



**DVHA - the Association for Dorset Village Halls  
Annual General Meeting  
held on Saturday 16 May 2026 at  
Morden Village Hall  
Morden, Wareham, BH20 7DT**

Present: 35 Representatives from 21 member halls were present plus 1 speaker. Lists of attendees available on request.

**1. Welcome & Introductions**

Mike Burt (MB) Chairman welcomed delegates and thanked Morden Village Hall, Morden, Wareham, BH20 7DT for hosting the AGM. The current members of the committee present were Mary Mathers (MM) Newsletter editor, Morarg Davenport (MD) Treasurer, Steve Hawker (SH) Membership & Website, Annette Newman (AN) secretary.

**2. Minutes of the previous AGM**

Minutes were previously circulated. Proposed by Carolyn Tory, seconded by Richard Benjamin. Agreed unanimously and were signed by the chairman.

**3. Matters arising**

None

**4. Chairman's Report**

Dorset Village Halls Association Chair's Report 2025-26 When I became a village hall trustee around 47 years ago, things were very different than they are today. In my view the halls were much more a part of the community. Local Government was more involved, and the community make-up was different, villages had multiple generations of families. The halls were important for births, deaths weddings, parties and fund raising to improve and maintain the facilities of the whole village. The way the halls came into existence was all different and the constitution of the halls can be different, that's why the DVHA supports the importance that all trustees should have copies of their constitution and understand their responsibilities, this is especially important where halls were gifted to the community to be used as a village hall. In the last few years, the DVHA has assisted halls who have run into difficulties when the now residents of a village do not understand the history and importance of halls to the community and also the dilution of the involvement of local government in assisting them. The DVHA has increased the membership of halls to the association and is currently looking to rationalise the website of Dorset Halls to bring it up to

date and make it more useful and easier to use. Some progress has been made but, in my view, it is taking too long. The DVHA constitution allows the DVHA executive committee to be a maximum of 14. At present we only have 5 so it would be helpful if we could increase that number. I thank the present committee for their efforts over the past year and thanks to my wife Diane who has been a hall trustee for 47 years and has helped me to carry out my duties for the DVHA. Let us hope that there are no further incidents like the Covid pandemic. But listening to the Government security committee discussions we need to improve the communications with councils and ensure that the halls are ready to deal with surprise incidents when they occur. I hope that those who attend the AGM have a productive day.

**Mike Burt Chair DVHA**

#### **5. Secretary's Report**

The DVHA committee met five times in 2025-6 apart from the AGM. Five newsletters were sent to all the village halls in Dorset in the last year covering a range of subjects including recycling legislation, the effects of the Budget and bank account charges. A Trustees Responsibility presentation was held at Alderholt Village Hall in September 2025. The committee have been asked to help with details about electric charging points, Martyn's Law, hall constitutions, noise nuisance, etc. We have offered advice and support to Film Expo South concerning organising a Film Festival, supporting The Arts Development Company with advertising a village hall survey and contributed to the NHS 10-year plan, health strategy.

**Annette Newman DVHA Secretary**

#### **6. Treasurer's Report & Accounts (2025-26)**

Morarg Davenport (MD) has prepared the accounts for the year 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, (Copy attached) The finances continue in a healthy situation with the main expenses in connection with maintain the website. The committee have begun the development of a new web site in a more up to date computer language. Eventually the old web site will be migrated on to this new platform.

