

HORSEMAN'S GREEN COMMUNITY GROUP
DRAFT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 8th August 2023

Housekeeping

Chair welcomed everybody to our Community Group's AGM for March 2022 – February 2023. As the meeting was being recorded to assist in the preparation of the minutes, Chair asked for any questions from the floor, that the speaker gives their name before beginning; Chair noted the whereabouts of fire exits and toilets.

Chair called upon Lady Kenyon as our patron to open the meeting

1. Patron's welcome and remarks

"Thank you very much for the warm welcome, my apologies for being a few minutes late; I have to say your Newsletter is truly inspirational. When I think of when this all began and where you are now, it's a huge credit to all of you and your officers, who, with careful planning and organisation, have really got everything together and it's a joy to read what you're doing. Nobody in Horseman's Green can say they're bored or have nothing to do, there's always something to do here and it's brilliant. It's wonderful to see a thriving community, which it wasn't nearly twenty years ago. You've come on in leaps and bounds and I think you're all brilliant. A big thank you to all the officers who put in a huge amount of work to make it all possible so a big thank you, and carry on".

Chair thank Lady Kenyon for her leadership

2. Apologies. Apologies were received from Peter Lawrence, Lin and Joe Smith, Hilary Andrews, Peter Bowen, Gareth Edwards and Keith Jones.

3. Minutes of the AGM meeting held August 2022

The minutes from the last AGM were agreed by the trustees as being a correct interpretation of the meeting. A summary of the meeting minutes was posted on the notice board and copies have been available here this evening. Could I have a show of hands please on the approval of the 2021 minutes; Unanimously agreed.

The minutes were signed by the Chair and will be placed in the Minute Book.

4. Chair's annual report for March 2022 to February 2023

"I've again divided my report into 2 sections: Community Activities and Hall Management.

Community Activities

'22 to '23 has been our first full year since 2019, but only the third since the Charity took over ownership of the Hall. Only as I came to write this report has it registered just how busy we actually are here in HG.

As you would expect a lot of time and effort goes into planning our community socials. We try to provide a broad and balanced range of events so different activities will attract the different age and family groups within our small community of HG and the wider community we serve.

We must cover the Hall's running costs of approx. £220/month, but we try to keep costs as low as possible and often accompanied children are free. We are mindful of household budgets. We aim to have only one main event per month, with income supplemented by Hall hire charges from private hire, activity group hire and perhaps a Posh Coffee. Planning the socials is a bit like planning menus, over a period of time you have your staple dishes, your specials, and what I'd like to call, our star specials/desserts - the icing on the cake.

Our staple socials are Quiz Night and Bingo; Quiz Night is a major component and something that has come along with it is the ever-increasing size of the picnic hampers each team brings along and which are most certainly now part of the fun. '22 – '23 wasn't the best for Quiz Nights, for our first we were only just emerging from Covid so understandably many were hesitant about attending and we still had a cap on numbers; the second, clashed with England V USA, from what I recall, the Quiz Night won hands down and we had a far better time. The other staple is the fast and furious Bingo Night. I can certainly see why the phrase "eyes down look in" is attributed to Bingo, there's no time for a conversation or lapse in concentration. Both staples we plan for twice a year.

During 2022 – 23 we had several very popular specials; Having been postponed twice due to Covid, in May it was 3rd time lucky for the Thespians of HG who took to the stage, ably directed by Brian Gilbert to perform the play, *Between Mouthfuls*. Aptly named, with refreshments provided by Jackie supplementing the evening. So much talent in our small community with star performances by all. I thank them all for their determination, patience and efforts. I know I shouldn't digress but on the recent Newsletter you will have seen there's going to be another production, so if you're interested, please do contact Brian.

We tested the waters in July with a "Pop up Pub" which Jackie brilliantly capitalised on by adding the phrase 'and pud' night, where she served up her delicious desserts. The penny was dropping what a useful addition a Bar could be for raising funds. In addition, HG was developing its very own pair of "likely lads" to run the bar – Gareth and Colin, not too sure who keeps who in check. The evening was such a success in raising funds and in attracting a different group of people, we repeated it in February in celebration of Valentine's Day.

One very popular Activity Group, the Green Singers gave their debut performance in October. Only one word could describe that night – WOW! Their performance certainly raised the roof and reinforced the fact we have some very talented people living amongst us. I owe special thanks to Dan, Jackie and all the Green Singers for sharing their joy in singing for our entertainment. We look forward to future involvements of the Green Singers in our socials.

