

PATCHAM MEMORIAL HALL Monday 23 June 2025
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Minutes 5.30 pm

A Review of the year January - December 2024

Present: members of the Committee: Chair: John Williams (Trustee/T), Hugh Woodhouse (T), Mary Taylor (WI T), Sue Seymour (U3A T), Chris Young (U3A T), Jan Mulreany (T/Charity Secretary), John Hogg, Maria Hogg, Sophia Hogg (PMH Caretaker),

Residents of the area of benefit: Michael Shade, Philip Gloyn.

Apologies received from: Pamela Hubbard, Raul Ortiz, Sarah Walker, Naomi Potter, Councillor Alistair McNair, Councillor Anne Meadows, Councillor Carol Theobald.

1. The Chair welcomed participants and verified that the meeting was quorate. Apologies were noted.
2. Minutes of the previous AGM, held 20 June 2024. JM read the action points and matters arising. The complete record of the meeting had been circulated to its participants shortly after it, with a request to correct, amend or add anything that indicated inaccuracy. No inaccuracies reported, nor had any queries been raised by those present, so the Minutes were signed as a true record of the previous meeting.
3. JM outlined the highlights and actions carried out by the committee and trustees, from the Annual Review from 2024, a copy of which held by each member present. The Committee was especially pleased that the Centenary Celebration had been a successful event, and welcomed the collaboration with the neighbouring DownsView LifeSkills College (DVLSC), which has resulted in two members of its staff joining the PMH Management Committee, increase in numbers being one of the previous year's objectives for 2024. No queries about the Review were raised from the floor, and the Report was commended to the company, proposed by Mary Taylor, seconded by Sue Seymour, and adopted as the Annual Report for CC Annual Return purposes, and for submission for grant-funding if necessary.
4. The Treasurer's Report for 2024 and presentation of the approved Accounts to 31 December 2024 was made by Hugh Woodhouse, Treasurer, using the Charity Commission format of the CC16a to show income, expenditure and balances. His review suggested that the Charity remains financially sound, with a healthy bank balance, and thus it is a Going Concern, for Charity Commission purposes. Trustees having approved the accounts earlier (prop. Jan Mulreany & sec. Mary Taylor), the acceptance of them by the assembled company was proposed by Philip Gloyn, seconded by Michael Shade. This was carried, for CC Annual Return purposes, and for submission for grant-funding if necessary. A question arising about the Utilities supplier was covered by the Treasurer, to wit that the Committee was struggling with EDF as a supplier. HW outlined how he had discussed the issues with the Complaints dept of EDF but the issue had not been resolved since the last bill December 2024. An outline of proposed actions to correct this was described, including the manual meter reading today (as witnessed by participants) being submitted to the electricity company, and a move to a different supplier once payment has been achieved.
5. Committee reports for the year under report had been tabled by the Bookings Secretary (JW) and the Estates Manager (JH). JW detailed how bookings have remained solid, including an increase in the number of regular hirers offering recreation sessions, with a total of 668 bookings in the year under report.

The Estates work has included collaboration with DVLSC regarding a new boundary fence to the Hall's perimeter to allow wheelchair access to the Community Garden and Centenary Orchard, opened during the year for the Centenary event in February. The improvement of the Hall's own garden was discussed. A question raised about the potential for insulating the Hall's structure (as a means of reducing energy costs) was answered with the results of a consultation with an expert suggested by Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS) Village Hall advisor, viz. that this would be expensive and disruptive, resembling rebuilding of the walls, and would entail closure of the Hall for a significant amount of time. It is not something that the current Trustees feel would be cost-effective in the immediate Board lifetime, and so will be left for a subsequent committee to manage.

6. Election of Trustees on a triennial rotation.

Three trustees elected by the Board of the Hall had been obliged to stand down after a three-year period, and had offered themselves for re-election. The remaining appointed and co-opted trustees, supported by other members of the management committee, had earlier agreed to recommend that their re-election be endorsed by the public vote. Participants living within the area of benefit (BN1 5(xx) or BN1 8(xx) were invited to ratify this decision, which was carried unanimously. Thus Hugh Woodhouse, Jan Mulreany, and John Griffith Williams were returned to the Board. They are also appointed Officers of the Board, namely Treasurer, Secretary and Chair of the Board.

The endorsement of two trustees appointed by the University of the Third Age was noted, namely Sue Seymour and Christine Young; they will serve for as long as the U3A regulations allow them to represent the organisation on the Hall's Board, according to its own constitution. Pamela Hubbard, who had retired as a U3A representative trustee, has been retained by the Hall's Board as a co-opted trustee by reason of her local residency.

7. Plans for the further publicising of the Hall's assets and opportunities were outlined, including a presence at the Patcham Community Association's Duck Fayre in August 2025, for which volunteer stallholders were requested. (MH to coordinate.)

JM invited thoughts from the audience about how future publicity might be enhanced, namely via resources spent on advertising and a presence on local and wider social media. This is in an effort to engage more of the Patcham population in active support for the Hall, with a view to its longer term succession plans. It was agreed that a dedicated Facebook page and other social media might attract a younger cohort of hall users and supporters, and that current Hall users might appreciate this to advertise their own services at the Hall. Committee members will investigate and report back to trustees.

8. No other business having been called, the formal AGM closed at 6.20, and participants were invited to a guided tour of the adjoining DVLSC Community Gardens, JM as a committee member outlining the progress made since the start of the venture in October 2023.