**Morarg Davenport DVHA Treasurer**

## Dorset Village Halls Association Annual Statement 2025-2026

	2025-2026	2024-2025	2023 - 2024
Income			
Membership fees	£1,030.00	£1,020.00	£ 900.00
AGM Income			
Other			
Total Income	<u>£1,030.00</u>	<u>£ 1,020.00</u>	<u>£ 900.00</u>
Expenditure			
AGM Expenses	£182.21	£192.80	£ 114.46
Computer Expenses	£194.62	£152.02	£ 318.70
Sundry		£505.00	
Bank Charges			£ 45.00
Total Expenses	<u>£376.83</u>	<u>£ 849.82</u>	<u>£ 478.16</u>
Balance of Income over Expenditure	£653.17	£ 170.18	£ 421.84
Bank Account			
Opening Balance	£2,047.92	£ 1,877.74	£ 1,455.90
(Transfer to Nat West Account, HSBC Account Closed)			£ 1,368.90
Closing Balance	£2,701.09	£ 2,047.92	£ 1,877.74
Reconciliation			
Closing Balances - Opening balances	£653.17	£170.18	£421.84

### 7. Website report

A new web site is being created using Drupal. (This is a free, open-source content management software (CMS) used to build secure, complex, and highly customized websites, typically requiring technical expertise. It is known for its flexibility, API-first approach, and robust content modelling, making it suitable for enterprise-level applications, digital experiences, and multilingual sites. The current site uses an older form of this software)

SH expressed the need for all village halls to update their details as soon as possible because the web site will be transferred to a new site by the end of November 2026.

### 8. Membership & Subscriptions

SH reported that he has sent out 103 invoices to Village Halls and 94 members have renewed already. The next batch of certificates will be sent out soon.

DVHA have a fairly complete list of 133 of the approx. 200 VHs in Dorset. 60 halls have never been members of the DVHA but occasional they get in touch and usually join.

The membership fee will remain at £10 per year very good value considering how useful the newsletters and advice is to village halls. It was felt by the committee that they at present

had sufficient funds to maintain and develop the website the primary expense as well as funding the AGM.

## **9. Election of Officers**

The following committee members were nominated:

Mike Burt, Mary Mathers, Morarg Davenport, Steve Hawker, Annette Newman.

Jenny Rigby from Walditch Village Hall agreed to join the committee.

Proposed Carolyn Tory, seconded Richard Benjamin. All agreed unanimously.

## **10. Any other business**

- Transferring into a CIO is an incorporated structure designed for charities. Caro Hart, Dorset Community Action, mentioned that the process is much clearer now and that she can help – ACRE have produced some useful help notes.
- Safe storage of deeds, governing documents, registering the hall land – suggestion Dorset History Centre or a fireproof locking cabinet – they can not be replaced.
- The HM Land Registry registration of the village hall charitable trust must either reside with another legal body (Trustees cannot own land and be Trustees of the village hall) i.e.; holding trustees, a parish council, or the Official Custodian for Charities.

## **11. Grants and bid writing**

### **A presentation by Caro Hart, Dorset Community Action**

A very informative presentation with slides (the slides were sent out to all attendees following the AGM) Caro highlighted the many sources of funding for village halls, not just grants, and the importance of creating a business plan, collecting and sharing data to support your developments and gain support from your local community.

## **12. Stapehill Village Hall – WiFi without broadband**

### **A case study by Steve Hawker**

Steve shared the process of trying to install BT broadband into Stapehill Village Hall and the novel way they harness 'A.I.' and the wireless phone infrastructure to make this possible.

## **13. Topics from the floor**

Topics – managing to get a postcode/postal address for your village hall, PAT Testing – what is currently legal / requirements by insurance company / hall own equipment / hirers

Community Conversations Design Sessions with Dorset Council - <https://www.dorset-aptc.gov.uk/news/latest/community-conversations-design-sessions-with-dorset-council>

Shaping the future of health in Dorset <https://nhsdorset.nhs.uk/voice/opc/> The new national 10-Year Health Plan sets out a vision for a modern NHS that meets the changing needs of our population. The planning committee have worked with communities across Dorset to gather views on three key priorities:

Making better use of technology  
Moving more care from hospitals to communities  
Preventing sickness, not just treating it

**13. Morden Village Hall**

Presentation by Rob Brenton and Mary Mathers followed by look round

**14. Buffet lunch with an opportunity for Networking**

**15. Optional Afternoon Workshops – choice of**

Introduction to AI and demo of ChatGPT – Steve Hawker

Simple website building – Annette Newman