

## **Reports from the Village Hall and Drake's School by Cllr. Louis Allan**

The Village Hall trustees held their AGM on Monday 29 April which was attended by a sprinkling of villagers generally representing hall users.

The Chairman opened the meeting with an overview of significant events including, inter alia:

- 23/24 had been a stable year with increased bookings and a resulting increased income. The forthcoming year looks healthy with increased regular bookings
- Energy costs have increased significantly; in order to reduce the cost of utilities a number of measures have been employed including timers on both hall heating and external lighting, and push-button taps in the toilets. Future plans will include feasibility studies of the installation of PV panels and EV charging points
- In the hall kitchen a new range cooker has been installed, with 'induction friendly cookware,' and the old refrigerator replaced with an energy efficient fridge/freezer. Additionally colourful, plastic plates, cups, bowls and cutlery have been obtained for children's parties.
- Following requests at last year's AGM about the weight of the current hall chairs we have investigated the purchase of new chairs. Trustee Nick James found around 80 lightweight, good quality chairs in good condition which are now being refurbished and should soon be available for people to assess. These chairs will be supplemented by a purchase of another 20 'ultra lightweight' chairs.
- In the forthcoming year it is hoped to repaint the hall and install a more secure entry system
- There are still issues with people smoking on-site, with cigarette butts being found near the Snooker Club door. This is a potential health and safety risk to children using the playground and all users and visitors are asked to comply with the ban.
- The main focus for the next year is going to be the improvements to the Village Hall and the adjacent Village Shop. Plans should be finalised by mid summer and planning permission will then be sought. Other improvements will be included in the planning application, but these projects will be staggered over time. Costings will be needed and funding will need to be sourced.

The Treasurer reported that the deficit for the year was £2013, reducing the Accumulated Funds to £37904 of which £8871 are Restricted Funds thus leaving general funds at £29033. This leaves the hall with sufficient Funds for the forthcoming year.

Trustees Bonnie Blackwell and Nick James resigned after their three year terms and were promptly re-elected.