

Garvestone & Thuxton Village Hall

Trustee Directors' Board Meeting

Monday 13th April 2026 at 2:00 pm

Minutes

Present: Stephen Smith, Chair (SS); Ruth Gooch (RG); Jon Gooch (JG); Dot Leeder (DL).
Also in attendance - Lesley Griffin, Treasurer (LG)

1. Apologies. Terry Newman (TN) Andrew Blake (AB)

2. Minutes of previous Meeting – 16th March. Previously circulated. **Agreed.**

3. Matters Arising not on the Agenda

None

4. Bookings

RG had only two matters to mention. Firstly, an enquiry regarding a wake that would clash with the school if they wished to use that slot. The school booking being for two hours, but the wake for five. Board **AGREED** that RG should stick to the priority for wakes over the school. [Subsequently. Noted no booking actually received for wake]. Second item was to note Mid Norfolk Railway have confirmed their AGM booking to be cancelled. Refund agreed and SS to ask them to send bank details to Treasurer.

4.1 Pizza Nights

JG had received an email from Tamzin who has confirmed that her and James will be running Pizza Nights from May to September, on the first pub night of each month. JG has added details to the website. SS has posters already from last year.

5. Finance.

5.1 Income and Expenditure. LG had provided summaries for March and year to 31st March, which is our year end. **SS noted sizeable losses overall and that he will see if some of that should be capitalised.**

SS also spoke of concern over some of the major expenditures, which were all discussed in some detail. Cleaning also includes sanitary servicing, materials, window cleaning, etc. DL explained plans to use the cleaner's available spare time to carry out other jobs and possibly window cleaning as the previous tradesman has retired. Gutters and fascias also need attention. **DL and SS will deal with this** as JG and RG did not take part due to potential conflict of interest.

Light and Heat costs are increasing significantly. **AGREED** to reduce the thermometers by one degree in the main hall, foyer, kitchen and corridor. **LG to action.**

Also, LG mentioned a demanding letter from PPL/PRS for over £600. Some thought that this is the third bill in recent months. JG suggested that forms for completion last year were dealt with by AB and maybe this year they went to the CoSec email address. **LG agreed to enquire with AB and clarify.**

5.2 Electricity Contract Renewal As TN was not present, this will be carried forward.

5.3 FiT payments. No credits received. **LG to ask AB if readings have been forwarded.**

5.4 Charges for use of the hall

JG pointed out that in a few months, it will be two years since our last increase to hire rates. As we are highlighting to all that we have insufficient income to meet costs, is it not fair to ask if we are doing all we should to maximise income? However, still appreciating the risk of hirers not being able or willing to pay more for use of the hall.

All AGREED that we should increase rates and after some debate it was agreed that rates for new bookings will be at the higher rate as soon as revised terms can be issued. Existing regular hirers will be given advance notice and charged at the higher rate from September. Beneficiaries rate to increase by 50p and commercial and non-beneficiaries by £1.00.

Proposed by SS and seconded by RG

6.0 Viability of Village Hall

6.1 Members meeting on 10th April

Approx 14 people were present, and SS explained the basic situation of the hall finances and the need for more help in increasing use of the hall. Many opinions were expressed and some even suggested the hall should close if there is no great enthusiasm to use it. It was suggested that we need to be making some positive comments at the Annual Community Meeting (ACM) on 8th May. All agreed to this.

One suggestion was to 'employ' a person to run events and fund their income from those. No one felt confident at the way this could work, but it should be mentioned as it has been raised by the Parish Council Chair.

The use of the hall by the school was also discussed and the idea of closer working with them. DL is already involving their Community Governor. JG raised the possibility of the school staff assisting with some tasks such as the fire alarm tests, as DL used to do when employed at the school. **DL to meet with school governor. Also see below – 6.4.**

The play area was discussed and some felt that the fund-raising for that might distract from the main concern of the hall and all its facilities. In discussing this today, DL suggested that with the exceedingly high cost, and the inability of the Parish Council to take it on, we should stop planning for full refurbishment and instead concentrate on repair of remaining equipment, sufficient to make it safe, and re-open this summer. The current fund-raising team to be encouraged to continue but with the aim of adding to the equipment bit by bit.

