



Broughton Playing Fields & Village Hall Association

Annual General Meeting 20th January 2025 Chairperson's Report

The Association is a registered charity which was established in 1978 to provide, manage and look after the Village Hall and Playing Fields for the benefit and amenity of all the residents of Broughton and Little Cransley. The Management Committee is made up of volunteer trustees and is responsible for the management, maintenance, and development of the facilities. The Committee consists of a maximum of 17 members including Officers, User Group representatives and appointed members from the Village.

I am pleased to report the Hall and Playing Fields continue to be well used by local groups and the community. We have a number of regular users including Pre-school, Bowls, Scouts, Cubs and Beavers, Badminton and Table Tennis clubs, Pilates, Fitness Group and Craft Club. We have a close working relationship with both Broughton Under 5s and Kettering Football Club which has been particularly helpful in developing our facilities. The hall is popular for parties and one off events, although we have seen these bookings slow down recently which may reflect tightening household budgets. As Andrew, our Treasurer, will report later, the Village Halls finances are on a sound footing.

As I step down as Chairperson, I would like to thank all the Committee members, both past and present, for volunteering their time and energy in managing the Village Hall on behalf of the rest of the community. Without your continued support, this great community facility would close and have to be returned to the North Northamptonshire Council (NNC).

A particular thank you to Andrew Tempest, our Treasurer for the last 3 ½ years, who is stepping down after the AGM, Andrew, I am very grateful for your help and support. I would also like to specifically thank the committee members who manage the bookings, the success of the village hall is largely down to their commitment to look after our hirers.

As well as keeping the Village Hall going, the Committee have been busy with other things:

- In July phase 1 of the new fire alarm system was installed, phase 2 will happen during February half term. We are grateful to NNC for providing a capital grant of £10,000 towards the overall cost of £14,500
- The Committee have continued to run Film Nights which we hope will continue providing there is enough support and interest.
- The window blinds were replaced in the hall in August at a cost of £2,800. The high level curtain tracks were replaced in January at a cost of £1,600.
- A nest swing has been installed on the site, a joint project with NNC to which the Village Hall contributed £2,000
- A new CCTV system was installed in January at a cost of £1,800.
- During the last year efforts have been made to change the legal status of the Charity from an Association into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) to remove personal liability associated with being a trustee, allow the Charity to enter into contracts and hold property in its own name. The process is ongoing.

- In October, revised planning permission was approved for an updated changing room project, the previous scheme proving too expensive. It is hoped the project will be completed by the summer funded by the remaining S106 funds from Redrow and the village hall development fund. Once completed, the original planning for Hall extension, Community room and bar and standalone Nursery unit will be locked in.
- Discussions continue with North Northants Council to formalise the arrangements for the management of the football pitches – now into the 5th year!

Some other things which I should mention:

- We were very sorry to lose our good friend and fellow Committee member Don Harper who died suddenly in September last year. Don was a great supporter of the Village Hall as well as Chairperson of the Bowls Club – he is sadly missed by us all.
- The Village Show & Fun Day took place in September 2024. The weather was perfect and as ever, there was a great turnout from the village. It is without doubt one of the best community events of the year. We are particularly grateful to the Village Show Committee for all their hard work in creating this lovely event. With contributions from both HSBC and Barclays community schemes £6,700 was raised at the Show which has been used for the improvement and development of the Village Hall facilities as detailed previously.
- Sadly, after putting on a show for 16 years the Village Show Committee have now disbanded due to lack of new blood being prepared to help with the organisation. I am hopeful the Village Hall Committee will find a way to continue the Village Show with a similar event in September 2025. Watch this space!
- The village's Community Fridge Project, managed by Kerri-Ann Stolari, continues to run from the Village Hall on a Tuesday afternoon
- We are particularly grateful for the grants, funding and support of North Northants Council and Northamptonshire Charitable Foundation. Their collective support of our community makes it possible to improve and develop our facilities.
- A big thank you to Ravi Zutshi for promoting and organising the Village Hall "250 Club". We now have 130 members and would love some more. This is a great fundraising scheme and with current numbers should raise in the region of £1300 this year. We have also received donations from Kettering FC and Janet Tyler – Thank you
- Our User Groups and Clubs are an essential part and purpose of the village hall and ongoing support by the local community is necessary for them to thrive. Sadly, we lost our local drama group, Broughton Players during the year. I hope the rest of the groups are successful in attracting the support they deserve to maintain the diversity of activities taking place on the site.
- The Committee have various policies in place to support the governance of the committee's activities including, Health & Safety, Safeguarding, Data Protection and Procurement which are subject to ongoing review.

Now for a couple of specific thanks and acknowledgments:

- North Northants Council have once again looked after the playing fields and surrounding area, mowing the grass, planting trees, looking after and maintaining the children's play area and skate park for which we are most grateful.
- A specific thank you for the flexibility and support of our new cleaner Sara Coniff who looks after the building, often undertaking the cleaning at unsociable hours to fit between hirers to make sure clean and tidy facilities are available to all. Thanks also to our previous cleaner, Tony Brooks who retired in the Autumn.

Finally, we have still got some exciting projects and a few critical challenges to tackle over the coming year:

- We need to conclude matters to change the legal status of the Trust to a CIO which includes the transfer of the Village Hall lease from the Parish Council to the CIO in its own name.
- We need to finalise an agreement with North Northants Council to formalise the arrangements for the management of the football pitches which in turn will help obtain funding for improvements.
- Completing the new changing room project will improve the facilities for both internal and external sports on the site and enhance safeguarding of the young girls and boys using the facilities.
- The Committee are keen to arrange more social events for the village – The Film Nights were a start. We plan to set up a subgroup as part of the village hall to develop this further over the coming 12 months.
- I am delighted we have managed to find people from the village to take over the Chairperson and Treasurers roles. A warm welcome to them both. It will be great to have new people, ideas and energy on the Committee and from others offering support. That said, we still need further volunteers to fill vacant roles and join the committee to take over from those who intend to step down in the next year.
- It is not clear how the cost of living crisis will affect the use of the village hall facilities and the groups who use it.

Some great opportunities together with a few challenges to maintain this wonderful facility for the benefit of our local community and surrounding area. I wish the new Committee every possible success for the future.

Clive Gresham

Chairperson