

Evenley Village Hall



Five Year Plan 2022 to 2027

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Evenley Village Hall Five Year Plan

Preface

This is the second formal five-year plan produced by trustees, focusing their endeavours to ensure the village hall remains a frequently used and well looked after community facility, as it has been for over 50 years. The plan also helps to communicate to residents and user groups how their village hall will continue to be developed in the future.

Social and economic factors are altering the demographics of many villages. People's interests and tastes also change over time. Evenley is no different, with several new families moving into the village every year, some of them on a short-term rental basis. The challenge for trustees is to ensure the hall continues to meet the needs of the community.

Over the previous five years, trustees have remained focussed on delivering the commitments set out in first five-year plan, which was approved by residents, despite changes of trustees and managing the impact of COVID 19 for the majority of 2020 and the first half of 2021. The challenges of the last five years have demonstrated the benefit of having a clear plan which has kept minds focussed, even when personnel changed or unexpected adverse circumstances prevailed.

In preparing for the next five years, the immediate focus for trustees will be rebuilding the hall's use back to pre-lockdown times and growing the business over the next five years. Apart from ongoing redecoration, few areas of the village hall require major refurbishment, but where improvements are identified they will be completed as part of this plan.

As before, the five-year plan is not just a vision for the future but is a practical description of how the hall is managed which helps to enlighten new trustees, regular hall users and anyone who expresses an interest in the village hall. The plan can also be helpful in supporting fund raising initiatives.

1. Executive Summary

Evenley's village hall is a charitable community facility whose activities are prescribed by a Deed of Trust and the Charity Commission and must be for the benefit of the community. The hall is managed by the Evenley Village Hall Management Committee (EVHMC), all volunteers. The hall is considered to be a venue which potential users can hire; EVHMC are not generally event promoters or organisers.

The main building was originally a school, erected in 1834 which became the village hall in 1960. Since then it has undergone a variety of extensions, structural changes and redecoration. Due to the age of the building, the slate roof and under felt is inspected

annually by a roofing contractor to confirm that it remains in good condition. The replacement of the roof is considered a longer term aim, outside of the scope of this five year plan, for which substantial funds will need to be raised.

Evenley Parish demographics show that the village has a higher number of older residents than the county average. The village can be described as an affluent community. Following the pandemic and subsequent closure of the hall, at the start of this five-year plan, business levels had not returned to the pre lockdown level which is a challenge for village hall trustees. To that end, a robust marketing plan has been drafted which can be implemented at any time.

Trustees are aware that lockdown has given user groups an opportunity to reassess their activities and some may not return to the village hall or may seek alternative venues. EVHMC needs to be aware of local competitive alternatives. There are Pubs, Hotels and Sports Clubs offering function room hire, meeting facilities and entertainment. There is also a plethora of village halls within a six mile radius of Evenley offering facilities similar to that provided by Evenley Village Hall.

It is a continued strength that many users and visitors to the village hall are generally satisfied with what it offers and believe that it meets the needs of the community.

Evenley Village Hall is not run as a profitable business venture (although a surplus is desirable) but is financially sound due to the contingency reserves established at the start of the previous five-year plan, grants received and sound financial management.

2. Village Hall Details

Evenley Village Hall is situated on the corner of Broad Lane and The Green. It has no letter box and does not receive direct post but its formal address is Evenley Village Hall, The Green, Evenley, Northants. The allocated post code NN13 5SQ is good for finding the hall by satellite navigation but not good for mail. All communications are via its Trustees (see section 9).

Evenley village hall is classed as a 'significant building' located within the village's conservation area, but is not a listed building. Some details about the village hall are included on the Parish Council website and more detail features on the village hall's own website, which can be found at evenlevillagehall.info

The village hall is registered as a charitable community facility which is available to the public of Evenley and surrounding area for community-related recreational activities (Charity Registration No 304189).

Like other village halls, Evenley Village Hall has charitable status because it is held in trust to be used for purposes set out by the Recreational Charities Act 1958. A building for use as a village hall was originally gifted to Evenley Parish Council. This building was later sold to raise funds to purchase the old school building for a larger village hall, which is managed by the Evenley Village Hall Management Committee (see later section on background and history). Evenley Parish Council remain the Custodial Trustees.

For Evenley Village Hall to maintain its charitable status, the EVHMC must ensure that

- The village hall provides facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupations.
- It meets social welfare requirements of the Recreational Charities Act 1958 such as ‘the facilities are provided with the object of improving the conditions of life’.
- The facilities of the village hall are available to the public.
- The organisation is altruistic in nature.
- The facilities are set up to meet certain social needs i.e. disabled access and lavatory.
- The village hall meets the public benefit requirements

In recent times, EVHMC have made a deliberate policy of not organising or promoting their own events. That said, one should never say never, so if the hall became in need of additional funds, trustees may consider organising and promoting fund raising events. However, in general, trustees believe organising and promoting events takes significant time and energy and carries high financial risk. For these reasons, trustees offer the village hall and its facilities as a venue for others who wish to set up and promote their own events.

3. Village Hall’s Purpose

The village hall’s purpose is clearly set out in the Deed of Trust. It is for the use of the inhabitants [residents] of Evenley and the neighbourhood without distinction of race, religion, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, disability or age* and in particular, for use for meetings, lectures and classes and for other forms of recreation and leisure time occupations with the object of improving the conditions of life for the residents.

*Note: EVHMC currently operate a policy of no bookings for 18th or 21st birthday parties.

The Charity Commission’s requirement is that activities in the hall will benefit the local community. More information is available from

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission.

The Charity Commission, under the heading ‘What does the charity do?’, registers Evenley village hall for providing arts, culture, heritage, science, amateur sport and economic development. Under the heading in the register ‘Who does the charity help?’, it lists children and young people, elderly people, people with disabilities, other charities and voluntary bodies and the general public.

