WILLIAM BLAKE MEMORIAL HALL - MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT 7.00PM ON MONDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER 2025 AT THE BLAKE HALL

PRESENT

i. **Elected Members:** Francis Blake (Chairperson), Anne Brown (Treasurer), Jo Tudor (Secretary), **Representative Members**: Stephen Carp (SP Parish Council), Beryl Male (WI), Angie Long (Sports and Social Club)

ii. **By Invitation**: Linda Bleasdale (Hall Manager), Dominic Francocci (standing in for Jan Stanton, Arts Group), Nikky Marks (prospective new secretary and elected member), Chelsea Abbott (new social media volunteer), Oliver Coulson (new social media volunteer).

NO	MINUTES
1.	**Chairman's Welcome, Apologies, Introductions and Notices** The Chairman welcomed visitors who were attending for the first time – Dominic Francocci, Nicky Marks, Chelsea Abbott and Oliver Coulson. Apologies were received and accepted from Jan Stanton (Representative Member, Arts Group), June Trask (Elected Member). Kathy Vertannes (Elected Member) was not present. **Action 1: Francis Blake to write to Kathy Vertannes regarding her membership of the Committee.**
2.	**Minutes of the Previous Meeting held 28th April 2025** The minutes of the previous meeting were **agreed as a correct record** and signed by the Chairman.
3.	**Actions and Matters Arising from Previous Meeting(s)** A brief update on the actions from the previous meeting, including those that had been completed, was circulated with the agenda and is included below on Page 6. With regard to Action 2, Linda confirmed that the fuse had been removed from the stage electrics and they were no longer operable. With regard to Action 19, Stephen noted that the issue of extending good Wi-Fi coverage to the Committee Room was still with the Parish Council. Dominic suggested that cabling should be put in as part of the future major renovation. **Action 2: Stephen Carp to chase up issue of Gigaclear extending Wi-Fi coverage to the Committee Room with the Parish Council**. Any other actions requiring further discussion were picked up under the relevant agenda item and are minuted below.
4.	**Financial Management and Report (Anne Brown)** Anne presented the following figures as of 20th September 2025. Her full report providing a breakdown of these figures is included on Page 7 below. • Total Income since 1st Jan 2025 – £13,798.70 • Total Expenditure since 1st Jan 2025 - £13,248.24 • Excess of Income over Expenditure since 1st Jan 2025 - £550.46 • Current Balance in Co-op Current Account – £7,730.97 • Current Balance in Bath Building Society - £22,415.77
5.	**Review of Booking Charges** The Committee undertook its annual review of booking charges taking into account a recent survey of local hire charges by Linda. It was agreed that, in view of ever-increasing operating costs, hire charges should, with effect from 1st January 2026, be introduced or raised as follows: • Regular Users - increase from £9.00 to £10.00 per hour for Hall, toilets and kitchen (costs of small committee room on back staircase will stay at £6.00 per hour • Casual Hirers – increase from £12.00 to £14.00 per hour

NO	MINUTES
	• "Whole Village" Events eg carnival, folk festival, Christmas bazaar, Children's Party – introduction of charge of £10.00 per hour • Hire of Kitchen and/or toilets only – introduction of charge of £6.00 per hour These charges still compared favourably with those of other local halls. **Action 3: Jo Tudor to write to regular users and organisers of annual "whole village" events regarding increased and new hire charges from 1st January 2026.** **Action 4: Jo Tudor to update the booking documents etc to reflect the increased hire costs.** The Committee noted that a new simpler charging system for regular bookers, first discussed a year before, had still not been devised. However, those involved with the current booking system now had a good overview of the various payment methods which had developed with different users, historically. The current procedure by which Nikki raised any necessary invoices was working well. Therefore, the Committee agreed, that for the time being at least, no changes would be made except to require that all payments to be made by bank transfer. It was agreed that, from now on, if regular users cancelled a session with less than a week's notice, they would be liable for 50% of the costs. **Action 5: Jo Tudor to notify regular users of necessity of paying booking fees by bank transfer and that 50% of fees were payable if regular bookings were cancelled with less than a week's notice, and to update Hall forms and policies accordingly.**
6.	**Hall Management and Report (Linda Bleasdale)** **Report** - The Committee had received a brief report from the Hall Manager for June to August 2025. The following issues were discussed: • ***Main Doors to Hall*** – Eternal Kitchens had undertaken the annual maintenance and oiling. There was discussion of whether it could be done every other year in order to save money but **the committee agreed** that weather-driven deterioration meant that the extra costs of less frequent but more extensive maintenance were unlikely to result in an overall saving. Angie said she had noticed a gap down the right-hand of the doors which could let heat escape in the winter. **Action 6: Linda Bleasdale to check if filler was needed around the Hall's main doors to fill any cracks and improve insulation.** • ***Public/Sports and Social Club Toilets –*** Linda reported that Steve had focussed his efforts on keeping the Hall's toilets clean while the public and Club's toilets were recently out of action. This might have had knock-on effects on the cleanliness of the Hall. Angie said that she had also contributed to keeping the toilets clean and providing supplies. • ***Projection Screen*** – Beryl reported that the WI had found that the new longer pole and hook provided by Steve was unfortunately still not long enough to pull the screen down. Angie kindly produced an old snooker cue from the Club which proved to be the perfect length. **Boiler –** As the Committee was aware, the boiler had failed and was irreparable. The cost of a new one plus the legally required adjustment to the flue would cost £8-£10k or more. In view of the fact that the Hall wanted to undertake a major renovation in future, the **Committee had agreed by correspondence** to install smart electric heaters in the Hall in place of the central heating. These could be programmed with precision to provide appropriate warmth for all needs. Rhys Harvey was currently undertaking the work for which a quote of 4,620.00 had been received. This included the cost of removing the old radiators and pipework which were potentially quite valuable and hopefully would help recoup some of the costs. The work should be completed in the next three weeks. **Action 7: All Committee Members to let Francis Blake know of any reclamation agents or other parties who might be interested in buying the Hall's old radiators.**