Our Star special for 22 -23 had to be the autumn Apple Fest. Thanks to our collaboration with the Dimelows of New Hall Farm, Andrea's long held vision for an Apple Fest came to fruition. This was a new venture, on what was for HG, a quite large scale with apples being turned into juice; baking demonstrations using apples; hand printing; apple peeling and a variety of country stalls. Apples were everywhere. A mammoth event for Andrea and her group of helpers to organise. On a day of sunshine and showers, the sun shone, and the showers did their best, waiting until the end before making an appearance. There's no doubt the event was a HUGE success, our "special dessert". Grateful thanks to the Dimelows for hosting this event and to Andrea and her team in bringing the whole together.

Not all "specials" are fund raisers. Over the year we do hold a number of free events. In June our Platinum celebration for the late Queen was one such event. The bunting was out along with the marquee and gazebo; it rained. Not to worry, our celebration spirit wasn't dampened and the Hall was packed, to raise a toast to Queen Elizabeth II. A great afternoon was had by all.

Back by popular demand, in October was the Halloween Party aimed at the younger members of our community accompanied by their parents or grandparents. The Hall was decked out in fantastic spooky decorations and pumpkin lanterns glowed. Not sure who enjoyed this event the most, the children or the organisers who prepared all the decorations, perhaps this too will become a regular feature on our calendar

A semi-special which provided good old-fashioned fun for young and old alike was the January Beetle Drive. It took a couple of rounds before we all grasped the rules not having played for years. Some weird and wonderful beetles being drawn. What was special to me was these last two events brought out grandparents and grandchildren – a delight to see and a most definite YES.

One month's activities I've missed – December. What can I say about December? We didn't raise any funds from our socials – but does that really matter? because to me December was a real community spirited month. The hall came alive with its Christmas decorations, thanks to Jackie. A very tall Christmas tree stood proudly outside resplendently dressed but a little dull until Sylvia brought it alight. What a super evening we had with the lights switch on. We did have a bar, which helped fund what we presented to the community. At the Community Carols we had David on the piano and Lin guiding us through our list of must sings. BUT still, despite the years of practice, we needed two runs through of the Twelve Days of Christmas before we got a reasonable version. Not a penny was raised for the community chest BUT, we were "all in it together" in the very truest sense of the words and we had a WONDERFUL time, a HAPPY time TOGETHER.

Whilst as a community we have raised funds for our Hall, (Jackie will expand on this), although we promised that this year, we would focus on raising funds for our own charity, we have continued to be mindful of other charity's needs. Monies having been raised for CRY (Cardiac Risk in the Young) – was our "charity of the year"; the Royal British Legion, the Ukrainian Fund and North East Wales Search and Rescue. In total approximately £900 was donated to charities during this financial year. So, well done Horseman's Green.

Our Activity Groups have continued to thrive and expand. New groups have been the Ladies Night, the Book Club linking with and supporting the Mobile Library Service. Last year I spoke about becoming involved with Social Prescribing and thanks to Andrea this too has evolved with improved links with the

Rainbow Centre; the Seniors Exercise classes' aided by Andrea acquiring a grant for an instructor for this group has grown; the Green Art Group and Chatter and Craft. We've expanded the number of day time activities – in response to requested from the community. I thank all our Activity Group Leaders for running these valuable groups. Which now provide both day and evening activities

Our bimonthly Newsletter made its first appearance as an A3 spread in February, with its busy calendar testimony to the volume of Activities and Socials we hold.

Hall Management

The Hall and the charity has continued to be managed by its small group of Trustees (Hilary (Vice Chair), Andrea (Secretary), Jackie (took over from David Spence as Treasurer) and Elwyn and the Management Team (a group of five volunteers including the Booking Officer Lin Smith – the keeper of the diary and the sender of invoices). Please believe me when I say without the generosity of these nine people in being willing to give their time NONE of what I have reported on this evening would have been possible)

In these challenging times we've monitored our expenses carefully by changing our insurance supplier and installing a SMART meter.

The Hall Working Group have continued to meet to plan a route forward. I did say the route would be a marathon, not a sprint. We commissioned a structural survey in September 2022, explored a variety of car parking options some in collaboration with local land owners. Unfortunately, the car parking issue has not been resolved, and I doubt it ever will be. I can assure you though, that the Hall Working Group have explored all possibilities in this area. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ann and Malcolm Aird for kindly offering their driveway as a parking space when large socials are planned.

