

North Wootton Village Hall Management Committee Meeting

7pm Thursday 9th July 2026

Apologies: Doreen Smith, Zehra Elphick, Colin Smith, Rachel Williamson, John & Pauline Marshall-Grint, Bob Angell.

Attendees: Dennis Blackmore (Chairman), Neil Pearce (Secretary), Antony Lamb (Events Co-Ordinator) Will & Wendy Border (Finance & Bookings Co-Ordinator), Jason Harper, Kip Baker, Anne Winson, Lucy Lemon, Bridget Nurse.

Agenda

1) Minutes The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11th June 2026 were approved as a true record and reflection of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

2) Matters Arising

The chairman opened the meeting with the sad news that Bob Angell our Maintenance Co-Ordinator has resigned from the committee. Bob has been integral to so much concerning the VH since the present committee took over the care of the building in 2017. Bob's 'can do' attitude to approaching maintenance of the hall has been vital to its integrity. His help with events has also proved vital. Bob has given up much of his free time to assist with numerous tasks and has always willingly assisted with many aspects of the massive improvements we have made over nearly the last nine years. It goes without saying that as one of the 'Originals' Bob will be greatly missed by all. The committee thanked Bob for all he has done over this period. Bob has stated however that he does not intend to be a stranger and has said he will still attend events and offer support and help whenever time allows him to do so.

Will has contacted the person responsible for the hedge cutting and will update the committee with a date of when this will be completed.

The chairman confirmed that it has been agreed to increase the price of the breakfast rolls in the kitchen and the price of items on the bread stall.

3) Finance

Wendy handed out the latest financial report. Again, it shows a healthy balance with the VH well utilised by regular hirers and one-off events. As mentioned in matters arising, we have increased some of our prices on food items which, although modest rises, will hopefully increase our profits on market days. Following inquiries we have established that our new fire alarm system will not affect our current insurance premium. Wendy confirmed that we will seek other quotes at time of renewal (24th December)!

Wendy reminded the committee that when we renew our insurance, we will need to consider the new shed when it is completed which may increase the insurance quotes a little.

Wendy reported a payment of £300 to the VH for the use of the building for the recent local elections.

4) Maintenance

In Bob's absence, the secretary reported that he had received a message from him regarding the laying of the concrete base for the shed at the rear of the VH. Kevin Leggett (builder) has put forward

two potential dates-17th/24th July, for work to commence. After discussion we agreed for the work to go ahead on 17th July

It was raised by several members of the committee that with increased likelihood of hot dry spells and heatwaves in the summer we should investigate into investing in air-conditioning for the hall. All agreed this would be beneficial. Dennis (chairman) to follow this up and obtain three quotes for the cost of having this done. Will also remarked it might be worth looking into whether we can get a grant for this, Dennis to report back at the next meeting.

5) Events

Antony reported that the previous VH market was not as busy as usual. This was probably due to it being summer holiday season, other local events on the same date, the heatwave and the absence of several regular stalls.

Antony reminded the committee that our next upcoming market on the 18th July is marks the 8th anniversary of the first ever market. The markets have over the years grown very popular with the local community and continue to serve the local area.

Antony is organising a North Wootton Village 'Sale Trail' on Sunday 23rd August. Participants will sell items from outside their houses. There will be a map which shows those taking part available from the hall so people can follow the trail and visit those sellers. It was agreed that we also open the VH for refreshments. Each person(s) wishing to have a stall outside their property will pay a £10 fee to the VH.

The Indian Night on Saturday 5th of September is now fully sold out.

Antony is organising another quiz night; the proposed date is Friday 9th October. Once again those taking part will have the option of ordering having fish & chips to be delivered at the interval.

Plans are already in motion for this year's Christmas Fayre. Antony confirmed the popular reindeer attraction will have to be in a slightly different location due to the positioning of our new shed. We will not be closing Priory Road this year, and any stalls on the grass verges next to the hall will be facing away from the road for obvious safety reasons.

2027 is the 90th anniversary of the building of the VH and Antony proposed we have an event to commemorate this auspicious date. He suggested an event similar to our Coronation event, including music, food stalls, a bar, and a 'Scarecrow Trail'. Antony will continue to update the committee of all arrangements over the next few months. It was suggested we hold it sometime from May as that the weather is likely to be good. A date will be confirmed later in the year.

Will/Wendy reported that 31 people attended the last bingo evening and £145 was taken on the night. Will and Wendy proposed that we should advertise the bingo more, with Facebook posts, on the website, and in the parish newsletter and local radio. They both also politely enquired whether anyone else can help with the bingo? Often it is just themselves and Antony who run the whole evening and it is a lot of work for just a handful of people. The next bingo evening is on the 30th of July.

Antony politely asked all committee members to inform him over the next few days if they will be in attendance to help with the VH market on the 18th of July so that he has an idea of cover for the kitchen/raffle/ bread stall/setting up and dismantling the tents.

6) Bookings

We are still receiving plenty of bookings and enquiries for hiring the VH.

7) Friends of the Village Hall

There followed a discussion regarding our social media-led campaign to recruit villagers who may be prepared to assist at the hall on a temporary basis to take some of the load off committee members. Wendy suggested we should promote the hall and its activities further via social media. Jason said that we can advertise on the VH website. It was also suggested that we could have a stall at the regular VH market promoting our regular hirers and hopefully drum up some business for them while garnering interest in the hall for possible 'friends'. Antony will see if we can fit in a small stall for this purpose, possibly from the September market onwards. Wendy is also going to ask regular hirers if they would be interested in the hall distributing printed leaflets promoting their businesses. Updates from all at the next meeting.

8) A.O.B

The chairman informed the committee that the neighbouring resident seems to have lost interest in selling the plot of land to the rear of the VH to us. Despite repeated attempts at contact, he has not returned any reply. The chairman said although he remains optimistic for a future purchase, we will leave the matter for the time being and hopefully resurrect it at some point in the future.

Antony raised the issue of building the new shed once the concrete base was laid down, after discussion the committee agreed that it would be a good use of our funds to have the shed erected professionally removing the responsibility from committee members. Bridget suggested we use her building company's carpenters. Dennis to follow up.

Just prior to the closure of the meeting Bridget also informed the room of her intention of also stepping down from the committee. Like Bob, Bridget is also one of the 'Originals' and she will also be greatly missed by all. Bridget's unique knowledge of the local building trade has meant she has been a vital point of contact for helping us procure the services of local trades people. Her knowledge of the local business community has also proved very useful to the VH on numerous occasions. Bridget has a busy schedule but has still found the time to help at events and VH markets. She now wishes to step back from some of her commitments and spend more time with her family. The committee thanked her for all her past efforts, and like Bob also, informed her that she is always welcome back at the hall at any time.

It was agreed that our next meeting will be preceded by our AGM.

No other business was discussed.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 13th August at 7pm. (AGM followed by the regular meeting).

Meeting concluded at 20:07