boiler gas pressure inadequate, new piping layout required, urgent action needed to keep hall heating on
- Broken Gas Governor cover replaced
- Large Hoover cleaned and now in regular use
- New batteries fitted to the defibrillator
- Kitchen First Aid Box Contents refreshed

Improvements that have been carried out include:

- All cupboards checked for contents and ownership established
- Committee room - cleaners cupboard, surplus items removed and painted, piano moved into shed, old PA system disposed of
- Village Hall Shed – various items removed and disposed of, a work in progress

- Main Storeroom – large cabinets reduced from 5 to 3 to free up space, reorganised to better support both halls, improved safety
- Broken items have been disposed of, and unused items stored in the shed
 - Chairs - in 2 sets, one for each hall, able to move table tennis table out of the committee room, more space for the walkway
 - Freeing up cupboard space for the new Salsa group's equipment
- The committee room and entrance lobby to the new hall have been redecorated with new paint and new lighting in the lobby

Some of these are small changes but make a big difference for users

A tidy up of the outside area has been carried out too

- Mother and Toddler group old toys disposed of
- Boards etc between sheds disposed of

In terms of hall management:

- On Line booking system up and running, a major step forward
- Shared online drive being used for online documentation management
- Village Hall email address being used for all correspondence, multiple user access
- New Post box, all mail now sent to the hall
- Key safe being used for door and gate keys. Door lock replaced as too many keys in circulation
- Filing cabinet in committee room for Village Hall documentation
- CCTV system now in filing cabinet, secure, better access for viewing
- Card reader procured and used for Christmas Bazaar
- Heating control has been proactively managed to save on gas costs
- Work underway to develop an all-new website
- New Asset Register, operating guidelines and Fire System log produced. CCTV policy and Risk Assessment in progress
 - Updated conditions of hire

Improvements to equipment and facilities:

- Digital display in lobby which aids communication with users, advertising and can be used by event bookings
 - New compact PA system, available for hire
 - New notice board opposite the shop
 - The dog bin moved
 - A half container providing additional secure storage for sit on lawnmower
 - New Hall party lighting, supports Salsa and parties, will be available shortly

Future activities planned:

- Both Hall floors need refurbishment, quotes required, needs scheduling
- Upgrade Old Hall radiators and decorate
- Old Hall rotting fascia board to be replaced by plastic
- Heating control system modifications to allow thermostatic control of both halls
- Reduction of hedges height and width, ditch clean up, rubbish removal from rear of sheds
- Extend size of rear car park through shrub and tree cut back
- Finish off Old Hall doors, painting
- Decorate Old Hall entrance lobby
- Additional lighting along drive to rear car park

7. Election of Officers and Members of the Committee – the posts have been filled as follows:
Chairman - Jamie Ward
Vice chairman - Melvin Simpson
Secretary - Hilary Simpson
Treasurer - Carol Wraight
Booking Secretary - Carol Wraight
Publicity Officer - Richard Wellborne
Website - vacant, not needed this year as we have professional support for the year
Social Secretary - there is a potential candidate
Public members - Pauline Greenan. The section reps will remain the same as last year.
As mentioned in the chairman's report, Leigh Woodward, Barbara Stanton and Ann Wellborne have resigned from the committee

8. Village Hall Charity for 2025 Selection

Five charities had been nominated and a vote among the committee narrowed this down to 2 charities - Spotlight and Basildon Minds. Unfortunately, Basildon Minds did not have a representative at the meeting - Jamie outlined their work. A representative from Spotlight was at the meeting and told us about their work fundraising for the radiotherapy unit at Southend Hospital which serves all of the Mid and South Essex area. They have funded equipment for Surface Guided Radiotherapy which will improve the experience of patients undergoing radiotherapy by detecting if they have move position and exactly where the radiotherapy is to be applied. This removes the need for patients to have tattoos, makes the radiotherapy for patients with head cancers less claustrophobic and means that the treatment will be more effective as it is always directed to the correct area. Further funding will be used to make the department more pleasant for everyone, for example having images on the ceiling of the radiotherapy room to improve the patient experience. A vote confirmed Spotlight as the charity for the year.

A member of the public suggested that Aspire cafe, staffed by students at Castledon School, is considered next year. The usual process is that the charities are nominated by the sections and committee members and the nomination must be a charity.

9. Any Other Business – The Aspire Café which used to be called Poppies was recommended. The issue of people driving on the grass and causing ruts was discussed - it is planned that the old rotten wooden posts will be replaced by posts with lighting. There has been one incident where a hall user did not know how to turn the heating on. Rusi thanked the committee for all their hard work over the year

The meeting closed at 3.35pm and was followed by a cheese and wine – thanks to Pauline Greenan and Melanie Ward for arranging this.

RAMSDEN BELLHOUSE VILLAGE HALL ACCOUNTS

1st December 2023 to 30th November 2024

Opening Balances

<i>Current Account</i>	2,797.29	9,797.29	<i>Total all accounts</i>
<i>Business Premium</i>	7,000.00		

Receipts

<i>Rental Income</i>	19,686.80
<i>Private Rental</i>	6,111.40
<i>Events</i>	2,510.55
<i>Charity RBVH</i>	3,636.50
<i>Bowls Insurance</i>	95.32
<i>WIFI - Idnet</i>	329.00
<i>Electricity/Gas</i>	568.15
<i>Loan</i>	98.75

Internal Transfer 4,000.00

37,036.47

Expenses

<i>Repairs/Maintenance</i>	7,961.17
<i>Cleaning</i>	5,361.31
<i>Donations</i>	50.00
<i>Subscriptions</i>	200.40
<i>Electricity/Gas</i>	6,283.80
<i>Rates</i>	236.30
<i>Waste (1100l bin)</i>	105.00
<i>Gardening</i>	640.00
<i>Water</i>	1,724.97
<i>Insurance</i>	873.49
<i>Equipment</i>	1,197.00
<i>Audit</i>	480.00
<i>Cash Account Closure</i>	989.73
<i>Sundries</i>	121.58
<i>Loan</i>	1,220.00

Internal Transfer 9,890.26

37,335.01

Closing Balances

<i>Current Account</i>	2,498.75
<i>Business Premium</i>	13,000.00
<i>Total all accounts</i>	15,498.75



**RAMSDEN BELLHOUSE VILLAGE HALL
CHURCH ROAD,
RAMSDEN BELLHOUSE
CM1 1RH**

External Financial Review of Ramsden Bellhouse Village Hall

Registered Charity No. 1025468

Period Ending: 30th November 2024

Following my review of the financial records provided by RBVH, I confirm the following:

- All submitted documentation has been examined for consistency, completeness, and compliance with standard accounting practices.
- Income and expenditure records are consistent with bank statements and supporting invoices, with only minor material discrepancies noted—these were attributable to the previous year’s accounting practices. It is reassuring to see that the earlier recommendations for improved record-keeping and financial transparency have since been implemented.

Treasurer Succession Planning: Policy Recommendation:

Developing a comprehensive financial policy can support future treasurers by providing clear, consistent guidance. Such a framework promotes strategic continuity, strengthens transparency, and safeguards the charities financial integrity through well-defined practices.

This review does not constitute a formal audit but reflects a thorough examination of the financial data made available to me. I remain available to support any follow-up actions or provide further clarification as needed. Lastly, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Carol for her efforts in providing all the supporting documentation.

Prepared by:
Tarnya Brannon

BBS Bookkeeping & Accounting Services

 07878 022435 |  tarnya@bbs-accounting.com |  [bbs-accounting.com](https://www.bbs-accounting.com)

Supporting your financial clarity from Tiptree, Essex

Member of the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT)