



## Farringdon Village Hall

Charity Number: 1206624

### **MEMBERS NEWSLETTER No 7. Feb 2026**

Welcome to the Members Newsletter No 7. Quite a bit to report in this first newsletter of the year. Firstly, we hope now to be able to make them more regular because Mike Law has offered his services to the Village Hall and - far more importantly - his IT expertise. He'll be looking after our member communication system and improving the website. Both of these have been our Achilles heel to date.

#### ***The Charity Commission***

Before Christmas, the Charity Commission contacted us raising some historic issues - dating back to a 2012 change to the charity's trust deeds - that had to be resolved before the "old" charity could be closed.

The Commission's letter explaining its concerns ran to no less than 6 closely typed pages and some of it seemed pretty much incomprehensible!

The Commission did suggest a possible solution, but the "solution" itself was confusing and didn't seem to resolve their issues in a good way.

We had no alternative but to consult specialist charity law solicitors.

Our solicitors wrote to the Charity Commission submitting that because of section 310 Charities Act 2011 everything had been done that was required for the automatic transfer of all property from the old unincorporated charity to the new CIO. The Charity Commission has accepted this and the "old" charity of which the parish council was sole corporate trustee has been closed. The CIO is, as we thought, responsible for giving effect to the trusts and we intend to continue to do that job.

On more routine matters we have recently submitted our mandatory Charity Commission Trustees Report for April 2024 - March 2025, which includes the accounts, which were presented at the AGM. These will shortly be added to the website, along with essential Charity policies.

## ***Fundraising***

With invaluable marketing knowledge and research help from Grace Clegg, we have submitted our on-line application to National Lottery *Reaching Communities England*. We have requested £500,000 which would fund most of the hall apart from the shell of the building. That may seem cart before the horse but there are two good reasons for that.....

The first is that we will be applying to the South Downs National Park and EHDC Community Infrastructure Levies (CIL). This is money charged on new developments, which is then put into a fund to support community projects. We have learned that they prefer to fund “bricks and mortar”. We are in the process of writing our 2026 submission. We’ve learned a lot since our first amateur attempt last year.

A key factor is showing community engagement and we can now show letters of support from nearly all the village clubs and activities. *If you would like to add personal support, please drop an email to [trustees@farringdonvillagehall.org](mailto:trustees@farringdonvillagehall.org) and tell us why you think we need a village hall again, and what you would like to see.*

The second reason is that National Lottery applications are a lengthy process and our initial application is only the first hurdle. The subsequent stages will be far more demanding. We will know during April whether or not we have been successful at this first stage.

We’ll also be investigating SSSE who have two funds, related to greener energy and to community resilience.

We have joined the National Council for Voluntary Organisations to have access to their resources and training.

We continue to research and explore other and contributory forms of funding the build.

But, as always, we would welcome any help with fundraising, especially if you have practical experience. The Trustees are learning on the job: we genuinely appreciate any advice and help, especially if we are to attempt fundraising in our local community, and this is the sort of thing that will strengthen our case with the National Lottery.

### ***Planning and Build***

- We have explained that our planning permission was accompanied by permitted opening hours that – compared with neighbouring halls( and pubs!) – were overly restrictive, and we submitted our “Section 73” application to vary conditions. There were some objections and we have agreed the planning officer’s option of a temporary trial period of more usable hours. But we’ve got to build it first.....
- ***The pre-build conditions.*** The results of essential topological testing (essentially drainage) are satisfactory. We now have to submit our plan to satisfy the very rigorous Highway Dept requirements for constructing access on to the A32. We already know that this will not be cheap, and will also require us to lodge a sizable deposit.

### ***Annual General Meeting***

Unless developments warrant a general meeting, the next AGM is likely to be in June

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Please send any feedback, suggestions or questions to  
[trustees@farringdonvillagehall.org](mailto:trustees@farringdonvillagehall.org)

Or catch us at Village Coffee Mornings: there is invariably one or two of us there.