EVHMC are able to let the village hall for use by private or commercial users, providing a payment is made [to at least cover expenses] and its use does not interfere with the activities that are set out in the Deed of Trust.

The requirements of the Charity Commission and Deed of Trust therefore shape the organisation's mission statement

4. Mission

EVHMC aim to provide a first class, safe, accessible, well maintained and well-presented village hall, to be used for social, recreational, educational and leisure activities with facilities which will be to the benefit of and meet the needs and desires of Evenley residents and hall's users. EVHMC will endeavour to meet the hall's annual running costs from the income from activities, including the occasional private or commercial events, providing this is in keeping with the interests of our own community. EVHMC will seek funds from donations, fund raising and grants to cover the cost of major capital projects to ensure the largest village asset is maintained and well presented.

5. Background and Achievements To Date

5.1 History

The original village hall was 23 The Green (now the Forge Coffee shop). Evenley Village Hall Management Committee was established in 1962 and the newly formed committee started the process of selling 23 The Green to acquire the old school building, which is now known as the village hall.

The main building of the old school was built in 1834. The village hall has been managed by an elected management committee for over 55 years and its membership has changed many times over this period. Their efforts have ensured that the hall has been maintained and has developed to meet the needs of the community. Sometime before 1994, a small extension was added to create male and female toilets. Later, in 2000 the complex was further developed with modern toilets including a disabled toilet, changing facilities, shower room and kitchen.

This was funded by grants from the National Lottery Fund and SNC and village fundraising events. In 2004 a storage room was added (replacing an old garage) along with the entrance link funded by the National Lottery Fund, SNC, Trust for Oxon Environment, Lloyds TSB Foundation and the village hall's own reserves.

Over time there have been upgrades of the electrical circuits, lighting, heating and plumbing and the purchase of fixtures and fittings including chairs, tables, curtains and audio visual



equipment. Damp proofing work was carried out in 2015.

5.2 The last Five Years

The last five years has been a period of advancement but immense frustration. The village hall has undergone major refurbishment throughout as follows;

- The exterior of the building has been repainted in heritage colours prescribed by South Northampton Council (SNC).
- The main entrance doors have been replaced again in line with SNC requirements.
- A new external bin store has been built removing unsightly rubbish bins inside the entrance hall.
- Signage has been upgraded with the addition of slate signs, inside and outside the building, plus safety signs in the car park.
- The external area at the rear of reception, referred to here as the atrium, has been cleared of debris, bollards etc., the floor area has been laid with gravel and a new wind sculpture installed.
- New wood effect vinyl flooring has been laid in the reception hall, corridors, small meeting room and kitchen.
- The village hall has been redecorated in contemporary colours throughout.



- Pictures and notice boards have been removed from the corridor and re-sited in the kitchen annex.
- Improved LED lighting has been installed in the main hall, introducing the ability to create zoned mood lighting. This is to create ambiance for functions rather than every night use.
- Artwork has been removed from the main hall and re-sited in the kitchen annex to reflect the multi-functional use of the hall.



- A new acoustic curtain has been installed across one end of the hall to provide a backdrop for performers and enhance the acoustics of the hall. The curtain also hides a myriad of wires which serve the projector screen, audio visual outlets and power extension cables.
- New racking erected in the storage barn.
- Additional two-way light switches were added to the storage barn and extra power sockets in the reception hall.
- The latest major refurbishment project was the installation of a new kitchen,



complete with new oven, larger fridge, new warming drawer and reduced height work top for visitors in a wheelchair.

Equipment and services in the hall have also been improved, upgraded or added as follows;

- Eight storable round plastic tables and table cloths have been purchased to provide an alternative layout for events in the main hall.
- A new electrically operated drop-down screen installed in the main hall.
- A new ceiling mounted projector.
- A 10-litre water boiler has been purchased for use at functions where tea and coffee are served.
- A free-standing island unit has been purchased to act as a bar, serving counter or additional surface/storage space in the Kitchen.
- High speed broadband has been installed in the village hall courtesy of *Gigaclear*.

There have also been improvements in the management and administration of the village hall, in particular to health and safety issues as follows;

- The 100 club has been expanded into 200 members and renamed the Village Hall Club.
- A village hall web site has been launched www.evenleyvillagehall.info
- The Health and Safety Policy was comprehensively rewritten.
- A new Risk Assessment process has been introduced for contractors in line with HSE guidelines.
- A legionella risk assessment survey was carried out by an independent expert and a new Legionella Policy and management plan has been introduced ensuring infrequently used water outlets and water storage are free of harmful bacteria.
- A COSHH Policy has been introduced to ensure users of cleaning materials are aware of the dangers of using a product and know how to react if the substance is ingested or splashed in the eyes or on the skin.
- An asbestos survey was carried out by an independent expert to identify areas of the building which may contain asbestos. A new asbestos management plan has been introduced so that external contractors and maintenance personnel are made aware of the potential presence of asbestos and can take the necessary precautions.
- A disability access audit was carried out by Trustees using the ACRE guidelines and a new Access Statement has been produced. There is a disabled toilet. The village hall has features to assist sight impaired hall users such as braille signs on the toilets, darker coloured light switch surrounds and door architraves. Double width doors make the hall accessible to wheelchair users and the new kitchen features a reduced height worksurface. A bell has been installed at the entrance to call for assistance by anyone wanting assisted access to the building.
- A data audit was carried out by trustees and a Data Protection Policy has been introduced.

- The booking form and conditions of hire have been updated to reflect current arrangements.

