Chair's Report

Shutford Village Hall AGM 2026

I'm pleased to be reporting on another successful year for the Hall, with strong and varied use that continues to demonstrate its importance at the centre of village life.

We were delighted to welcome a new exercise class during the year, further broadening our exercise offer to villagers which, alongside pilates and yoga, helps to promote health and wellbeing within the community.

The launch of the new community lunch and ongoing success of the monthly breakfast provides valuable social opportunities, bringing people together and strengthening connections within the village.

Thank you to Stephen for organising the theatre event held in September which was well received and demonstrated the Hall's potential as a venue for cultural events. We look forward to Stephen's next theatre event later in the year.

Alongside new initiatives, we have been very pleased to see continued value and variety in our regular hall users. Table tennis, yoga, pilates, arts and crafts groups, film club, the WI, church activities, and parish council meetings all contribute to keeping the Hall active, relevant, and well used throughout the year.

Turning to the financials, I am pleased to report that the interim January 2026 report showed an account surplus.

This year we have improved our financial reporting by separating operational and capital expenditure, giving us much better transparency and helping to plan for both day-to-day running costs and longer-term investments in the building.

Energy costs have been a significant focus, and I am very pleased to report that we have successfully reduced these through a combination of system changes to the heating, securing a more competitive tariff, and careful management of our heating regime. Recent heating upgrades have further increased efficiency and should continue to benefit us in future years.

I would like to express thanks to Chris for his work in monitoring and managing the heating system and to Geraldine for her diligent recording of accounts and reporting at each meeting.

As always, the Hall could not operate without its volunteers. I would like to thank all those who continue to organise and support the Village 100 Club. The loyalty of participants and the commitment of those who organise it remain an important source of funds for the Hall.

Special thanks also go to Helen and John for their work in finding a buyer for the stage and organising its sale.

Considerable progress has been made on maintenance and improvements over the past year. In addition to the heating upgrades and new controls, we completed a store clearance, undertook boundary wall repairs—with a valued contribution from the pub—and carried out decorating to improve the appearance of the Hall. The addition of a key safe has also helped to provide improve access arrangements for our hirers.

With Chris's help, Voneus have now introduced a guest log-in alongside access for regular users, maintaining connectivity and usability.

Gardening and general upkeep have continued to keep the surroundings looking welcoming.

On marketing and promotion, I would like to thank Helen for her ongoing efforts to encourage hall use at every opportunity, and John for his regular "What's On in Shutford" page. Their work plays a vital role in promoting events and ensuring the community is aware of everything the Hall has to offer.

Finally, I would like to thank all committee members, volunteers, hirers, and users for their continued support. Shutford Village Hall remains a thriving community asset, and that is entirely due to the people who give their time, energy, and enthusiasm to keep it going.

Gordon Freeman