

North Wootton Village Hall Management Committee

Committee Meeting Thursday 18th December 2025

Apologies: Bridget Nurse, Doreen Smith, John & Pauline Marshall-Grint, Rachel Williamson, Colin Smith.

Attendees: Dennis Blackmore (Chairman), Neil Pearce (Secretary), Wendy Border (Treasurer & Bookings), Bob Angell (Maintenance) Will Border, Jason Harper, Kip Baker, Rachel Williamson, Zehra Ebelhack, Lucy Lemon.

Agenda

1) Approval of previous meeting minutes held on 20th November 2025.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true record and reflection of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

2) Matters Arising

The committee discussed the feasibility of building a storage facility in the form of a secure heavy duty shed at the rear of the VH. We require this for storing the gazebos that are used on village market days, and also excess chairs from inside the hall. Depending on which side at the rear of the hall this would be situated this may need to comply with planning regulations. Bob had already secured a couple of quotes for this ranging in price. It was agreed by the committee that we do need this facility, however further quotes will be sourced, and we will look into whether we can secure a grant for this before giving the go ahead. The committee will review again at the next meeting.

The secretary has delivered a letter from the chairman to Mr Trueman who owns the property adjacent to the VH formerly requesting permission to trim the hedges bordering the hall. The letter also enquired as to whether Mr Trueman would be interested in selling a plot of land behind the hall. Dennis (chairman) had previously raised this with the Parish Council. If Mr Trueman was willing to

relinquish ownership of this plot and sell, it would need to be valued. At the time of the meeting no reply has yet been received from Mr Trueman.

3) Finance

Wendy handed out the latest accounts sheet. She raised the point that even though we have substantial funds in the bank, for this calendar year we have run at a loss. Whilst we are a charity and we give back to the community, the point was made that at the very least we should break even and ideally make a small profit, which in turn helps fund future projects. A lengthy discussion ensued about possible ways to increase income-ranging from increasing hirers fees, table rents at the VH market and at the annual Christmas Fayre, as our pricing structure remains very low compared to most other similar venues. Whilst our present structure makes us very competitive we must ensure we do not fall behind on potential income. It was also suggested that we could perhaps be more proactive in using things like collection buckets at our events.

Whilst in principal all those committee members in attendance agreed with Wendy's proposal it was suggested by the chairman that we have a separate item on the agenda at the next meeting to discuss this further.

Wendy reported after the recent Christmas fair that the 'Pizza Slice Guy' made a £100 donation to the VH. On behalf of the committee Wendy thanked him for his very kind gesture.

4) Maintenance

Bob had no further maintenance issues to report.

5) Events Report

Antony asked politely for help setting up the VH in readiness for the upcoming market on Saturday (20th December) and also thanked all who helped on the day of the Christmas Fayre. He added that all the additional help he has received is very much appreciated.

6) Bookings

Wendy reported that bookings continue to remain very strong, both with regular hirers and one-off events and parties. Our competitive pricing (which we discussed earlier) continues to make us a very attractive proposition for potential future events/parties and hirers. Such is the interest in the hall that Wendy stated that she has had to sometimes turn away prospective hirers due to us being oversubscribed.

Wendy also reported that the VH has been hired out on the 26th/27th/28th and the 31st of December.

Wendy stated we already have numerous bookings for 2026 which means she anticipates for another busy year for the VH. The committee thanked Wendy for her hard work regarding the not inconsiderate task of maintaining a busy VH schedule.

7) A.O.B

Will took the floor and gave some out some statistics for the last year's monthly Bingo evenings.

Average attendance-39

Highest attendance was-56 in April. Will thinks this may have been partly due to increased advertising on that particular month.

Lowest attendance was-29 in July. This may be partly due to the event not being as advertised quite as well.

Our average income from Bingo evenings is-£220.

Wendy asked if we could purchase some more teaspoons as we seem to be getting low. It was agreed by the committee to go ahead and purchase these and any other cutlery we may require. She also enquired as to whether next Christmas we could view the hamper that is given as a prize at the Christmas Fayre raffle.

Our insurance runs out shortly and Wendy is in the process of renewing this.

A point was raised by several members of the committee regarding the possible need for security cameras. Jason raised that this may well be beneficial,

particularly if we do go ahead and build a storage facility at the rear of the hall. The committee agreed to get some quotes.

The final point raised was by Wendy enquiring about a goodwill gesture for any committee member wishing to hire the VH. As we all volunteer and give up our free time she suggested that on a once-a-year basis that if any of the members wished to hire the hall it should be free of charge. All present agreed this was a good idea.

No other business was discussed.

Date of next Meeting:

Thursday 12th February 2026 at 7pm.

Meeting concluded at 20:00