In addition to the improvements there have been several major repairs

- The flat roof above the small meeting room and the sky light have been replaced.
- The chimney stack and gable end has been re-pointed, flashings repaired and rainwater guttering unblocked.
- The main hall floor has been professionally refurbished by stripping down, cleaning and resealing.
- A new boiler has been installed.

Some of this work has been funded out of village hall reserves but major work would not have been possible without grant funding, in particular from WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental), SNC and HS2.

These improvements have been achieved, over the last five years, by the hard work and commitment of village hall trustees, some of whom are no longer on the management committee. The current trustees acknowledge the contributions made by former trustees Maddie Furnival, Kirsty Burnham, Barrie Morgan, Karen Walker, Sue Waller, Chris Hart and Alison Millard, all of whom served as trustees during the term of the last five-year plan.

Despite the substantial achievements of the last five years, the last 18 months have been extremely frustrating for trustees and hall users, with the hall's closure in compliance with government restrictions during the COVID pandemic. When the hall was allowed to open, restrictions continued, meaning many user groups did not return between lockdowns and have just not functioned for over 18 months.

Up until the pandemic, Evenley Village Hall had become a very successful venue for wellbeing activities including keep fit, yoga, pilates and CPR training. The hall was well used for social events, clubs and society gatherings, dances and concerts.

6. Current Use of the Hall

At the time this second five-year plan was produced, the village hall had only recently reopened after the government COVID 19 restrictions had been lifted only to experience the reintroduction of restrictions (such as mask wearing and social distancing) following the outbreak of a new COVID variant Omicron. The situation continues to be monitored and it is hoped that the village hall can soon operate without restrictions.

Many pre lockdown regular users have returned to the hall whilst others have been reviewing their situation. Future bookings looked positive at the turn of the 2021/22 year. The table below is subject to change but is the position at the start of this new plan.

Day Time Use Confirmed			
Activity	Day	Time	Comments
Challenge Parkinsons followed by Pilates	Monday	09.00 – 12.30	Weekly
Village Lunch	Tuesday	12.00 – 13.30	Monthly
Sing and Sign	Wednesday	9.00 – 15.00	From January 2022
Chair Based Exercise	Thursday	15.30 – 16.30	Weekly
Table Tennis	Friday	15.30 – 16.30	Weekly
Cricket Club	Saturday*	13.00 – 18.00	May to August only
Craft Class	Tuesdays	14.00 - 16.00	Monthly (plus occasional Saturday)

The Dance Class, Tai Chi and Yoga classes may not be returning to the hall.

- Denotes changing room and showers only

Evening Use Confirmed			
Activity	Day	Time	Comments
Film Club	Monday	20.00 – 22.00	c9 times per annum. Not recommencing until Spring 2022.
EPC	Monday	19.30 – 21.30	c9 times per annum
EVHMC	Day and times to be agreed		3 – 4 times per annum
WI	Monday	19.00 – 22.00	c10 times per annum.
Gardening Society	Tuesday	19.30 – 21.30	c9 times per annum. Recommencing September 2021
Bridge	Wednesday	18.30 – 22.00	Weekly. Recommencing September 2021
Craft Class	Tuesdays	19.00 – 21.00	Monthly
Cricket Club	Saturday	18.00 – 20.00	May to August only

As was the case prior to lockdown, all Saturdays and all Sundays are free of regular bookings (other than the cricketers using the changing room) and are available for parties and one-off events. There are other regular events not included in the timetable including the Gardening Society plant sale in May, Village Hall AGM, Katherine House coffee morning and the village hall being used as a Polling Station at election times. The ERA appears to have changed the venue for their AGM to the Forge Coffee Shop and moved the children's Christmas party to Evenley Wood Gardens.

7. Asset Appraisal

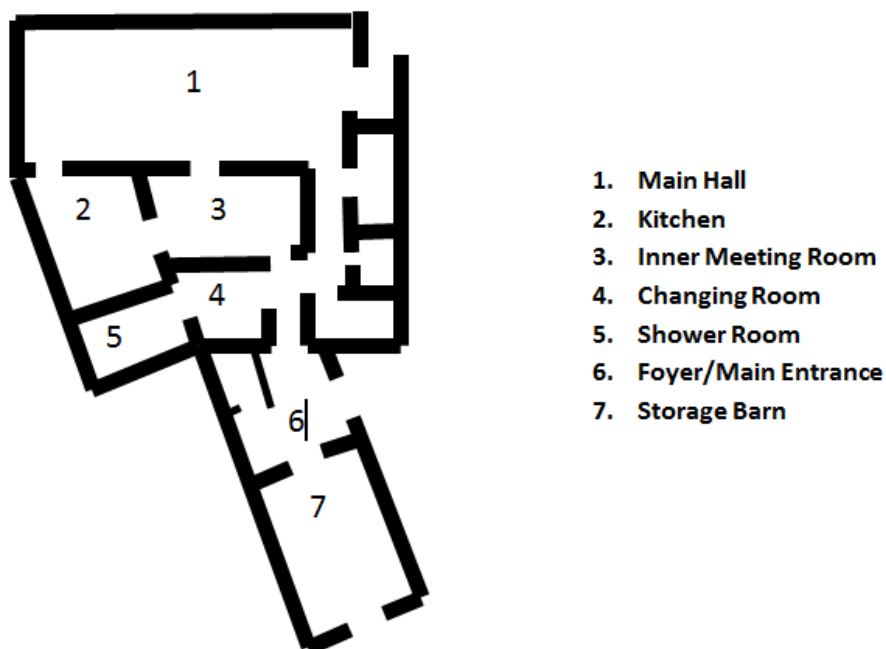
There have been no structural changes to the hall in the last five years so the asset appraisal

remains unaltered. Evenley Village Hall consists of an entrance foyer, a storage facility referred to as the storage barn, male, female and disabled toilets, a changing room with separate shower room, the main hall and an inner 'meeting' room referred to as the kitchen annex and a kitchen (see plan below).