The Hall and grounds continue to require regular maintenance and repair. We have needed: gutters cleaning, frozen pipes treating, extra shelving for storage along with all the other routine jobs, including cutting the lawn at the back. I know I've said it before but the Community Hall would not be viable without the continuous hard work and alertness to problems of our two volunteers Chris and Colin.

From what you have heard this evening, I would hope you would agree with me when I say the Horseman's Green Community Group has improved the quality of life for residents both here in HG and in the wider community and despite the small size of our community, Horseman's Green Community Hall is a success. BUT this success has only been achieved with the support of you, the community and the absolute wealth of volunteers who come forward to help.

I make no apologies in reminding you (and yes, I have used this list before), in our team of volunteers, we have: the catering team of bakers, tea & coffee makers, waitresses, menu planners and party planner. Jackie, I take my hat off to your talents in this area. Our planning team along with the Booking Officer – guarding our increasingly complex calendar of community socials, activity groups, meetings and private hire; the maintenance team, lawn cutter, decorators and our own interior designer, so brilliant with decorations. Our behind-the-scenes support staff – the cleaning teams, marquee erection helpers, furniture movers, and consumables supplier. Hilary ensures we never run out of tea, coffee, cleaning materials, and loo roll to name but a few of our essential items. The communications team, photographers, Facebook poster, website support, report writers, Newsletter producer, leaflet distributors, activity group leaders, the Defibrillator checker, and the administrative team, made up of the Management Team and the Trustees. And a very special person who keeps everything 'legal and on track and who generally greets you at EVERY event, before taking money from you, the invaluable secretary Andrea. All the above give of their time and I thank you from both myself and the community. I know it's dangerous to name individuals when giving thanks, but I feel there are a special few who deserve mention. There's Jackie and Gareth always willing to step up and lend a hand in whatever capacity; Lin the Booking Officer keeping a close check on our ever increasingly complex and busy diary; Chris and Colin constantly keeping an eye on maintenance and needs and Andrea whose role and contributions just seems to mushroom and mushroom.

I certainly wouldn't be able to execute my role without the support of all our volunteers. I ask – how can such a small community have so many volunteers? We are truly a Community Hall, run by the community for the benefit of the community.

We are a very fortunate community to have so many talented, wonderful, kind and generous people living amongst us. Nothing, would be possible without our vast number of willing volunteers so please join me in giving all who help in whatever capacity, be it large or small, a resounding applause for ALL the work they have done this year on the community's behalf. Thank you.

There are three people in particular that I have mentioned that I would like to give a little bit of something to, on behalf of the Trustees and the community; Chair presented Chris Wood and Colin Porter with a bottle of wine each and Andrea Porter with a box of chocolates.

Chair asked if there were any questions? None, however Jim Glover did note he'd been to Bingo and couldn't believe how frightening it was, how quick and intensive it was and didn't think he would go again.

Chair asked Jackie Edwards as Treasurer to give her report

5. Financial report March 2021 to February 2022

Please bear with me as this is my first AGM. I will give you a brief overview of our bank account; Money in the bank for the previous year was £23,440 and at the end of this period we had £23,860 so slightly up. We have now split our money into two accounts a reserve and a working account, the reason for this is it's easier to explain why we hold funds when we are applying for grants. The reserve account balance was £19,461 and our current account £4,398.

Some interesting facts, the total income from all events etc. for the year was £7,436 and costs slightly under, so we made a profit of £111. Expenses included a one-off cost of £1,468 for Hall working Group investigation costs, a new sample table at £170, new shelving in the store room £125, fogging equipment at £101. Barbara touched on this, the general running costs for the year were £2419, which is £201 per month, so hence all the different types of functions have to happen to pay these costs. Within these figures there is a grant of £1,600 which Andrea got for the Seniors Exercise group, only £286 has so far been spent so we have a reserve in the account for future sessions. A positive change before I came on board was the change of expense form which makes it easy for me to identify costs associated with each function. Coming out of Covid our income has doubled in the past twelve months, and may this continue.

I mentioned we had over £7,400 income and its interesting to see where that comes from: income from Activity group rentals was £791, external rentals £480, now we have the new furniture, external rentals may become more popular; our events, bingo, quizzes etc. comes to an enormous £3,524, so half our income comes from the events we hold. We received £1,020 in donations which gives us an overall figure of £7,436. I think we have a little more scope on external rentals as they have been extremely quiet and perhaps a show-date to show off the hall and its furniture might be a good opportunity.

Jackie thought she and Barbara had covered all aspects but asked if there were any questions: Carol Glover asked if Coffee Mornings were classed as events as they are becoming very popular, Jackie confirmed they are.