NO	MINUTES
	Action 8: Francis Blake to lead on selling of the Hall's old radiators. In connection with this, it was agreed that gas was no longer required in the upstairs Hall area and the boiler should be decommissioned and removed if possible. Hot water was provided via an immersion heater in the attic area. **Action 9: Linda Bleasdale to obtain quote for decommissioning gas and boiler and to arrange for decommissioning and removal as appropriate.** **Action 10: Jo Tudor to ask regular users to ensure the two sets of double doors on the first floor were kept closed to minimise heat loss.** **Action 11: Jo Tudor to inform the History Group that gas heating was to be decommissioned and therefore, unfortunately, there would no longer be a warm pipe running through their "village archive" cupboard.** **Storage** – In answer to a question from Dominic, it was clarified that many of the regular classes had lockable storage cupboards which were included as part of their hire charges. Linda noted that there was now a spare cupboard in the kitchen and it was agreed that this should be made available to a regular user who did not currently have one. Jo Tudor reported that the family of Reg Beale had confirmed that they did not seek the return of any of the Over 60s Club's possessions following the Club's closure (after Reg's passing at the beginning of the year). **Action 12: Jo Tudor to seek a regular user wanting a kitchen cupboard.** **Action 13: Jo Tudor to ask Reg Beale's family if they could return the two keys to the Hall that had been held by Reg.** **Action 14: Linda Bleasdale and Oliver Coulson (see minute 10) to liaise over photographing and selling/ disposing of the Over 60s Club's equipment and possessions via Facebook.**
7.	**Renovation of the Hall and CCS Carbon Reduction Project (Francis Blake)** The Chairman provided an update on the project. Unfortunately the application for a grant from the Somerset Community Foundation's *Community Building and Energy Efficiency Fund* had been unsuccessful. Francis suspected this was because they wished to fund hardware such as heat pumps rather than a renovation plan. In the light of this, he has put the Renovation Project on a temporary hold pending the outcome of the Parish Council's discussions on the renewal of the lease with the Club – see Minute 8. This was because the area downstairs would need to be considered in any renovation plans. Jo Tudor had provided the Committee with a summary of responses including key messages to the consultation held earlier in the year which could inform future work.
8.	**Lease with the South Petherton Sports and Social Club** Francis noted that, while up to very recently, he had had no formal communication from the Parish Council, he had learned that the Council, at its last meeting, had passed a resolution to pass back responsibility for preparing the Club's lease to the Management Committee. He understood that an argument had been made that, while the Council and not the Committee was the signatory, historically it was the Committee's responsibility to prepare the document. Neither Francis nor Angie had been kept informed or seen a draft lease. Stephen reported to the Committee that, as the lead councillor for the Blake Hall, he had contacted the Charity Commission for advice. He understood that the Parish Council was the custodian trustee and held the title deeds but was not responsible for preparing or decision-making about the lease. However, much of the work had now actually been done by the Parish and only three things remained outstanding. The Committee would need to consider these and then share the lease with Angie as the Club manager.

