

PARHAM VILLAGE HALL

REPORT TO PARHAM PARISH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 2025/26

Introduction

The Village Hall has continued to provide a meeting place and leisure facilities for the local community. The following is a brief summary of the main features of the past year and an outline of our future plans.

The hall runs its affairs on a year from 1st November until 31st October and the annual financial reports for both the Parham Hut Charity and the Bar Association are both attached. Returns to the Charity Commission and HMRC are based on these reports.

Activities of the Village Hall in 2025/26

The main social functions have been monthly bar nights which are increasingly popular. Food is now offered at the bar nights which has substantially increased both attendance and the revenue obtained. There have also been successful talks, quiz nights and similar social functions; we also held an enjoyable car treasure hunt and barbecue.

A small group of volunteers continues to work to improve the hall. This year we have improved the décor, changed to low energy lighting and cleaned and painted the outside of the building to improve its appearance.

Hire of the Hall

The hall has been hired for the following activities:-

- A Spinners and Weavers group continue to hold their weekly meetings.
- A weekly table tennis group.
- The snooker tables are hired every month and used during bar nights.
- A dance group for young people on Saturday mornings.
- Private functions including parties and receptions.
- The meeting room is used by the Parish Council and Village Hall Management Committee.

Since losing a major hirer in April 2025 the hall is not hired as much as we would like, which is adversely affecting our finances. We have recently adopted a new online booking system which means that we no longer require a bookings manager, this reduces our costs. Mary Simmons and Marjorie Gibbs have stepped in to run the booking system. There is now a link to the new system from the Parish website to the new online booking system for which we thank Lydia Kindred.

We have also had to increase our charges by around 10% to make a more realistic contribution to our dramatically increasing costs.

The Management Committee

The Committee has continued with similar membership until recently when two new members have joined. We also now have five trustees registered with the Charity Commission.

The current membership of the Committee is as follows: -

Trustees

Chair	Alan Gray
Vice Chair	Sandra Poacher
Treasurer	Mary Simmons
Secretary	Phil Simmons
Trustee Member	Robin Gray

Committee Members

Jacalyn Scopes
Jonathan Cottrell (Liaison with Parish Council)

New Members

Lyn Briscoe
Marjorie Gibbs

The Constitution of the Village Hall Management Committee has been based on a Trust Deed of November 1961 which establishes a Charitable Trust to own and operate the Hall. There have clearly been many changes in the intervening 65 years. We needed to update the constitution and considered the development of a completely new arrangement as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This proved to be a complicated process which would involve significant legal costs. After advice from an expert from East Suffolk Council, we have developed a revised Committee operating procedure under the existing 1961 Deed, for which the Deed makes provision. These new arrangements came into force following a Special General Meeting in December 2025.

Under the new procedure the 1961 Deed remains effective, but we have regularised the actual operation of the Committee and defined the roles of Trustees and Committee Members. The Parish Council and Parochial Church Council were advised of these changes before they were adopted. There has been no change which will affect the informal liaison arrangements we have used in recent years.

Major Grant Funded Project

We were successful in obtaining an 80% Grant to fund complete recovering of the roof of the East section of the hall. We have also fitted solar panels to the new roof and changed almost all the light fittings to LEDs. The roof covering was over 30 years old and had already been patched, we would have been unable to fund the £10,000 replacement cost without this assistance.

The Solar Panels are predicted to generate around 9,000 kWh in a year, which is the average consumption of more than 3 households, at least 8,000 kWh should be exported. We are on track to achieve, and probably exceed, these targets. The combined effect of the payments for generation, use of self-generated electricity during the day and savings from the low energy lighting could well achieve an overall benefit of up to £150 per month. The value of the installation is likely to increase with increasing energy costs. We are most grateful to East Suffolk Council and HM Government for the grant which will make a significant difference for many years to come.

Current Financial Situation

Our financial report for the year ended 31st October showed that we effectively broke even, making a small loss of £180. However, this masks a worrying underlying trend. Our costs are increasing faster than we can find ways of funding the rises. We have significantly improved the income from bar nights and functions to compensate for the reduction in hire income.

