

Longparish Village Hall

Charity No. 301877

Business Plan 2021

1. Executive Summary

We provide a warm, welcoming and well-equipped village hall which is available at reasonable rates to anyone who wishes to hire it. The hall is well used and is a vital part of our village community. Usage has more than doubled following a major refurbishment in 2012. Covid-19 has affected us significantly and we must plan for the 'new normal'.

2. Introduction and Mission

We provide a warm, welcoming and well-equipped village hall in Longparish which is available at reasonable rates to anyone who wishes to hire it. Longparish is a village near Andover in the Test Valley with around 700 inhabitants.

In normal circumstances, the hall is well used for events including baby and toddler group, children's parties, craft group, two weekly exercise classes, Pilates, film shows, talks, gardening club, bingo, Scouts, village lunches, an ultra marathon, parish council and PCC meetings, coffee mornings, weddings, parties, wakes, plays, fund raising events, live entertainment and so on.

The hall is run by our committee which was established as a charity in 1964 and includes representatives of our main user groups.

It provides a focus for many activities which help ensure the sustainability of our village community. This is in accordance with our Parish Plan which says, *"Having a facility such as the village hall for village community events is extremely important."*

We plan to improve our facilities to keep them up-to-date and meet the needs of our users. This will ensure that we continue to be regarded as the provider of a high quality, affordable and accessible community facility.

3. Background

The hall was built in 1910. It stands on land owned by a trust. The trustees are the rector and churchwardens of Longparish. The Diocese of Winchester Finance Board holds the freehold on their behalf. The cost was funded by public subscription. Until 1964 it operated as a church hall. It was then leased to the Longparish Parish Council at a peppercorn rent. The current lease runs until 2038.

The lease established the Village Hall Committee (Registered Charity No 301877) to manage the hall *"to provide a village hall for the inhabitants of Longparish and the neighbourhood without distinction of sex or of political, religious or other opinions and, in particular, for meetings, lectures and classes and for other forms of recreation and leisure-time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life of the said inhabitants."*

By the time it reached its 100th birthday the hall was showing its age. A major refurbishment in 2012 made it warm, welcoming and well-equipped. As a result use of the hall has more than doubled and it is a vital part of our village. In 2016 we built a storage extension and improved the car park at the rear of the hall to help us to support existing and new hall users who provide activities which are a vital part of village life.

4. Summary Review

We intend to continue the work of the previous 100 years by providing a village hall in Longparish. But first we will have to weather a period of disruption caused by COVID-19. A SWOT analysis demonstrates that we are capable of doing so.

Strengths

- Our building is in good condition
- We have willing and experienced volunteers on our committee

- We are financially sound
- We get on well with our customers, the church authorities and our Parish, Borough and County Councils

Weaknesses

- We depend on volunteers to run the hall
- Bookings are down significantly because of coronavirus.

Opportunities

If we want to increase the number of lettings then

- We could target groups in the new Picket Twenty development
- Test Way walkers and frequent groups of cyclists through the village could provide new customers
- We provide a meeting facility with an excellent a-v system and Wifi access close to the A303 for businesses such as The British Association for Shooting and Conservation, agronomists from across the south of England, etc. We could promote this sort of letting.

Threats

- Fire or some other major disaster (mitigated by insurance)
- School hall might compete for the same customers (but our experience is that the school hall is more expensive and more tightly regulated and does not actively promote community use)
- The 'new normal' post- COVID-19 conditions may be significantly different from our previous pattern of events

5. Financial Information

We are financially sound and, in normal circumstances, can cover day to day running costs and long-term maintenance from our income. Our income from hall hire is usually £7-10,000 per year but we must expect it to be under £5,000 in 2021/22. In addition we receive approximately £2,500 per year from electricity generated by photovoltaic cells on the hall roof. We usually receive around £4-5,000 per year from the annual Longparish Fete which is our major source of financial support from the village we serve. This year we have asked the fete committee to use the surplus for other village causes. We have also offered the first three months after they resume free to regular village users and half price to new regular village users

But we will still have adequate resources which will enable us

- to meet our day to day costs of running the hall of around £10,000 per year;
- to do various planned minor improvements which we estimate will cost up to £5,000;
- to re-decorate the hall and sand and re-surface the floor if necessary
- to provide for long term maintenance. Our lease (dated September 2013) requires the hall to be decorated outside every five years and inside every ten years. We are also required to keep the hall in good repair and are aware that the flat roofs will require significant maintenance in the medium to long term future.

We need to keep a working balance of £10,000. We expect to have sufficient resources in the year to come to achieve the plans shown above though we may have to dip into our reserves to do so..

6. Future Trends

We need to keep the hall in good condition so that it is available to support our community. Until we know what the 'new normal' is, we will keep the hall going, drawing on our reserves if necessary.

7. Immediate Action

- We will provide the best service we can within the constraints caused by coronavirus
- We intend to continue to provide a warm, welcoming and well-equipped village hall that meets the needs of our customers.

Plan adopted April 2021. To be reviewed annually at the committee meeting after the AGM and more frequently as required.