If anyone would like to see these figures the sheet is at the reception desk.

Chair asked if there were any further questions on the accounts: none

Lady Kenyon said she would just like to congratulate us, we've done incredibly well, it really is brilliant that as well as earning so much you have given such a lot of pleasure, that's what it's all about. Chair thanked Lady Kenyon for her remarks and noted we hope we are giving the community a better quality of live and pleasure and we enjoy doing it.

Chair asked for approval of this financial report and the accounts for 2022-2023 with a show of hands for these to be adopted. Unanimous

Chair asked for a proposer and seconder: Colin Porter proposer and Julie Jones seconded

6. Appointment of charity trustee

Chair moved on to the appointment of charity trustees:

I mentioned earlier that we had five Trustees, Elwyn Hughes resigned in April of this year, he stood from October 2020. Chair thanked him for his service. I am delighted to say someone else has stepped forward. Our Constitution allows for up to nine Trustees at any one time; since the inception of the Group there have been four or five Trustees which seems to work well. We currently have two applicants for Group Trustees, details of each candidate were circulated prior to the AGM. Each candidate has been

proposed and seconded by members of the community. We will take each in turn and have a show of hands to confirm their appointment.

So first we will take Jackie Edwards, who was co-opted to the Trustees last year and has done a sterling job with the treasury and finances, we thank you whole heartedly for that and how you have managed, after each event, to show our profit and expenses has been absolutely superb, so thank you Jackie very much.

Jackie is proposed by Julie Jones and seconded by Keith Jones, could I have a show of hands please to confirm Jackies appointment. Unanimous

Next, we have Jim Glover, who we thank for stepping forward, as I think when you hear 'would you be a Trustee' you think it sounds official and not for me, so I thank Jim for taking this step and testing the waters. Jim is proposed by Colin Porter and seconded by Gareth Edwards, so could we please have a show of hands to we confirm Jim's appointment as a Trustee. Unanimous.

We now have a re-appointment of a Charity Trustee, Hilary Andrews who has agreed to stand again for a further term, as we don't have another volunteer. As Hilary has been a Trustee for many years there is no requirement for a proposer or seconder, so I would like to ask for a show of hands for Hillary's re-appointment. Unanimous.

7. Closing remarks by chair

So, this is the business of the meeting done and I'm assuming you are all sitting comfortably on the new chairs; the initial feedback regarding the chairs is all very positive.

So where do we go from here? Well, I say definitely onwards and upwards; as Lady Kenyon has also mentioned, we are doing well. I talked before about us growing up, I think we are maturing and we are maturing fast; the hall is so much better equipped and our furniture is wonderful and I'm such when you walked in you must have been delighted with the chairs and tables which is due to a grant received from The National Lottery and £500 received last year from Hanmer's Autumn Fayre; by the time we were notified of the grant, the costs had increased so we are very grateful for this. Lady Kenyon noted she'd thought how comfortable they were.

We will continue to need our army of volunteers. Especially with the on-going maintenance of the hall. We have to try and continue maintaining the community spirit, our welcoming attitude and our sense of belonging that people talk about when they have been to our events.

The Hall Working Group will continue to meet, identifying a recommendation for the best way forward. With the hall we have to be mindful, whichever path we take, the changes must be completed as speedily as possible, the end result must be economically viable, efficient, environmentally friendly and easy to maintain. It will be a legacy for future generations and people in this area. I have to say this, it does worry me because I know whichever decision we make, it will not please everybody but we've got to make a decision and I just hope that the community will unite and will embrace the decision made.

So once again I thank you all for coming along with evening, and showing your support for the Horseman's Green Community Group and I thank you Lady Kenyon as well, for coming along and being our patron, and in Horseman's Green style I hope you will accept these flowers.

Lady Kenyon's closing remarks

Thank you, and all grown in Horseman's Green? it's most unnecessary as I'm just lost in admiration for you all, for what you've achieved in such a short length of time is really quite phenomenal, because you have grown the community spirit and you have welcomed people, many years ago it was almost a dormitory, people lived here but they went off to work and there was no real community here. Congratulations to all of you because it doesn't just happen you have to make it happen and that's what I said at the beginning, a huge congratulations to the committee, for all of you who give your time and energy and effort and I know there will be an awful lot for the boys do behind the scenes, but don't you get a lot out of it, isn't it fun to live in Horseman's Green because of everything that's going on?

Chair thank Lady Kenyon for her kind words

Meeting closed at 7.45pm

Signed.....Date.....
Chair