All AGREED and SS offered to carry out some repairs to remove identified risks.

DL agreed to seek quotes for some repairs.

JG agreed to inform the Parish Council at their meeting later today.

We AGREED we should aim to have it ready for the next ROSPA inspection, due in June, and re-open in time for the summer holidays.

It was also **AGREED that we should offer, at the ACM**, to transfer ownership of, or to lease the area to, the Parish Council as we are now of the opinion that we are able to do this.

6.2 Draft presentation for ACM on 8th May

AGREED that JG presents the slides from the presentation recently circulated to trustees and talks through the slides to highlight our current situation and also some thoughts for the way ahead. Updated figures to be added once LG has finalised year-end figures.

6.3 Possible CIO status

JG has looked at the process of changing to a Charity Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and found that this would involve not only establishing the new charity with the Charity Commission, but then the transfer of all land to the new charity. This would need legal advice and involve Land Registry fees. Estimated costs (from a legal firm with experience of doing this) was around £6,000 - £8,000. This is not possible at present, but with some 'pro bono' legal advice, it would be good to look at in the future, if the hall is to continue. JG will include it as an example of possible community help in the presentation.

6.4 Potential role of School

As discussed earlier, **DL will maintain contact** and it was **AGREED that we should make clear the risk to the school of the loss of the hall.** This to include the **local headteacher, Governors, Unity Trust, and Norfolk County Council.**

6.5 Newsletter and Membership Benefits

JG passed on an offer from Peter Skeggs-Gooch (PSG) to help with the Newsletter and membership records. **SS agreed to supply a spreadsheet etc. to PSG.**

7 Maintenance Issues

7.1 Accident Reports. None received.

7.2 Play Area. Discussed earlier.

7.3 Plant Room fire check. We now have only one quote as the second firm who surveyed the problem have just decided to close. This could make grant applications difficult. **SS offered to chase Garveston Trust** as there had been a suggestion they could help. It was also suggested to approach **Thuxton Trust. SS to pursue.**

Help with grants could also be a point to raise at the ACM. DL is to attend another Breckland meeting that may give some leads.

7.4 Fire Doors: repair and insurance claim

AGREED that the replacement doors at either end of the corridor are the least urgent, especially as use of the meeting room is currently restricted.

Repair of Fire Escape doors. After further wind damage, **JG has carried out a temporary repair to ensure the door still works adequately** and has sent some quotes to the insurance brokers, but one further quote is outstanding. **JG to chase supplier again.**

7.5 and 7.6 all now complete.

8 A.O.B.

8.1 Open Gardens. Some local households have offered to set up an Open Garden Day on 28th June. After discussion, it was **AGREED** we do not need to arrange any insurance cover as this is the responsibility of the householders who are inviting the public to view their garden. There will be no involvement of the hall, or its facilities on the day, other than JG & RG having their garden open.

8.2 Facebook and promotion

DL passed on an offer from her daughter, who has experience of social media and promotional work, to help with our Facebook page. This will include plans for fundraising, and the use of QR codes and charity donation pages. **All were grateful for the offer.**

8.3 Document archive

PSG had offered to look through the various documents stored in the meeting room and store room to see what needs to be kept, and to make an inventory of what records we have. All **AGREED** to allow PSG to access the records and use the hall's G-mail account to store information. **AGREED** that all records of finance should be kept for at least six full years. Some records may also be with AB after retrieval from Liz Buckley.

Some discussion over an e-mail account for PSG to use, eventually decided on creating an e-mail address of admin@garvestonevillagehall.org for PSG and others to use for archive and membership record purposes.

Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 12th May 2026 at 2pm. In the Meeting Room.

Meeting closed at 4:15pm