Financially the hall is just meeting its obligations, but there are insufficient funds to renew the equipment of the hall. The Committee continues to seek ways to improve the facilities without compromising the essential reserve of funds necessary to replace significant elements of the hall such as the heating system. At present our improvements are limited to work by volunteers, which limits the cost to materials only.

We have been encouraged by the success of our appeal against Business Rates which had increased sevenfold in two years. We appealed and heard nothing for over a year, but then our appeal was granted and we received a refund of the 2024/25 rates as well as the first payment for this year. This rebate is discretionary, but we hope that it will continue for 2026/27.

Overall, the Hall is surviving and covering its day to day costs. The new income from the solar panels, savings on the payments for a hall bookings manager and the removal of business rates have eased the situation; but raising the funds for the renewal of the fabric and equipment of the hall remains a considerable challenge.

Future Plans

We have recently held an open day to show people what is available in the hall and ask people what they would like the hall to provide. This was encouraging and we will pursue ideas to make the hall appeal to a broader range of villagers.

It is intended to accomplish the following in the coming year:-

- Apply for further grants to enhance the equipment and the facilities of the hall.
- To improve the décor and equipment of the hall with the aid of grants if possible. The Committee has authorised a programme for volunteers to upgrade the exterior of the hall and internal décor where we can. This should make a significant difference at moderate cost.
- Seek new hirers, particularly involving villagers who do not use the hall at present.
- Offer the hall for new uses which could include:
 - Use for local health and wellbeing services which are being proposed by the NHS.
 - Since we now have a solar panels, a battery could be installed which would make the hall self sufficient in electricity at all times. This would also allow the hall to be used as an emergency centre when power supplies fail. The location of the hall is also above potential flood water from the river.

Thanks

Finally, we would like to thank the Parish Council for its annual grant to the Village Hall.

Phil Simmons, Secretary

THE PARHAM HUT CHARITY

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST OCT 2025

The aim of the Parham Hut Charity (The Charity) has been to operate the Hall as a facility for the benefit of the local community. Community events have been held including quiz evenings, talks and monthly bar nights. The Hall has been used by a group educating children with a mobile zoo, by a Spinners and Weavers Group, a children's dance group and the facilities have regularly been used for both snooker and table tennis.

Income

The Village Hall finances are summarised in the attached tables. During the year 2024/2025 our income reduced to £11,752 (to 3rd November 25). This is a slight reduction compared to the £12,302 the previous year, but still much better than the £6,874 during the low point of 22/23.

There were 14 bar nights and functions which made an income for the Hall of £3,362; this includes bar profits but excludes the £463 costs were incurred for food and so clear profit was £2,899. This compares to £2,013 in the previous year. The bar nights have recently been enhanced by the provision of food, this has significantly increased both bar takings and profits to the Hall. We will continue with this to try to replace some of the losses due to reduced hire income. A massive thank you is due to Sandra Poacher, Jackie Scopes and many others for making these endeavours a success and giving a much-needed boost to our revenues.

Hall hire income has fallen significantly to £7,856 compared to £10,814 the previous year (This includes the £1,165 billed but outstanding at the end of the year). The main reason for this was the failure of Our Animal World which ceased hiring the Hall at the end of March 25. The mobile zoo was very successful initially, but attendance collapsed when it ceased to have its novelty value. It is likely that Hall hire income will be only £4,000 per year without Our Animal World. It will be important to attract new hirers to cover our costs in 2025/26.

We have continued to benefit from a donation of £500 from Parham Parish Council which is much appreciated.

Expenditure

Expenditure during the year 2024/25 increased significantly to £11,932 from £9,223. The breakdown of expenditure is included in the table at the end of this report. The main features are:-

- Utility costs fell from £2,018 to £1,826 because of lower utilisation of the hall, the costs of electricity and gas was similar and there was a small reduction in internet charges.
- Insurance increased by around £35 because we added trustee liability insurance.
- Caretaker costs reduced in line with utilisation of the Hall.
- Business rates have increased substantially because a subsidy from the Covid era was removed. An appeal has been raised since other village halls with greater income do not pay business rates; unfortunately, no response has been received.
- Licence fees have remained constant; this year the Performing Rights Licence was taken as 6 payments and we had not paid all of them at the end of the year.
- Expenditure on maintenance increased significantly from £1,071 to £2,955 because we have begun to renovate the Hall. This year the gents' toilets were upgraded, a

new cooker was purchased, a new baby change facility was installed and a new fire alarm panel was fitted to replace its faulty 35-year-old predecessor. In addition, we suffered a burst pipe and required repairs to the heating system.