NO	MINUTES
	Angie voiced her concerns over the long delay and the fact that, as a long term tenant, the Club was not being kept informed or progress or content. She would be very unhappy if the rent was raised and compared her situation unfavourably with that of the Sports Pavillion in the village. Angie had been unable to set up a committee to help her run the Club because individuals were unwilling to take on the responsibility given the uncertainty. Her next EGM aimed at setting up such a committee was scheduled for 14th Jan 2026. Angie also said that she did not consider the Club should be responsible for paying for the recent repairs to the drains. Francis said that a much more transparent and structured process was required quickly so the lease could be completed and signed. **Action 15: Francis Blake to work with Stephen Carp, the Parish Council, Angie and the Committee to agree a process for getting the lease completed, negotiated and signed as a matter of priority.** **Action 16: Francis Blake to set up a special committee meeting if necessary to consider the lease with the Club.**
9.	**Hall Bookings and Users (Jo Tudor/ Linda Bleasdale)** Jo had provided a short report on hall bookings which was taken as read. There were still eleven regular users with no gains or losses since the last meeting. As of 20th September, 37 one-off hires had taken place in 2025 and there were another nine bookings in the diary. This was a slight increase on the previous year and represented an income of c. £2.1k. Jo was happy to continue as the bookings contact after stepping down as secretary and committee member shortly after this meeting.
10.	**Blake Hall Website and Promotion of the Hall** Unfortunately, Nikki Jones was no longer able to take forward the work of maintaining the Hall's website and promoting the Hall as she had set up a wood turning business. However, the Committee was delighted to welcome Chelsea Abbot and Oliver Coulson who had recently responded to adverts on local social media looking for help in these areas. It was hoped that they would be able to work together perhaps with Chelsea drafting articles and Oliver developing the website. Dominic noted that there was an opportunity to tell the story of the renovation and it was suggested that the Hall should have an Instagram account. Jo advised that, as it had been impossible to find out who had the admin rights for the existing Hall Facebook page, she had set up a new one - William Blake Memorial Hall, South Petherton 2025 at https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61578007393244. **Action 17: Stephen Carp to set up meeting with Chelsea Abbot and Oliver Coulson to show them how the website operates and share appropriate admin rights.** **Action 18: Francis Blake and committee colleagues to meet with Chelsea and Oliver regarding strategy and processes for promoting the Hall through social media.** **Action 19: Jo Tudor to provide Chelsea and Oliver with information about TA13 and contact details for editor, Paula Yare.** **Action 20: Jo Tudor to share admin rights for the new Facebook page with Chelse and Oliver.**
11.	**Committee Membership/ Admin Update** **Policies** – Jo apologised for the delay but she had finally sent the four Hall policies that had been agreed by the Committee to regular users and to Stephen for putting on the website. She had also prepared a paper summarising the policies now in place and identifying those recommended as good practice by the Charity Commission and Thrive for the Committee to consider putting in place. **Action 21: Francis Blake and committee colleagues to meet to consider whether the Hall needs to adopt any further policies.**

NO	MINUTES
	Charity Commission Return – The annual return containing figures and information for the year ending 31st December 2024 had been submitted on the 21st September. **Resignation and new Secretary** - Jo confirmed that she would stand down as secretary and committee member once she had completed the minutes of the meeting, quick actions and tasks associated with relinquishing signatory responsibilities. The Committee was delighted to welcome Nicky Marks a new prospective secretary and committee member to the meeting. As secretary, Nicky will need to be a committee member, and **it was agreed unanimously to coopt Nicky Marks** upon Jo's resignation, until the next AGM when she can be elected properly. Following Jo's resignation, Anne pointed out that a new third signatory would be required for banking matters. **Action 22: Jo Tudor to set up meeting with Nicky Marks and Francis Blake regarding a handover of secretarial responsibilities to Nicky.** **Action 23: Committee to adopt a new third signatory for banking issues.**
12.	**Any other Business** There was none.
13.	**Date and time of next/ future meeting(s)** • Dates of next Committee meetings: **7.00pm, Mon 26th Jan 2026, After AGM on Mon 27th April 2026, Sept date tbc** • Date of next AGM: **6.30pm on Mon 27th April 2026**

The meeting finished at 9.00pm

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UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM THE LAST COMMITTEE MEETING

