

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES OF PATCHAM MEMORIAL HALL (PMH) for year January 1st to 31st December 2024**TRUSTEES' ACTIVITIES, ACTIONS and EVENTS in 2024****Committee Work In 2024**

During 2024 the PMH Management Committee continued to meet on a regular basis, plus a public AGM. Smaller working parties also met to carry out various tasks, such as the Centenary planning, the garden planning, and a financial group to oversee immediate costs related to estates business. The three publicly-elected Charity Trustees (Hugh Woodhouse, John Williams and Jan Mulreany) completed their three-year term, and are planning to stand again in 2025, when the opportunity arises at the Annual General Meeting. Following the 2022 AGM these three had been appointed by the whole committee to take the Officers roles, namely Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, from the publicly-elected group. They were supported by three Trustees appointed, as per its original constitution, by two Brighton-based branches of national charities: University of the Third Age (U3A) and the Confederation of Women's Institutes (WI), both being long-term supporters and users of the Hall; they are eligible to vote, though required to abstain if there is a conflict of interest between the Hall's agenda and that of the organisation represented. The U3A members (Christine Eden and Pamela Hubbard) gave notice at the very end of 2024 that they were both retiring from the U3A committee in January 2025. The U3A will appoint two new members from their own committee to represent them, and Pamela Hubbard is intending to stand as an independent Patcham resident trustee. Trustees do not receive remuneration for their time.

The voluntary members of the management committee are the estates manager, and a local resident, to make up the eight volunteers in total. Five members of the committee are residents in the Patcham area covered by BN1/8 or BN1/5 postcodes (previously Patcham parish). We engage a self-employed person as to cover the daily/weekly cleaning of the Hall, and an occasional gardener to support the garden committee members with the heavy work.

The committee met four times during the year (11 January, 28 March, 20 June, 15 October). The public AGM was called for 20 June 2024. We use a standardised agenda, with Standing Items of Finance, Bookings, Estates, Discussion points and AOB. The Charity's Annual Return was completed, and accounts submitted on time, as required by the Charity Commission, in October. John Williams is the Acting Chair, and a 'revolving' chair happens in practice if he is not able to be present. Trustees and attendees are asked to declare any conflict of interest in agenda items, and no conflict of interest has been apparent or declared this year. Minutes are taken by the charity secretary and circulated to the committee, with Action points.

As tasked by the terms of the constitution, the committee meetings continue to concentrate on maintenance issues (heating, lighting, cleaning and furniture), overseeing expenditure and financial health through papers being circulated and encouragement of discussion before any decision-making.

Celebration of the Hall's Centenary Event.

The Committee's main focus from the end of 2023 and the beginning of 2024 was the planning and execution of a celebration of the Hall's Centenary, which took place on Saturday 3 February 2024. A focussed programme of activities was created, led by Secretary Jan Mulreany and supported by Maria Hogg. Using the format of the programme for the initial opening in 1924 as a guide, it was hoped to welcome the whole community as well as public figures to mark the occasion. Caroline Lucas, the MP for the constituency, was invited to launch the day. Because of clashing appointments for the principal invited speakers, Deputy Mayor of Brighton Asaduzzaman gave the opening address, unveiling a new brass plaque, and the MP's successor candidate Siân Berry 'cut the birthday cake' to celebrate the Hall's 100th.

Public talks about Patcham village in the 1920s were given by local historians, Dr Geoffrey Mead and David Rogers, regular hirers and users of the hall contributed displays and activities, local musicians played throughout the day, a rolling presentation of Patcham across the years was shown on a screen. The Committee mounted a display of the Hall's history using some original artefacts, including the founding committee's minutes from 1923, acknowledging the committee members, numbering about 75 over the years, including many representatives of families still local to the village. Participants were invited to contribute memories and stories about their involvement with the Hall and Patcham's history. The event was publicised by a poster and flyers, distributed via local businesses, the library, local

and social media. The expenditure resulted in a little more than half of the £2500 budget agreed, owing to various contributors' generosity and the voluntary time offered as good will.

In 2023 the PMH committee had collaborated with the Hall's neighbour, DownsView LifeSkills College (DVLSC), by supporting their bid for funds and planning for a Community Garden. Reciprocating, the College named its Centenary Orchard in honour of the Hall. As a final activity for the celebration, this was opened on 3rd February by Mrs Sandie Cooper, a prominent local resident and one of the first pupils at the then National Board School on the College's site.

Enhancement of Facilities in 2024

The Trustees would like to thank our Estates Manager John Hogg for leading on the continuing refurbishment programme, commissioning tenders for work, monitoring the progress of the work, and managing the technology. Please see his report for details of work carried out.

Bookings

Hiring fees are our main source of charitable income, bookings consolidated further during the year, thanks to the persistence and patience of John Williams in dealing with private and corporate hirers alike. A modest increase for community and private hourly hire charges was implemented in 2023, and had not discouraged potential hirers. The number of sessions hired by regular users increased, with positive feedback about the enhanced decoration and ambiance.

Financial Stability

As will be seen in the appended Treasurers report for the year, our financial situation remains positive, turnover being £21k, expenditure £18k, with a final annual balance of £3000. Thanks are due to Treasurer Hugh Woodhouse for maintaining us in good financial stability, especially pursuing economical tariffs for the energy supply. EoY cash balance, maintaining previous years' grants and income, is Dec 2024 £72k.

Planning for 2025 and beyond

- A formal request was granted to the DVLSC by the Trustees, consent to create easy access to the Community Garden for wheelchair users from the College (learners and visitors) to reach the Community Garden site, rather than traversing a large area of grass in the Peace Garden. Planned for early in 2025, it is an extension to the path in the Hall's side garden, through a new fence with a secure gate; it would be for a restricted group of people (ie. not open access for the general public). It will support the collaboration between the two charities. To facilitate this, two members of staff from the College will be welcomed onto the Hall Committee.
- Regarding facilities for our User groups to publicise their events, we intend to seek their opinion on contributing to the charity's website to attract participants.
- We continue to seek more committee members, preferably by engaging Patcham residents and business community. Most committee members have served more than a dozen years. Our main objective is to run a succession plan to manage the Hall, to supplement some of the work such as representing the PMH charity at local events and contributing to consultations, eg. planning committees etc.

Written by Jan Mulreany, Charity Secretary & PMH Trustee /endorsed PMH Management Committee, 23 June 2025

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TRUSTEES AND OFFICERS for 2024

Trustees are appointed for three years, in order to maintain continuity in decision-making and locus of responsibility. The following people continued in their service to our community in 2024:

Hugh Woodhouse, Treasurer [elected trustee, Patcham resident]

Jan Mulreany, Charity Secretary [elected trustee, Patcham resident, contracted user group]

John Williams, Acting Chair and Bookings manager [elected trustee, Patcham resident]

Mary Taylor, WI appointed representative/ trustee

Pamela Hubbard and Christine Eden, U3A appointed representatives/trustees

John Hogg, Estates Manager and Patcham resident

Maria Hogg, Patcham resident and gardening workforce

Thanks also to Sophie Hogg, caretaker, for regular cleaning and maintenance, and to Luke Robin, contracted gardener, for supporting the garden committee members with muscle and know-how.