

**Minutes of Castlethorpe Village Hall Committee
Annual General Meeting
Thursday 31st March 2011**

Present:

<i>John Foakes</i> <i>Chair</i>	<i>Geraldine Sweetland</i>	<i>Vice Chair</i>
<i>Ann Foakes</i> <i>Secretary</i>	<i>Dave Hinds</i>	<i>Parish Council</i>
<i>Phil Ayles</i> <i>Parish Council</i>	<i>June Haynes</i>	<i>W.I</i>
<i>Yvonne Hands</i> <i>Youth Club.</i>	<i>Carol Wray</i>	<i>Craft Club</i>
<i>Glenys King</i> <i>Bowls Club</i>	<i>Sarah Proctor</i>	<i>Pre-School</i>
<i>Scott Pearson</i> <i>CCC</i>	<i>Karen Hill</i>	<i>Parish clerk</i>

1	Apologies were received from Karen Russo, Margaret Chapman & Julie Baldwin
2	The minutes of the last meeting were accepted and signed by John Foakes as a true record.
3	There were no matters arising.
4	<p><u>Chairman's Report:</u></p> <p>Generally I think that we can claim that we have had a good year with the Village Hall. After a difficult start with the Committee having to sort out problems with gritty floors and misunderstandings over exits, entrances and fire regulations, I think that we have settled into a good and honest team relationship – and I would include in that our close working with the Parish Council.</p> <p>User Groups remain strong – the Village Show Committee has become a user group and there is a new group on the horizon (the Friendship Club). The Youth Club has hung-on-in-there despite a dip in numbers and has widened its activities to include video games.</p> <p>The Castlethorpe Entertainments Group has operated as a sort of un-official sub-committee of the VHC to organize fund raising events for the hall. I'm not going to mention any names, they know who they are, and they have worked very, very hard to make a success of things.</p> <p>And the successes include Open Day at the hall, Coffee Shops, Halloween Party and the New Year Village Party. Successes aren't just measured in terms of money made – but also in terms of getting the community to come together to enjoy themselves in their Village Hall.</p> <p>Financially the hall is sound in as much as it has not needed to be subsidized by the Parish Council. At the same time funds for maintenance are very tight and we have adopted a DIY policy in areas where this is possible, the floor paint in the storage areas and the lighting on the pathway being examples, in order to keep costs down. The main structure and décor of the hall remain in good condition following the previous years makeover, and of course thanks to the funding by Open Gardens we have a splendid new sign so that strangers to the village can now find the hall.</p> <p>One of the coldest winters for decades led initially to some complaints from users about the hall being cold, but after adjustments to the central heating system the hall has remained warm and this will no doubt be reflected in the quarter's gas bill. Karen Hill has been vigilant in this area and her negotiations with eON, the suppliers, have helped to keep prices down.</p>

	<p>However, the rising cost of utilities has meant that hire rates have had to be increased for the new financial year, but this has been met with acceptance and understanding by those whose pockets are going to be affected. A new Village Hall Constitution has been agreed and put in place.</p> <p>It just remains for me, on a personal note, to thank the rest of the Committee for their help and support in the last year, to Geraldine not just as vice-chair but for her work as the Bookings Clerk, and especially to my wife, Ann who has not only had to do all the secretarial stuff but has had to sort me out at the same time. Many thanks to you all.</p>
5	<p><u>Treasurers Report:</u> Another good financial year behind us, with income exceeding budget by £800.00 due to the efforts of the committee members responsible for fundraising. The overspend on equipment maintenance was an unforeseen occurrence. All in all the budget was well managed and costs come out on target. My personal thanks to everyone who made this possible. A copy of the 2011/2012 budget has been circulated [details available from the Clerk or on the website www.castlethorpevillage.org.uk]. In a departure from the previous years accounting, the current financial year's budget (just over £800 more than last year) reflects only recoverable costs for the Village Hall and reflects the actual costs to run the hall for users which it is hoped will prove a more accurate forecast. The budget still relies on supplementary income from fundraising and a Parish Council subsidy to balance the books. That said the 2011/2012 budget reflects a cautious approach to income but if the current years figures are attained in the coming year then there could be excess money to spend on the hall & reduce the burden on fundraising. With 2 achieved budgets under the belt there is every reason to think that the current budget is attainable. Utility costs continue to be a large chunk of running costs. Negotiations are ongoing with utility companies for best possible rates and so far the best deal is through Eon (offer of a medium reduction in current unit costs if the hall enters a 18 month agreement). Eon calculate that the overall reduction could be as much as £600.00 annually. There is, therefore, much to commend taking a fixed term contract as rates are destined to rise due to oil disruptions, (Recommended by Which magazine and Guardian Money Matters). A sterling job has been done by Geraldine Sweetland and in her absence Ann Foakes, both of whom keep the booking procedures well managed and problem free. FINALLY All that remains if to thanks Councillors Hinds & Russo for all the support in discussions relating to the hall. To the Committee – especially John and Ann Foakes and Geraldine Sweetland for their support and assistance on matters financial, procedural and maintenance and to Georgina Hinds for maintaining a high standard of cleaning in the hall.</p>
6	<p><u>Election of Officers</u> John Foakes (Chair) and Ann Foakes (Secretary) agreed to stand for re-election, they were proposed by Phil Ayles and seconded by Glenys King; they were both duly elected. Geraldine Sweetland stepped down from the position of Vice-chair. Carol Wray was proposed from the floor by Yvonne Hands and seconded by Ann Foakes; Carol was duly elected.</p>
7	<p><u>Bookings and Hire Rates</u> There was a brief discussion regarding the increase in hire rates, this being due mainly to the increase in the cost of utilities this year. The bookings remain steady with a small increase in numbers during the year.</p>
8	<p><u>Any Other Business</u> Phil Ayles offered a vote of thanks to the committee for its hard work during the past year.</p>
	<p>The meeting closed at 8pm with the chairman thanking everyone for their attendance</p>

