

Minutes of Great Easton Village Hall Committee Meeting: Weds 25th March 2026

Present: Tim Smith (Chair); Alice Murdock (Deputy Chair); Mandy Law (Treasurer); Lorna Bryant; Teresa Chapman; Sue Peet, Margaret Stamp; Chris Stirney; Bob Wilson.

Apologies: Louisa Feltham

Minutes of February 2026 Committee Meeting were agreed.

MATTERS ARISING

1. Kitchen Refurbishment

Kitchen renovation works have now been completed: on time, within budget and adhering to the specification as regards content and quality. Funds have been well-managed meaning that although the original budget was £26,900, the renovation has come in at £25,500, which is £1,400 under budget. The committee noted their thanks to the Kitchen Group for managing this. A few actions and decisions remain:

- a. **Report to Harborough District Council** is being completed by Mandy. There are 2 separate reports required (one for each of the 2 different grants). We need final invoices from Tim Willford (Principal Contractor) and Simon Gladstone (Gas Safe Engineer) – these to be chased up: **Action: ML/SP**
- b. **Cooker & fridge isolators** are not easily accessible and will be left switched on between bookings.
- c. **Official opening** to see if this could be done at Good Companions on 24th April. Ask Cath Lupton to do the official opening. To do publicity for May GEMS (deadline 22nd April). **Action: BW/SP**
- d. **Kitchen blinds** - samples in kitchen. Simple roller blinds for sunscreen and colour have been costed by Teresa. Total for 2 windows is £254. Committee undecided about the necessity of blinds. Plus a roller blind may also be a dust/grease trap. To review next month **Action: ALL**
- e. **Additional floral mugs** – Good Companions have requested an additional 12 William Morris design mugs. These have been purchased and will be paid for by Crafternoon **Action: AM**
- f. **Hirers' guide** to be compiled and any resultant changes to the website to be identified. Will also update Kitchen Inventory on the website (Alice to share a copy) **Action: TC/SP**
- g. **Old fridge disposal** – advertise on Facebook/Freecycle or charity **Action: SP**
- h. **Advise insurance company** of completion **Action: SP**
- i. **Publicity poster:** designed by Mandy – orange and blue version was agreed. **Action: ML**
- j. **Sink blockages** - check with Tim Wilford what had blocked the old kitchen sink **Action: SP**

2. Feedback from Fire Risk Safety Assessment

Chris advised that Ian Gough, Fire Risk officer has conducted a full survey. Report has been received and today circulated. Main points: due to good management our overall risk is low. However, two key areas of significant risk are: a) additional stage lighting combined with nylon curtains; b) and the use of decorations close to fairy lights. Both represent potential fire risks.

The report's main recommendations are:

- a. candles and other naked lights should not be permitted
- b. no additional decorations without advising the committee
- c. we need a record of how we test emergency lighting – 6-monthly basis
- d. curtains/drapes must be flame-retardant
- e. when next upgraded, timber cladding to ceiling is treated with a fire-retardant product

Teresa suggested putting in a bid for new curtains into the HDC Community Grant; the committee agreed to apply for funds and replace as a priority. Need 2 quotes for grant applications. Deadline is 11th May. Mandy to write application; Chris to get like-for-like quotes to replace with fire retardant material. Teresa and Sue to support where needed. Tim to email GELT for additional specification. **Action: TS/ML/CS/TC/SP**

All to read report and discuss at next meeting.

Action: All

Chris to advise Ian Gough that our response will be delayed for 1 month.

Action: CS

3. Bookings

- a. **High-Risk Activities (inc. bouncy castles):** Tim has followed-up with insurer who recommends taking a copy of the individual's insurance documentation and keeping it on file. Following discussion about how this works in practice, the committee agreed to approach Simon Drysdale (local insurance broker) to advise us on a possible approach that covers Hall users and trustees to a satisfactory degree without deterring potential bookings. Once discussed/agreed, we may then need to make amendments to our Ts&Cs. **Action: TC**
- b. **Hirers' document**– ACRE have a model hiring document to send out on initial enquiry. However, it is lengthy and may put off potential hirers. Chris and Sue to identify pertinent points. Will also look at other Hall's hiring documents. **Action: CS/SP**
- c. **Proposal for GELT charging:** no proposal received. Carry forward **Action: LF**

4. Marketing and Fund Raising

- a. **Final Friday Social & GEPOS bars:** Sufficient stock for this Friday – Bob will then do a stock take. A glass-washer is starting on Friday – Eloise Outram: will be paid at minimum wage for 16-18 year olds (£8/hour). The role will be self-employed; to confirm hours by email. Bob to check if she wants to be paid into her bank account or by cash. **Action: BW**
- b. **Monthly Draw:** prizes for Feb/March being distributed.

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5. **Governance:** many issues raised during the kitchen renovation. Agreed that we need to start compiling policies and consider how these are monitored/managed. **Action: All**
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6. Finance

- a. Financial Statement – previously circulated (see attached). Overall surplus is £2.5k, as of 19th March 2026. Available to us is £14k to spend. By the end of the year, and reducing our contingency to £8k, we would have £15k to spend at the beginning of the year, over and above the £8k contingency.
- b. Reserves policy circulated by Mandy was agreed by the committee.
- c. Independent examination: Paul Brittain has agreed to do this. However, in September 2026 the Charity Commission is to change the threshold to £40k (currently £25k) which means this is unlikely to be required for 2027-28.
- d. Committee members' expenses form has been completed and circulated.

NEW AGENDA ITEMS

1. **Village Hall and Committee Archive** – Chris reported that his has now been completed. The rationale was to look for the original Trust Deed, which was not found. However, evidence was found that in the early 2000s something had been kept safe in HSBC (possibly the Trust Deed?). To approach Maureen Streather to see if she has the original or knows where it is. **Action: LB**
2. **Lost Property** – it was agreed that Tim will put something in our Ts&Cs that lost items will be retained for 3 months after which they will be disposed of, perhaps via Charity shops. Teresa will source a lost property book/document. **Actions: TS/TC**
3. **GEVH Logo**– the committee agreed that Alice's logo is to be adopted. Alice will speak with local designers. Tim also has a hanging sign (pub style) which could be used to make the location of the Village Hall more obvious. Will bring to next meeting. **Actions: AM/TS**

Other Business

1. Sue requested that we discuss issues relating to opening the Hall to hirers and contact points for hirers. This will go onto the agenda for our next meeting. **Action: SP**
2. Chris will get quotes for servicing of fire extinguishers; currently with Smiths **Action: CS**
3. The Hall hoover is insufficient for the task; Claire is to try the Miele and then make a decision about whether we need a new one. Alice to speak with Claire. **Action: AM**
4. Mandy reported that we made £1115 profit on the recent Valentine's Quiz

Meeting closed at 12:35pm

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 29th April