

# **Wixford Village Hall**

**AGM – Wednesday March 18<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**Report for the year January 2025 to December 2025**

## **Summary**

The year has been one of consolidation, after the opening of the new Village Hall in Summer 2024. Pleasingly, attendance figures for events at the Hall demonstrate strong support from local villagers and from others coming from the surrounding villages. These events have been characterised by a warmth and collegiality which has been heart-warming; this is very evident among those who attend the fortnightly coffee mornings, Wixford's warm hub, where it is apparent that the Hall provides a welcome service in bringing friends and neighbours together.

The committee has not been content to think that, by merely opening the new Hall, the job has been done. Across this last year it has sought to augment the facilities, installing solar panelling to bear down on our utility costs and also acoustic panels in the Hall to improve the auditory experience; it has also improved the systems for booking the Hall and for ticketing and payments. Acquiring a licence to serve alcohol has enhanced the customer experience and our bar receipts have been a useful addition to the Village Hall's bottom line. Even the purchase of a professional coffee machine has borne witness to a desire to improve the WVH offering...

Committee members have been keen to organise a wide variety of different events, both informative – lectures on language, art, local history, as well as practical demonstrations of self-defence – and entertaining, including musical concerts, and drama in the shape of National Theatre productions beamed into the Hall, and a Craft Fair. Feedback from those attending these events has been gratifyingly enthusiastic.

It has been very heartening to receive external endorsement for the work of the committee in establishing the new Village Hall and its wide-ranging programme of activities: in April 2025 the committee was recognised with the High Sheriff's Award for its contribution to the Community.

## **Committee and Trustees**

Whilst there have been no new committee members this year, there has been a major constitutional change. The committee decided that it made little sense to have a separation between those who were Wixford Village Hall charity trustees, and those who were ordinary committee members, for every committee member contributes to the running of the Hall and to the policy decision-making which determines its direction. As a result, the committee resolved that all committee members would become trustees; the constitution has been revised to reflect this and the Charity Commission has been informed.

The AGM is an appropriate opportunity to thank the committee members for all they do. Wixford Village Hall is extremely fortunate that it has among its trustees people with a wide range of expertise: administrative, technical, financial, digital. Those skills brought the Hall project to fruition, and they continue to be very relevant in organising and running events. Just as important has been the unity of the committee; colleagues have become friends, and for each and every one of the trustees, nothing is too much trouble and there is a prevailing attitude of ‘can-do-ism,’ all to ensure that events are run smoothly and efficiently. Equally, committee members’ partners and other non-committee members have been invaluable in their support be it stacking furniture, running the bar or washing up.

We might be losing one committee member – Nick Dodds – if he and Kate move away from Wixford this year; his steady and loyal support, his expertise, would be greatly missed and we would hope in due course to be able to replace him with someone who could make just such a valued contribution in the future. Additionally, Jain Drinkwater, who has been a trustee, and such an integral part of the Village Hall in its various iterations for decades, has resigned as a trustee but will remain as an associate committee member in which capacity she continues to be unstinting in the assistance she gives us.

## **Financial and funding**

The Treasurer is presenting his own separate report to this meeting. Suffice to say that what has been so encouraging is that the Hall has been in surplus for its activities in its first eighteen months. In addition, it has benefitted from grants, firstly from the People’s Postcode Lottery, which has enabled us to install solar panelling this year, and – to a lesser degree – from the Throckmorton Trust which has underwritten the costs of the warm hub.

This is the appropriate place to thank our Treasurer, John Ballard, whose diligent management of our finances – as well as his project management - has made a considerable contribution to the success of the new Village Hall.

## **Organising Activities**

Reference has already been made to the wide range of events run for residents and near neighbours across the past year. Booking for these events is handled by an online booking system; the new Lemon booking/ticketing package has made life much easier for Sue Vincent, our highly efficient administrator. This system is also used to book business meetings in the meeting room and the Hall itself, and children's parties. The Hall has hosted a number of these in the last twelve months; their success relies to an extent on the party organiser ensuring our imprecations on parking are adhered to. We marshal, cone Church Fields, we have a new noticeboard with parking instructions, all to underline the fact that parking on Church Fields is forbidden. We have evolved ways of fitting up to 7 cars on our parking spaces in front of the Village Hall (though achieving this constitutes a severe examination of advanced driving skills), but these are sometimes insufficient, and we are very grateful to the owners and managers of The Fish and the Three Horseshoes for their help in acting as overspill carparks for our patrons.

In addition to our one-off special evening events, the Hall hosts a number of regular sessions: yoga, pilates, tai chi, fitness, table tennis, as well as – of course – those fortnightly warm hub coffee mornings, at the last of which 31 people attended, both for communal chat but also for Marcus Bennett and Agata Majzel's invaluable computer clinics.

All this activity represents our ongoing mission to make the Village Hall the central focus of community life in Wixford.

Andrew Reekes

Chairman

March 2026