Grants

No grants have been received in the year, but the Hall was notified on 22nd October that it will receive a grant of £14,649 from the Rural Community Centre & Village Hall Grant scheme funded by the Government and administered by East Suffolk council. The grant is to be used for the replacement of the roof on the eastern section of the hall, to fit a solar panel installation on this roof and provide low energy light fittings and bulbs. The roof covering was in extremely poor condition, and we were concerned how its replacement could be funded before it leaked and caused major damage to the structure.

The solar panels will generate carbon free electricity much of which will be sold to the grid and make an income. The low energy lighting should make a significant reduction in the electricity bill.

Overall

The Hall effectively broke even our income matched our expenditure and we made a small operating loss of £180. However, we received no grants in 2024/25 and we did self-fund some significant replacements including the cooker and fire alarm panel plus the refurbishment of the gents' toilets.

Administrative Details

The principal address for The Charity is c/o Mary Simmons, Eastern House, Parham, Woodbridge IP13 9NE.

The Charity has no investments but keeps accounts with Barclays Bank as shown in the attached accounts and a savings account with The Suffolk Building Society which is maintained as a strategic reserve.

Our Bankers are Barclays Bank PLC, Leicester LE87 2BB

Our Solicitors are Birketts, 24-26 Museum Street, Ipswich IP1 1HZ.

Thanks

Our members and volunteers should be congratulated for their continued hard work & the support they provide; without them it would be impossible to provide such a valuable part of village life.

The Management Committee also wish to thank Jos Slade for acting as the Independent Reviewer of our accounts.

Concluding Remarks

This year has seen long overdue improvements made to the Hall. This has involved some well targeted expenditure to upgrade the facilities offered using volunteer labour so that the work has been accomplished for the cost of the materials.

The income from hiring the hall is not adequate we need to increase the number of hirers, reduce our costs and update the hall charges. It is intended to use an online system for hall bookings and invoicing.

The money raised from social events held in the hall has increased and this should be promoted to offset the reduction from hiring. The social events are also enjoyed by a wide range of members of the local community.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS for 2024/2025

Mr Alan Gray (Chairman)
Mrs Sandra Poacher (Vice Chair)
Mrs Mary Simmons (Hon. Treasurer)
Mr Phillip Simmons (Secretary)
Mr Jonathan Cottrell (Parish Council Rep)
Mr Robin Gray
Ms Jacalyn Scopes

Mary Simmons:

Hon. Treasurer
Date:

RFJ Slade:

Independent Reviewer
Date:

Alan Gray :

Chairman
Date:

Parham Village Hall - Record of Income and Expenditure

Approx. Breakdown of Income & Expenditure for the Village Hall Account

Income	2024/25 To 3/11/25	2023/24 To 31/10/24
Total Income	£11,752	£12,303
Hall Hire Income	£7,856	£9,650
Bar Nights & Events Inc bar profit	£3,362	£2,013
Donations, Including £500 from Parish Council	£534	£640
	2024/25	2023/24
Expenditure		
Utilities – Electricity, Gas, Water, Internet / phone	£1,826	£2,018
Insurance	£2,032	£1,991
Caretaker/cleaning	£1,469	£1,912
Hall Manager	£1,179	£1,208
Building Maintenance (inc routine inspections of fire alarm & boiler)	£2,955	£1,072
Ground Maintenance	£330	£230
Consumables	£112	£325
Council Tax/Business Rates	£252	£110
Licence Fees PRS and data	£155	£190
Bar Night Food (previously food cost was settled from cash takings)	£463	
Unallocated	£1,159	£168
	£11,932	£9,223
 TRADING ACCOUNT	 2024/25	 2023/24
Total Income	£11,752	£12,303
Total Expenditure	£ 11,932	£ 9,223
Bar Profit not yet paid to VH		£ 192
Margin	£ 180	£3,272
 ASSETS	 3rd Nov 25	 31st Oct 24
Barclay Current Account	£9,675	£9,854
Invoices owed		£1,165
Suffolk Building Society Account	£9,824	£9,516
Bar Account, cash and stock	£2,893	£2,182
Total Assets Available	£22,392	£22,717