ACTION FROM LAST COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 28TH APRIL 2025	UPDATE ON ACTIONS AS AT 3RD SEPT 2025
Action 1: Jo Tudor to contact Groups re risk assessments for their classes.	Completed – Included in update sent to regular users and committee members 4th Sept 2025.
Action 2: Linda Bleasdale to ensure that stage electrics were decommissioned	TBC - Update required
Action 3: Linda Bleasdale to ask Jess if it was feasible to get a reconditioned boiler which could be sold on after the renovation.	Completed. Not possible to get reconditioned boiler. Heating to discussed under Agenda Item 6.
Action 4: Stephen Carp to approach Council for support with funding a reconditioned boiler.	Superceded. Heating to discussed under Agenda Item 6.
Action 5: Francis Blake to set up initial meeting of the Renovation Project Working Group.	Update required. On hold until outcome of Parish Council discussions known – Renovation Project to be discussed under Agenda Item 7.
Action 6: Jo Tudor to ask Committee Members if they wished to join the Renovation Project Working Group.	Completed. List of willing committee members compiled. Renovation Project to be discussed under Agenda Item 7.
Action 7: Jo Tudor to prepare summary of responses to survey on hall renovation including replies to open-ended questions.	Draft summary completed. Renovation Project to be discussed under Agenda Item 7.
Action 8: Linda Bleasdale to look at what other local halls were charging for booking to see if we were still in line with current rates.	Completed. Hire charges to be discussed under Agenda Item 5.
Action 9: Jo Tudor to contact Kathy Vertannes again to see if she had been able to progress the work on regularising payments to cut down on workload or whether another approach was needed.	Secretary had not been able to make contact with Kathy. Charging system to be considered under Agenda Item 5.
Action 10: Jo Tudor to contact the Beale Family with regard to removing the Over 60s club material.	In progress. Beale Family has not yet responded to attempts to make contact. Update to be provided at meeting under Agenda Item 6.
Action 11: Stephen Carp to continue to provide Nikki with technical help regarding updating and developing the website.	Completed but Nikki has had to step down from IT duties. Alternative volunteer IT/ social media support being actively sought. Update to be provided at meeting under Agenda Item 9.
Action 12: Francis Blake and Jo Tudor to provide Nikki with guidance and support on website and Facebook strategy and content.	Completed but Nikki has had to step down from IT duties. Alternative volunteer IT/ social media help is being actively sought. Update to be provided under Agenda Item 9
Action 13: Stephen Carp to try and adjust settings so Blake Hall emails do not end up in the spam folders.	Completed successfully – problem resolved.
Action 14: Committee Members to provide Nikki Jones with photos of the "Blake Hall in Action" and, if they had not already done so (and were willing), photos of themselves.	Nikki has reported that only the Art Group has provided pictures. Secretary has used one of these on the new Facebook Page.
Action 15: Jo Tudor to contact Kathy Vertannes/ Antonia Gatehouse again	It has not been possible to contact Kathy. Kathy has previously said, and Antonia has now reiterated that neither

ACTION FROM LAST COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 28TH APRIL 2025	UPDATE ON ACTIONS AS AT 3RD SEPT 2025
with regard to changing the Hall's Facebook page administrative rights to Nikki.	held administrative rights despite the page still existing. Secretary therefor took decision to create a new page with 2025 tag and, as Nikki has stepped back, she currently has administrative rights for the new page. Social media to be discussed under Agenda Item 9.
Action 16: Linda Bleasdale to consider being identified as the Hall's Safety Officer.	Francis and Linda have agreed that, while Linda will deal with appropriate safety issues as part of her Hall Manager role, responsibility will lie with the Chairman and other trustees. Francis has updated the policy agreed at the last committee meeting to reflect this. Update to be provided under Agenda Item 10.
Action 17: Jo Tudor to ensure that the Hall's policies were ready for publication and send copies to Nikki Jones for uploading.	Policies have now been collated and, as Nikki has stood down from website duties, will be forwarded to Stephen for uploading to the Hall's website. Update to be provided under Agenda Item 10.
Action 18: Francis Blake and Jo Tudor to consult re whether any further policies needed.	Not yet done
Action 19: Stephen Carp to contact Gigaclear.	Update on outcome required
Action 20: Jo Tudor to advise Groups that they should run through fire procedures with their members.	Completed – Included in update sent to regular users 4th Sept 2025.

FINANCIAL REPORT JAN TO SEPTEMBER 2025

Figures as at 20/09/25

Updated Income WBH 1 Jan 25 to 20 Sept 25

Social Club	Regular	Casual	Grants	Refunds	Sundries	Total
5400	5397	2149.5	0	742.2	110	13798.7

Updated Expenditure WBH 1 Jan 25 to 20 Sept 25

Cleaning	Capital	Insurance	Maintenance	Sundries	Deposit refund	Electricity	Gas	Water	Licences	Contractors	Total
2097	0	1742.37	2096.16	846	488.59	1839.86	2564.88	398.81	94.57	1080	13248.24

Start 1/1/25	IN	OUT	TOTAL	
7180.51	**13798.7**	**13248.24**	**7730.97**	**Current Account Balance**
			22415.77	**Untouched Savings BIBS**