The village hall has a variety of equipment. There are 81 chairs (65 new blue, 12 old red and 4 specifically for the disabled), several six-foot-long folding tables, eight round tables, a modular staging facility, table tennis table, DVD player, overhead projector, step ladders for maintenance purposes and the full range of catering equipment (cutlery, pots, pans, cups, saucers, bowls, plates etc.). The village hall houses the village defibrillator which is on the Emergency Services 999 database.

Evenley village hall is clearly a major asset of the village. It has been surveyed on a couple of occasions to assess its condition. The first time was in 1994, by the Aylesbury Partnership and the second in 2016 by Loring Brown. A number of faults were identified which were rectified during the normal maintenance program. Due to the age of the building, observations were made about the roof structure and the need to consider replacement some time in the future. The roof is inspected annually and the current guidance is that 'there is nothing structurally wrong with the roof'.

A mysterious pool of water appeared on the storage barn floor in 2021. Investigations were carried out to identify the source but nothing was found. The situation is being monitored.



8. SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis helps an organisation determine where it stands on four key strategic areas

enabling it to better determine what changes should be made. Strengths and Weaknesses are generally internal looking; Opportunities and Threats focus on external matters.

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users of the hall and its facilities appear happy and feel it meets the needs of the community. • The building is well maintained, is in excellent condition and kept clean. • The village hall is an attractive building with plenty of character located in the centre of an attractive village. • Adaptable for a variety of community purposes including parties with a variety of equipment available. • There is disabled access, disabled toilet, adapted facilities and special signage. • Competitive hire fees. • Regular bookings. • Hall is the right size for most users and current demand. • Brand new modern kitchen with new appliances. • Contribution from members of the Management Committee. • Expenditure is tightly controlled and remains within income levels. • The hall has a reserve fund as a contingency to cover significant unexpected expenditure. • The hall has a regular part time paid cleaner 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The hall has its limitations for some events. • Dependent upon part time volunteer management. • Lack of interest from community to become trustees. • No employed caretaker. • Major repairs may require the hall to close resulting in loss of income. • Once per month users may limit room availability for more frequent users. • Limited car parking space. • Small meeting room is not really a separate room but a storage corridor. • The hall is not a practical location for some sports activities. • When users of the storage barn do not return items for storage in an organised manner it becomes cluttered and untidy.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve promotion of the hall to fill underused capacity by implementing the proposed marketing plan in part or in full. • The addition of a television license and arial may attract organisers of different events such as watching a televised event (providing broadcasting laws are not infringed). • Create a fixed seating area in the small meeting room. • Continue to enhance décor and improve facilities where appropriate 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major works to the roof may be required within the next ten years. • Major events such as maintenance, return of COVID19 restrictions etc, may require the hall to temporarily close resulting in users finding alternative venues and not returning to Evenley. • Maintenance costs will increase over time due to the age of the building • Competition • For some potential hall users, other venues may appear attractive due to size, location, facilities etc.

9. Operational Arrangements

The Deed of Trust provides for up to six elected trustees, three appointed trustees who represent the interests of specific user groups and co-opted committee members appointed by the management committee, all having full trustee status. At the start of this five year plan the trustees forming EVHMC are:

Mike Boshier	Elected Trustee responsible for internal maintenance and represents the Cricket Club
Joyce Stevens	Elected Trustee, Minute Secretary and represents the Gardening Society
Derek Haynes	Appointed Trustee representing the ERA and responsible for external maintenance
Eric Millard	Elected Trustee, Chair and responsible for Health & Safety
Tony Stevens	Elected Trustee and Treasurer
Kim Golding	Appointed Trustee representing the Bridge Club and responsible for the village hall club
Jackie Lee	Co-opted trustee. New to the village in 2021, brings a fresh pair of eyes and new ideas. Booking Clerk from January 2022
Nick Lee	Co-opted trustee. New to the village in 2021, brings a fresh pair of eyes and new ideas.

The following documents are in use;

- Terms and Conditions of Room Hire
- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessment
- Asbestos Report and Risk Assessment
- Legionella report and Risk Assessment
- COSHH Policy
- Booking Form

The Deed of Trust was revised June 2017 with an appendix document registered alongside the Deed.

10. The Market

10.1 Demographics

It is calculated that there are approximately 260 homes in the parish of Evenley. From the Office of National Statistics the latest published population figure for the parish was 625, with a similar number of men and women. 54% of residents were over the age of 50 and 39% were over 60. This higher age profile has increased since the 2013 statistics reproduced

in the previous five-year plan. Evenley continues to have a more mature profile of inhabitants compared with Brackley and the county average.

The web site *Streetcheck*, using data collected from the last census indicates that 68% of the population in Evenley fall into the top three socio economic groups A B and C1. Just over half of home occupiers own their home outright, with no mortgage liability. Several properties are privately rented. Evenley is an affluent village.

10.2 Residents Use of the Village Hall

The village hall was closed for much of 2020/21 and when it was open, operated under restricted conditions. As a consequence, residents recent experience of the village hall has been limited.

As part of the previous five-year planning process, data showing some residents opinions was available from the results of a questionnaire issued to residents by the Parish Council in 2014, but this information was now considered to be too out of date to be relied upon. Statistics provided by Kevin O'Regan (then the Evenley Arts Co-ordinator) in his 2018 report to the Parish Council, showed that the percentage of Evenley households who had a family member attend one or more of his events was 34% with around 12.5% attending 5 or more events. His conclusion was that the EVA programme had been sustained by a fairly small number of households (33). His report showed that two thirds of households had never been to an EVA event. Not all of Kevin's events took place at the village hall, but his statistics do demonstrate the level of commitment from many residents. Organising and promoting events is challenging. This reinforces the village hall trustees decision not to promote the halls own events.

