

The Nigel Poulton Community Hall Report - May 2024

Trustees	Cllr. Richard Lewis (Chair)	Cllr. Nicola White
	Mr. Michael Smith	Cllr. Darren Appelby

It has been another year of change for the Trustees, with many welcomes and many goodbyes.

After years of commendable service Mr. John Meischke stood down as a Parish Councillor, Chair of Trustees and Trustee. We are, however, delighted to be able to continue to call on John's knowledge and passion in the newly created role of caretaker.

We have new Trustees, Cllrs. Richard Lewis and Nicola White, who were appointed as Community Hall Trustees during the September 2023 Parish Council meeting, and we have also since been joined by Cllr. Darren Appelby. Mr. Michael Smith continues as a Trustee and provides excellent expert guidance to us with his years of service on the Parish Council and as a Trustee.

The building has been kept clean and tidy by our team of cleaners. We have welcomed our new cleaner Debi Lee and pass a big thank you to Rosemary Brown for her years of service as she steps down.

I would like to send a particular thank you to Mrs. Jane Allsop who was instrumental in keeping us all coordinated through this period of change, even as she was handing the reigns to our new Parish Clerk Abi Brown who we also greatly welcome.

The Board of Trustees had three formal meetings during the financial year, and all business was reported on during subsequent monthly meetings of the full Parish Council.

To meet the charity's key objectives, the Trustees took all steps to ensure that the on-going maintenance and upkeep of the Nigel Poulton Community Hall and grounds was carried out as required and all Government regulations applied. Our Caretaker continues to ensure day to day health and availability of the hall for all, esp with a keen eye on keeping running costs down (esp in these times of high utility costs).

Despite all the changes in the team, we have been able to continue to deliver. The tennis courts recently had a professional spring clean. We continue to have an external annual inspection and review of all the playground facilities as well as a monthly check by a Parish Councillor, which means we are constantly updating and maintaining the equipment for safety.

Exclusive use of the meadow football pitch by Youth Football has resulted in a significantly improved quality of the ground. We are working with both Youth and Ladies for the 2024-5 season to explore options for co-use. Beyond that, we are optimistic in our ambition to get a 3G pitch into the village in the future.

The hall itself continues to increase its utilisation, including the Lunch Club, which has been an immense success since their move from the Methodist Church. The library continues to be a welcome community asset. Sports and clubs continue to thrive inside the club as well as outside, including table-tennis, Bounce and Imagination Dance. Though there is space for more events and clubs, and it would be wonderful to see us at capacity.

Disappointingly, we continue to see some levels of vandalism, especially with the outside toilets. Occasionally this means they must be closed for repair work to be carried out and this is both a cost and a distraction from the enhancements and investments we could make.

The Trustees will continue to strive to make the Community Hall and its facilities more appealing and update them, as necessary. Most excitingly, we have this new team wanting to look to the future. We are planning to update our vision and goals for the hall and grounds to ensure we are positioned to support the village in the longer term. This will mean getting out into the village community to get new ideas and validate our direction. We hope to see lots of engagement and enthusiasm.

To close, I would like to reiterate my thanks to all the incoming and outgoing Trustees, Clerks, Cleaners and Caretaker, in particular Mrs Jane Allsop and Mr. John Meischke for their work and dedication over the year, to guide the new team through this difficult transition and setting us up for the future.

REPORT BY CLLR. RICHARD LEWIS (TRUSTEE CHAIR)