THE PARHAM VILLAGE HALL BAR TRADING ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST OCT 2025

The Bar Trading Association was formed in 2007 and remains trading. The bar takings in 2024/25 were £2,322, mainly due to the monthly bar nights. This produced a net profit of £774, compared to £851 in the previous year. However, £1,000 was paid into the Village Hall funds because there was unbanked cash retained from earlier trading.

The Association's aim is to operate a well-run bar to make a profit which can be covenanted to the Parham Hut Charity. Above all it is intended to provide a facility which brings members of Parham village together in a convivial atmosphere. The practice of introducing food at the bar nights and encouragement of the use of the games facilities has enhanced attendance and will be continued.

Our members should be congratulated on their continued hard work & support they offer; without them The Association would have to cease trading. Particular thanks are due to Jackie Scopes who arranges and presents the tables in an attractive manner for each event and the excellent food which is provided by Sanda Poacher which are major contributors to the success of events.

The results are somewhat disappointing because the costs of bar stock have increased significantly and we have not increased our prices commensurately during this year. This means that the margin made by the bar has reduced, even though overall sales increased slightly. In addition, two annual licence fees have been paid during this year because of the timing of the licence bills which reduced the profit by a further £70, however this will benefit next year's account.

Recent bar nights have seen somewhat increased takings which is encouraging, this has been enhanced by the introduction of credit/debit card machines. The prices will be increased in future trading to restore the margin to increase the contribution to Hall funds to reflect the effort of the volunteers.

The Association was set up primarily by the late Simon Cottrell with advice taken from the HMRC, the Charity Commission and our legal representatives.

The Association remains wholly owned by The Parham Hut Charity.

The principal address for The Charity is c/o Mrs Mary Simmons, Eastern House, Parham, Woodbridge IP13 9NE.

The Association remains separately insured for Public Liability and The Charity continues to insure our property under 'property owned by others' within its existing policy.

The Charity and the Bar Association have no investments but keep separate accounts with Barclays Bank as shown in the Village Hall accounts.

Our Bankers are Barclays Bank PLC, Barclays Bank PLC, Leicester LE87 2BB. Our Solicitors are Birketts, 24-26 Museum Street, Ipswich IP1 1HZ.

Parham Village Hall Bar Trading Account 2024 - 2025

OPENING ASSETS (01/11/2024)

Bank	£768	
Stock	£871	
Cash Float	£543	
		£2,182

OPENING LIABILITIES

Profit to Village Hall 2023/24		£192
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NET

£1,990

- INCOME

Trading receipts	£2,322	
		£2,322

Opening Stock	£871	
Stock Purchases paid in cash	£440	
Stock Purchases paid from bank	£680	
		£1,991

Closing stock		£676
Cost of sales		£1,315

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- TRADING PROFIT

£1,007

OTHER INCOME

Nil	£0	£0
Total		£1,007

EXPENSES

Licence Fee 2 paid this year	£140	
Insurance	£93	
		£233

PROFIT

£774

CLOSING ASSETS (02/11/2025)

Bank	£2,160	
Stock	£676	
Cash Float	£57	
		£2,893

CLOSING LIABILITIES

Profit to Parham Village Hall 24/25 including retained cash from 23/24		£1,000
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MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS for 2024/2025

Mr Alan Gray (Chairman)
Mary Simmons (Hon. Treasurer)
Mr Phillip Simmons (Secretary)
Mr Jonathan Cottrell (Parish Council Liaison)

Mr Robin Gray
Mrs Sandra Poacher

Independent Reviewer	R F J Slade
Chairman	Alan Gray
Treasurer	Mary Simmons