To introduce more up to date information to this plan, 26 households were chosen at random in July 2021 and questioned about their use of the village hall over the previous five years. This small number of households represents a 10% sample of all households in the parish and covered 51 individuals living at those addresses which was a sample of 8% of the total parish population. A full summary of responses is included at Appendix I but the following are the key findings.

- 47% of the households approached had never been to the village hall with 50% thinking it unlikely that they would attend the village hall in the next five years. It should be noted that 15% of households approached who said they had never visited the hall had moved into the village within the last five years.
- 39% of households had one or more family members who had visited the village hall in the last five years, several attending more than one type of event.
- Residents who had visited the village hall did so for a wide variety of activities with 50% attending a concert or performance, 53% a private function; 23% a public

meeting, 7.5% attending the village lunch, 15% attending a clubs or society event and 7.5% enjoying a well-being session.

Further testing of user groups and residents' opinions will be considered during the course of this plan to ensure the village hall meets the needs of its community; perhaps solicited digitally via 'Survey Monkey' or a questionnaire via maildrop.

It is recognised that the continued success of the village hall is dependent upon neighbours remaining happy with the activities provided, ensuring that noise and light pollution does not adversely affect them as hall users enter, leave and park on the site. During the last five years there have been two informal complaints received from neighbours, one regarding street parking and the other about bad language when visitors left the hall late at night.

10.3 Regular Hall Users Opinions

Regular users have remained very supportive of the village hall during the 'COVID period' with the Bridge Club, the Gardening Society, Cricket Club and Film Club plus several individual residents all making small but gratefully received financial donations during lockdown. This in itself demonstrates their appreciation for the village hall.

Anecdotally, the village hall has received many compliments and positive feedback from users. A few examples are as follows;

- I first encountered Evenley Village Hall when I used to attend Sing and Sign classes with my baby which left me with a good impression of the facilities. That is why I am now booking the hall again for my child's birthday party.
- Thanks for putting a link on the village hall website to my own website. That is very helpful.
- Several prospective hall hirers have expressed thanks for the time extended to them responding to email queries, tours of the hall and all-round good service. The quote looks fine and we'd like to go ahead.
- Thanks for the information, everything looks great. How is best to make payment.
- Thank you for your flexibility (during restrictions) in suggesting gazebos in the car park
- Thank you so much, everything went very great.
- Thanks for all your help, support and wonderful venue.
- I will continue to hire the venue and look forward to working with you.
- We like the layout, it suits our needs
- Love the new colour scheme
- The hall is always very clean
- It is wonderful that you offer equipment at no extra cost. Many other venues charge for the use of tables, chairs etc)
- Your hire charges are very reasonable.

- It is great that additional heating can be provided at the push of a button and at no additional charge.
- Thank you for your health and safety guidance. We hadn't thought of that. (They booked the hall in any case)
- The village hall it is an excellent venue, traditional but modern.
- I have experienced the hall when attending XXX class and knew how warm and comfortable it is. That is why I am making this private booking.
- Many thanks it was such a pleasure to meet you and be shown around the hall. We are looking forward to the party next weekend.
- Love your new web site, it looks fabulous and the links are great, thank you.
- Many thanks for letting us use the village hall for our daughter's birthday party. It was a great success and everyone commented on how lovely the hall was.
- We look forward to having another reason to hire the hall again in the future.
- As a visiting speaker this was one of the best village halls I have visited.
- It was a wonderful party with everybody having a great time. The facilities are terrific.

It is planned that future testimonials and feedback from hall users will feature on the village hall web site as from 2022.

10.4 Other Interested Parties

Evenley Residents Association (ERA)

The ERA appears supportive of the village hall, which is why they put forward Derek Haynes to sit on the committee as a Trustee and represent their views. Derek believes the Hall should be cared for and looked after, as it is an historic part of the local community and at the same time be available to be used for the benefit of the local community.

Parish Council

The Parish Council are custodial trustees of the village hall, holding the land title and property on behalf of Evenley residents. They are not involved in the day to day running of the hall but are very supportive of EVHMC. The Parish Councils strategic plan states that [the PC] will continue to provide support [to the village hall] & encourage the use of it. Councillor Jeff Peyton-Bruhl is the village hall liaison person on the Parish Council; he understands the workings of EVHMC having been chairman of the village hall management committee for many years before becoming a Parish Councillor.

Evenley Matters

Evenley Matters Charity has been supportive of the village hall offering financial grants on

several occasions. They have said the hall is an important community facility

10.5 Competition

Evenley Village Hall is not run as a profitable business venture (although a financial surplus is desirable) but the management committee needs to be aware of competitive alternatives which might stage activities and attract a source of income away from the village hall.

Evenley village hall faces competition from a variety of facilities in the area. Obviously all local venues have been closed over the period of the COVID19 pandemic but, as restrictions are lifted, most are actively seeking the return of old business and trying to capture new.

In the examples below it is not known how long a session would last so direct comparison with the rates Evenley Village Hall charges would be misleading. That said, Evenley Village Hall regular user rate is probably cheaper than other venues in the area.

Competition includes pubs, social clubs, local village halls and community centres and commercial hospitality premises. These are summarised in more detail below.

