

HURSTPIERPOINT VILLAGE CENTRE

Charity No: 305265 c/o office@hurstpierpoint-pc.gov.uk 01273 833264
Parish Office, Village Centre, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint, WEST SUSSEX BN6 9UY

Annual Report

1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Introduction

The Village Centre has continued to meet its objective to provide public space for hire to the community of Hurstpierpoint and the surrounding area. It aims:

“To promote the benefit to the inhabitants of Hurstpierpoint and neighbourhood without distinction of sex or political, religious or other opinions by the provision and management of a Village Centre for the advancement of education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure-time occupation with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants”.

The Charity's governing document is a constitution adopted 19/02/1965, as amended on 22/05/1975, as amended on 03/11/2003, as amended on 29/06/2011, as amended by order dated 18/04/2005, as amended on 20 February 2019.

The Charity is managed by 1 trustee - Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council.



Users

The Village Centre's main regular hirers continue to be Hurstpierpoint Gymnastics Club and Star Dance (ballroom dancing) in the Main Hall and Hurstpierpoint Pre-School in the Club Suite. The Agnes Dance Classes (Acrobatics and Dance) are also now a main hirer of both the Main Hall and Club Suite. The Village Centre is home to many other long-established groups such as the Scottish Country Dancing, Ballroom Dancing, Yoga, Pilates, Karate, Tai Chi, Kung Fu, Knit and Natter, Table Tennis and Heber Opera. The Sanctuary parent and toddler group on a Monday morning is very well attended.

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Newer hirers have established themselves into regular weekly session, such as the Groove Dance Class on Monday evenings which is a feelgood dance experience for every body and the Friday morning Fit Steps 'FAB for all bodies' class and the 'Move It or Lose It' class for ages 65+.

The Conference Room and Small Meeting Room

There is still significant capacity for hiring the conference room as this has still not been fully utilised. New uses have been made of the Conference Room including Alcoholics Anonymous and a fun art class on a Friday morning.



The use of the small meeting room by the West Sussex Association of Local Councils has been successful and has also brought in additional hirings of the Conference Room. Further work will be done to try to promote the Conference Room for more activities, meetings, training sessions or events.

Usage

The Main Hall and Club Suite are almost full with nearly every session of the week booked. A typical term time week of 21 sessions (7 days x morning, afternoon and evening sessions) shows:

Main Hall 20 session booked out of 21 (week of 17 June 2024)

Club Suite 14 sessions booked out of 21 (week of 17 June 2024)

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Maintenance Update

Regular servicing and maintenance continues to be undertaken, for example, the gas boilers are regularly serviced and safety checked. Repairs are undertaken as required such as to the thermostat.

The fire extinguishers, fire alarm, call points, exits and smoke detectors are independently checked and serviced every six months and weekly in-house check are made. Repairs were made to the emergency light switches. The toilet light sensors were improved. Portable appliance testing is undertaken annually. The 5 yearly Fixed Wire Testing was undertaken.

The main hall velux windows in the ceiling were serviced as well as the disco ball light. New arrangements are now in place for twice yearly external window cleaning.

Utilities

The electricity supply contract for the Village Centre from 1 June 2022 was with SSE Scottish Hydro which uses all renewable energy. This contract continues until 31 May 2024 but arrangements have been made to switch to Ecotricity from 1 June 2024 which uses all renewable and vegan friendly energy.

The Gas supply contract from 1 June 2023 is a 24 month contract with SSE Business Energy.

A new water supplier was appointed namely ADSM (Advanced Demand Side Management Ltd) which commenced on 17 July 2023 with no specific end date.

All the utility costs are carefully monitored to protect the risks to the budget as far as possible from fluctuations in energy prices. Ways to reduce the use of energy will also be explored in 2024/25 to cut any wastage. Further sustainability measures have also been implemented to help reduce, re-use and re-cycle e.g. all internal lights now contain LED lamps.

Energy Audit

An Energy Audit report was completed in 2023/24 to explore the potential for the building to generate and share renewable energy, limiting reliance on the grid and reducing carbon emissions e.g. solar panels on the Village Centre roof. The results of the Audit have just been received so the options and costings are now being investigated e.g. for Solar Panels on the Village Centre.

Financial Position

The year end position was more positive than in recent years for the Village Centre with a surplus of £3,630.

Income was above target as overall the Village Centre income was £55,732, some 123% (or £10,567 up) against the original budget figure of £45,165. Bank interest returned £1,671 against a budget of zero and room hire brought in an additional £9,088 against the budgeted income.

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The expenditure of £52,103 was an underspend of £11,067, some 82.5% of the original budget of £63,170. The main underspend is against the gas and electricity budget. This is due to credits on accounts; and also careful budgeting to ensure sufficient funds would be available in an uncertain market, budgets were increased at the budget setting time to cover worst case scenarios that did not entirely materialise. The property maintenance budget was also underspent but this offset overspends on cleaning and equipment. The miscellaneous costs covered a report from Action in Rural Sussex on the future of the Chairty outlined below.

Related Party Disclosure: The Parish Council provides management, administrative and financial support to the charity and during the year the Parish Council charged the charity £13,128. In return the Parish Council paid the charity £2,662 for use of the office space within the Village Centre.

The balance sheet shows the total current net assets of the Charity at 31 March 2024, as £89,627 an increase on the previous year.

The annual independent inspection of the accounts took place on 15 July 2024 and the report was presented to the Trustees at the Annual General Meeting on 25 July 2024.

The annual return will be submitted by the Clerk, to the Charity Commission by its deadline of 31 January 2025.

Future of the Charity

During the year the Trustees explored the advantages and disadvantages of dissolving the charity and received an independent report from Action In Rural Sussex. The report included some inaccuracies but after careful consideration the Trustees agreed that the Charity remains in existence in its current form and a review will take place in five years, unless there are material changes to the charity's finances or the lease in the interim.

Sarah Groom, Clerk to the Trustees