

Orwell Village Hall Management Committee



Information and bookings: www.orwellvillagehall.com

At its meeting on 29 July the Committee returned to themes discussed on earlier occasions as well as looking at next steps in the upgrading of the village hall.

On the Covid—19 front the Committee recognised that with the Government having lifted formal restrictions, imposition of top-down rules governing the use of the hall would be replaced by a recommendation that individual hirers should implement their own guidelines (if any), based on the specific nature of their event.

Opportunities to better promote the hall were again discussed. The Committee agreed to create a page on the village hall website to advertise the activities of regular users. This is up and running, with five organisations now represented. If you are looking to join a club or society this could be a good place to look (as well as looking through the Bulletin of course!).

With the refurbishment of the main hall largely complete, the Committee turned its attention to the back room. This is relatively underused and it was agreed that with a few minor modifications it could be offered to a wide range of hirers on a separate basis to the main hall. With this in mind, the Committee agreed a number of improvements, chief among which are:

- Enhanced IT provision/infrastructure, to include videoconferencing and projection facilities.
- Replacement of stained carpets.
- Upgraded lighting.
- Redecorated toilets.
- Upgrades to the rear fire exit door to enable it to function as a separate entrance and exit point to the room.

This does not mean the main hall has been forgotten altogether. Options to upgrade the kitchen/servery area will be brought to the Committee in October and it was agreed that the audio-visual equipment will be overhauled and upgraded. Fibre broadband will be installed at the hall free of charge on the back of installation work being undertaken throughout the village by County Broadband. Once that is in place the pole that hosts the temporary arrangement will be removed and the fire escape path down the side of the building improved.

The Trust Deed for the hall (effectively its constitution) was created in 1959. Whilst the principles it espouses remain sound, it is debatable whether it remains fit for purpose in the 21st century. With this in mind the Committee has agreed to explore the possibility of moving to a new constitution. Bodies such as the Charity Commission and Cambridgeshire ACRE offer model constitutions for village halls and these will be evaluated over the coming months with proposals to be put to key stakeholders such as the Parish Council (our Custodian Trustee) as well as the full Committee.

As the pandemic retreats we look forward with growing confidence to the hall returning to its rightful status as a key asset for the village and to welcoming more clubs, societies and individual hirers to enjoy everything it has to offer.

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