Village Halls

In the surrounding locality, there are several village halls within a few miles of Evenley offering similar facilities as Evenley village hall, which include;

- **Croughton** (not fully disability compliant) but offers a stage and bar.
- **Syresham** (photograph 1 below) – a modern building, much larger hall than Evenley village hall, accomodating between 100 and 250 subject to seating arrangements.
- **Tingewick** (photograph 2 below) – a traditional old village hall which is in need of modernisation. It is lowest priced venue in the area charging between £12 and £20 per session
- **Westbury** (photograph 3 below) is a relatively new facility including changing rooms, cafeteria and shop. Their hourly rate for non village residents is £20/£22
- **Charlton** (photograph 4 below) charges non-residents £15.50 per hour or £66 per session





Evenley Wood Garden

Situated within the parish of Evenley approximately 1 ½ miles from the village hall, Evenley Wood Garden offers facilities aimed at one off special events rather than regular weekly sessions. They have a pavillion suitable for up to 50 people or a marquess glade suitable for up to 120 people.



Brackley Town Hall

Recently refurbished, the Town Hall (pictured below) has a room for hire that can accommodate up to 100 people according to type of event.

Hire rates vary from £40 per hour during mid-week day time, up to £60 per hour for week end evening events.



The Learning Loft

Situated at Barn Owl Farm, the Learning Loft (pictured right) is a new facility in Evenley available for hire for meetings and 'low impact' activities. Their hire rate of £15 per hour is similar to those charged by Evenley village hall.



The Community Room

Situated at Brackley Old Fire Station, this is a relatively new facility with a capacity of 50 people for children's parties, afternoon teas, evening dinners, training courses and for community groups. Their hire rates are higher than Evenley village hall with commercial groups charged £34 per hour, Brackley residents £20 per hour and charity groups £10 per hour.



Egerton Hall

Located on the new Radstone Fields development, on the northern edge of Brackley, Egerton Hall is a relatively new facility aimed primarily at larger groups (up to 150) although they have a smaller meeting room for up to 30 people. They have the facility of banked theatre style seating.



Egerton Hall offers variable hire rates. For a commercial organisation to hire the large hall the rate is £40 per hour. For Brackley residents it is £30 per hour and for charity groups £15 per hour. Similarly, the small room hire fees for commercial organisations is £20 per hour, for Brackley residents £15 per hour and charity groups £10 per hour.

Local Pubs

Local pubs generally do not have rooms for hire but some, including The Red Lion in Evenley, has in the past been used for private parties, including offering a marquee for larger groups located in their beer garden or car park.

Sports and Social Clubs

Brackley Rugby Club, Brackley Bowls Club (pictured below) and The Crown Hotel all have rooms for hire. Sizes vary and hire charges are generally unknown but available on application.



Brackley & District Bowls Club

Brackley Football Club offers three new rooms for hire, after rebuilding the club house following a fire. The Venue can accommodate 160 people seated, charging £60 per hour commercial Rate, £50 per hour for local residents and £25 per hour for Charity groups. The Ann Leighton Suite can accommodate 40 people seated and charge £45 per hour commercial Rate, £30 per hour for local residents and £20 per hour for Charity groups.



The Venue. Brackley Town FC

The 1890 suite is in an adjacent building built just before the club house fire which can also accommodate up to 40 people seated. The hourly hire charge is £40 commercial rate, £30 for local residents and £15 per hour for charity groups. All three rooms have bar facilities.

Wedding Venues

Whilst Evenley Village Hall has been occasionally used for wakes it is not trustee's intention

to promote the hall for wedding events due (a) catering restrictions (b) limitations on parking and the impact on neighbours and (c) other venues can do it better. Therefore, wedding venues have been omitted from the list of competitors.

11. Finance

This section covers pricing, income and expenditure, grants available to the village hall and fundraising.

11.1 Pricing

Hire charges were last increased in January 2018. There have been no further increases since then and no increases are planned in 2021. Hire fees will be reviewed again in 2022. Evenley village hall hire fees are considered to be competitive when compared with other similar venues and significantly lower than commercial venues in the area. Some price comparison is included under the section on competition which will be kept under review.

Many organisations apply additional charges above the sessional rate for extra heating, equipment hire, using the kitchen and COVID cleaning. It remains Evenley village hall policy to charge a flat rate without adding supplementary charges, unless it is absolutely necessary.

11.2 Income & Expenditure Forecast

Annual running costs, excluding refurbishment or major repair, are around the £8,000 per annum mark. Trustees decided at the start of the last five-year plan, that a sizeable reserve fund should be maintained to meet at least nine months outgoings to cover the hall if there was a significant period when the hall could not be used or if there was a significant loss of business. Being able to make a financial contribution to major refurbishments or repairs, would demonstrate to grant-giving bodies that the community is playing its part. After the unprecedented events of 2020/21 this has proven to be a sound policy.

Up until the end of 2020, over the previous six years, income from room hire increased from £6,470 to £9,588 representing growth of 48%. With the change from 100 numbers to 200 numbers income from the village hall club grew from £1,152 to £2,348. Good financial stewardship by the treasurer has ensured that the available year end funds (apart from 2016/17) were consistently over £11,000.

Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Income from Hall Hire	6,470	6,500	7,747	8,133	9,588	556
Income from Village Hall Club	1,152	1,200	2,484	2,280	2,348	2,318
Year-end Available Funds	11,536	9,942	11,181	11,446	11,662	28,962

The financial year 2020/21 was like no other in the village hall's history, due to closure and operating restrictions imposed by government relating to the COVID pandemic. Hall income dropped to £556 although the village hall club continued and generated income of £2,318. Trustees maintained strict control over the hall's running costs, although an unplanned deep clean of the hall was commissioned with defogging and sanitising of equipment, to ensure that the hall remained Covid secure at a cost of £1,000.

The treasurer was able to obtain several COVID related grants from local government, totalling in excess of £ 20,000 (the source of these was reported in the treasurer's report to the AGM) resulting in available year end funds increasing to 17,299.

11.3 Grants

Over the past twenty years, the village hall has received significant grant funding from various bodies. These include the National Lottery Fund, South Northants Council, Trust for Oxon Environment, Lloyds TSB Foundation, WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental), Maud Elkington Trust and SNC New Homes Bonus. Smaller sums have been received from the Co-op, Evenley Matters, Parish Council and various clubs and societies.

Organisations that have funds to allocate to good causes is not a static situation and will change year on year but the treasurer maintains a constant dialogue with Northampton ACRE to explore funds available to village halls. Once West Northants Council is well established it is expected it will announce community grant funding to replace the schemes previously run by South Northants Council.

Consideration could be given to signing up to EasyFundRaising.org.uk – a system where residents are encouraged to register Evenley Village Hall as their charity so when they purchase something on the Internet (through Amazon, Ebay, Boots, Tesco, Sainsbury, M&S, Halfords, etc) the retailer would donate to the village halls EasyFundRaising account. When the account reaches £15 they pay that money into the charities account. This does not affect the price the purchaser pays, nor does it cost the purchaser but it would need support from residents.

12. The Next Five Years

The primary objective for the management committee is for the hall to return to its normal level of use, potentially increasing usage during the lifespan of this plan. To that end a potential marketing plan is included at **Appendix II**.

Having achieved so much in the last five years there is little refurbishment work required at the start of this new plan. A number of potential projects have been considered by trustees for the next five years and below is a list of proposed work that will or will not happen.

Wholesale changes to the use of various rooms such as the storage barn, changing room, annex kitchen room have been discussed, but no great benefit of such changes for hall users could be identified and trustees felt that there was no point in change for changes sake.

General Decoration

Regular redecoration of the hall, room by room, will be undertaken as and when required. There are no plans to change the current colour scheme.

There are no plans to add pictures to the main hall, other than retaining the picture of Her Majesty the Queen, reflecting its multi-purpose use. The traditional 'Evenley' pictures will continue to be displayed in the small meeting room/kitchen annex.

Temporary displays of local photographs and art works in the corridors may be considered as and when requested.

Exterior Improvements

The brick party wall at the rear of the car park, bordering No 1 The Green, appears to be leaning towards the neighbour's garden. This will continue to be monitored and kept under review.

Annual inspections of the tiled roof shows that despite its age no major repairs are required. Remedial work is inevitable during the course of the next five years. The flat roof is in good condition.

In the car park there are weeds coming through the tarmac at the edges and in places near the bin store. For the immediate future they can be kept at bay with weedkiller but at some time in the next five years, partial resurfacing may be required.

The main gates, which are never used, will need repair or replacement sometime during the next five years. Possible replacement of the bus shelter in the future as proposed by the PC, may affect trustees' decision on how and when the fence is replaced

The bin store will require re-staining with preservative.

The external railings will require repainting.

Storage Barn

The problem of water ingress into the barn may require work.

A new rainwater gutter may be required to avoid 'puddling of water' outside the storage

barn double doors.

Changing Room

The shower room could be upgraded with new flooring.

Toilets

Toilets could be upgraded and refurbished.

Kitchen

Replace some of the old, smaller wine glasses to match the larger Ikea ones.

As always, trustees are open to considering any improvements to the hall which may benefit hall users or village residents.

13. Conclusion

Evenley's village hall is a charitable community facility whose activities are prescribed by a Deed of trust and the Charity's Commission and must be for the benefit of the community. EVHMC have continuously succeeded in ensuring that the hall meets these requirements and achieves its mission.

Since the village hall's opening on the present site in 1963, trustees have continuously maintained and improved the hall on behalf of Evenley residents and hall's users, none more so than the trustees serving the village hall over the last five years. During that period a significant number of enhancement projects have been completed.

Up until the lockdown, the hall was in frequent use with over 70% of Monday to Friday sessions regularly booked. Usage at week ends was variable but the most popular day (Saturday) had 60% usage. Obviously, the period from March 2020 to July 2021 saw the hall either completely closed or when allowed to opened, operate under such restriction that the hall remained closed. This new five year plan has been written at a time when pre March 2020 users are considering their return dates but not all have committed to their previous schedule. Returning to pre pandemic business levels is the major challenge for trustees over the course of this five-year plan.

When a facility like Evenley village hall is closed, users explore the availability of other venues or reassess the delivery of their service. Whilst the village hall is not a commercial business, trustees need to be mindful of potential local competition, such as other village halls in the wider surrounding community, sports clubs and commercial venues. It is accepted that some of the other facilities may 'do it better' and it is accepted that Evenley Village Hall cannot be all things to all people.

Evenley Village Hall has operated with a surplus for a number of years and in recent times carried a contingency sum in its year end accounts of c£8k; a reserve in case of emergency repairs or sudden loss of income. This policy certainly benefited the hall's financial position during the recent lockdown. Grant funding has always been accessed by trustees to carry out major projects but Evenley village hall has been in receipt of several grants relating to the COVID pandemic awarded by local government to reduce the impact of lockdown on community facilities and compensate them for COVID related increases in costs. This has left the village hall better off than normal at the start of this five-year plan. Trustees will endeavor to continue meeting the hall's annual running costs from its income.

There is minimal refurbishment of the village hall left to do. However, EVHMC have a range of options to be considered in detail at EVHMC meetings. The majority of issues identified are not expensive and can be funded from the hall's income.

Evenley Village Hall is a valued village asset and will be maintained and well presented on behalf of village residents.

Random sample of Evenley household's use of the village hall

House	Total number of occupants	Have used the village hall in the last five years										Likely to use the hall in the future?		
		Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session	Probably	Unlikely			
1	1	Under 18												
		18 to 30												
		31 to 50												
		51 plus	1	✓										✓
2	4	Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session					
		Under 18	2	✓										✓
		18 to 30												
		31 to 50	2	✓										✓
3	1	Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session					
		Under 18												
		18 to 30												
		31 to 50												
4	2	Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session					
		Under 18												
		18 to 30												
		31 to 50												
		51 plus	1		✓								✓	
		Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session					
		Under 18												
		18 to 30												
		31 to 50												
		51 plus												
		Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session					
		Under 18												

		Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session		
9	1	Under 18									
		18 to 30									
		31 to 50									
		51 plus	1		✓						✓
10	1	Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session		
		Under 18									
		18 to 30									
		31 to 50									
11	2	51 plus	1								✓
		Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session		
		Under 18									
		18 to 30									
12	1	31 to 50									
		51 plus	2	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
		Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session		
		Under 18									
13	2	18 to 30									
		31 to 50									
		51 plus	1		✓						✓
		Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session		

18	4	31 to 50	1	Never used the hall	✓	Private Event	✓	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session	✓	
		51 plus											
		Age range of occupants											
		Under 18											2
		18 to 30											
		31 to 50	2	✓								✓	
		51 plus											
19	4	Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	✓	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	✓	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session		
		Under 18											
		18 to 30											
		31 to 50											
		51 plus	2	✓								✓	
20	1	Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	✓	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	✓	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session		
		Under 18											
		18 to 30											
		31 to 50											
		51 plus	1									✓	
21	1	Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	✓	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	✓	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session		
		Under 18											
		18 to 30											
		31 to 50											
		51 plus	2	✓								✓	

22	2	Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session
		Under 18							
		18 to 30							
		31 to 50							
		51 plus		✓	✓				✓
23	2	Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session
		Under 18							
		18 to 30	✓						✓
		31 to 50							
		51 plus		✓	✓	✓			✓
24	2	Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session
		Under 18							
		18 to 30							
		31 to 50							
		51 plus		✓	✓				✓
25	2	Age range of occupants	Never used the hall	Concerts or Performance	Private Event	Public Meeting	Village Lunch	Club or Society	Wellbeing session
		Under 18	✓						✓
		18 to 30	✓						✓
		31 to 50							
		51 plus							

Proposed Possible Marketing Activity

With competitive venues in the area reopening in late 2021, Evenley village hall may need to carry out some marketing rather than rely on recommendation and ‘word of mouth’. The hall does not possess a huge database of contacts, so is unable to carry out specific audience targeting and would rely on a program of general advertising to create awareness which would have universal appeal and not concentrating on any particular target group or activity.

The following is a list of marketing activities that Evenley village hall could carry out, if required, many at very minimal cost.

- Direct mail drops to village residents, starting with a questionnaire already prepared for distribution later this month. It would not be sensible to bombard residents with information, but we could aim for up to four ‘drops’ over the coming twelve months, dependent on how well bookings pick up. Estimated cost would be c£50 each time for printing. Committee volunteers could be used to distribute a leaflet and or have the leaflet circulated with the village newsletter.
- Using the Parish Clerks data base of 90 email addresses, an email circular could be circulated. This would be free of charge but the circulation would be lower than a physical leaflet drop.
- Similarly, a posting on the Evenley Residents Association Facebook Group would reach over 480 people.
- For broader marketing a posting on Brackley Gossip Girls would reach over 3500 people.
- Create a Facebook Group for the Evenley Village Hall
- Promote the village hall in Focus magazine, which reaches 8500 homes in the wider Brackley area (see map)



A quarter page advert would cost £55 (inc VAT). The benefit of this is that the magazine has about a two month shelf life and can be seen whenever someone flicks through it. The downside is that it would be one of many adverts in the magazine which diminishes its impact.

Alternatively Focus magazine will design a flyer for approx £250 (inc VAT) and distribute it with the magazine. The benefit of this is that the leaflet would clearly be visible to anyone receiving the magazine but the downside is that leaflets are easily discarded and have no shelf life.

- Hold a coffee morning, inviting residents to visit the hall and view the facilities.
- Produce a village hall leaflet. This could be made available in a dispenser in the village hall for visitors to pick up and take home. It could also be used to provide information to enquirers. To design and print a quality promotional document with professional photography could cost around £500-£750 depending how many were printed. To gain maximum value of printed matter such as this, it will need to have a reasonably long shelf life. This means that a timetable of activities, room hire prices or any other current information could not be included. A leaflet for general pick up from a dispenser would have marginal value as a marketing tool and would be helpful to anyone who is not connected to the internet, but the web site appears to be the best source of information.
- Purchase a 3 metre x 1 metre vinyl banner reading 'HALL AVAILABLE FOR HIRE www.evenleyvillagehall.info'. The cost would be c£75 and the banner could be displayed on the railings on the front of the village hall. It has the flexibility to be displayed for a month, taken down and stored for a while until displayed again. It also has a long shelf life.
- The web site needs to remain fresh and be kept up to date. Mike requires updates to be fed to him and trustees should not expect him to be making changes automatically.

Key Messages

In addition to the standard features and benefits of the hall included in any message sent out to the market place, Evenley village hall's setting as an attractive building with plenty of character both inside and out, in excellent condition, located in a beautiful village should be emphasised.

Summary

Undertaking a marketing campaign means implementing a variety of activities to reach a varied audience. If all of the above activities were adopted, apart from our own promotional leaflet, the whole campaign would cost less than £2000. Activity does not need to be carried

out all at once and could be phased subject to how quick the hall is getting booked. Obviously, if all the activities summarized above are not carried out, cost would reduce. If the effectiveness of the campaign would need monitoring, each marketing activity could have a unique code so that enquiries could be linked back to that specific event.

Striking a balance between providing the halls facilities to existing hirers and hall users with attracting new users from outside the village is an ongoing consideration.