WILLIAM BLAKE MEMORIAL HALL - MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT 7.00PM ON MONDAY 26th JANUARY 2026 AT THE BLAKE HALL

PRESENT

i. **Elected Members:** Francis Blake (Chairperson), Anne Brown (Treasurer), Nicky Marks (Secretary), June Trask

ii. **Representative Members:** Beryl Male (WI), Angie Long (Sports and Social Club), Jan Stanton (Arts Group),

iii. **By Invitation**: Steve Hill (Hall Manager)

NO	MINUTES
1.	**Chairman's Welcome, Apologies, Introductions and Notices** Apologies were received and accepted from Jo Tudor (Bookings Administrator), Kathy Vertannes. The Chairman welcomed Steve Hill who has taken over from Linda Bleasdale as the new Hall Manager.
2.	**Minutes of the Previous Meeting held 22nd September 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. 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) – *Finance report included in papers*** A summary of the current financial situation was circulated with the agenda. Anne stated that the accounts are currently with the examiner and will be presented once agreed. There is a slight increase over the year in income but also increase in expenditure. 2025 made a loss which was not helped as there was a need to change to electric radiators resulting in installation and equipment costs. Anne had withdrawn £2000 from the building society but repaid as not required. Unsure of impact on utility bills now the hall is an all-electric system. December cost for the Christmas lights has been refunded by Parish Council but Anne anticipated that we have not received the full amount of the electric costs. We have contributed £938 for the repair of the drains to the main toilets downstairs. Rental is now received from Sports & Social club which has helped with income. Ended finance year with £22826.11 in the Bath Building society and £2853.67 in the Coop current account. Finance summary approved.
5.	**Hall Management and Report (Steve Hill/Francis Blake) – *Hall management report included in papers*** The Committee had received a brief report from the Hall Manager for November 2025 to January 2026 which had been circulated with the Agenda. The following issues were discussed: • Small Ongoing issues. These included problems with toilets, a ceiling tile having collapsed in main hall and it was unsure as to when this might have occurred and what caused it. Francis believes there may be some spares within the hall. Steve will look to see if any spares **ACTION 1: Steve to fix ceiling tile** • There had been some leaks from the recent storms. Two big windows in main hall through the seal. Could just need resealing, Steve to check out. Otherwise, will contact

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	roofer. **ACTION 2: Steve to check out windows and if necessary, will contact the roofer.** • Stair lift. Now fixed and Steve confirmed there had been an issue with batteries. The maintenance engineer was not impressed by previous maintenance work there also being an issue with sticky tape that he thinks the previous company had used when they had serviced it. Need to get some further parts but recommends not replacing. Still able to get parts and to continue with regular maintenance. Maintenance man lives in village so is willing to help if any urgent issues. **ACTION 3: Steve to action invoice for repair work** • Roof tiles – Now fixed, several others that needed fixing and all sorted. Approx £175. Awaiting invoice. • Immersion tank – Slight leak outside from overflow but also dripping inside as had become disconnected. This caused issue with smoke alarm sitting in water. Steve has reconnected overflow and worked on the ballcock – he thinks this might have fixed the issue but will continue to monitor. • Water heater (raised by Jan Stanton) – Issues with getting kettles under tap. Now on plinth but members still not overly happy with the heater, though accepted it as workable. Steve will look ask Hodges to look at the original boiler to see if it can be got working again. • Stacking and cleaning of tables (raised by Jan Stanton). The tables often look dirty with what looks like charcoal marks, presumably from the life drawing class, but they should be taking responsibility for cleaning. Materials are accessible for the class. Steve to make sure all cleaning equipment is available and then Jo will write to ensure classes properly clean up after use. **ACTION 4: Steve to ensure cleaning equipment available** **ACTION 5: Jo to write to users to ensure cleaned after use** Jan also commented that the tables and chairs are not always stacked in a safe way. Could be due to non-regular users. It was confirmed there are instructions on how to stack. **ACTION 6: Jo to write and ensure users are made aware of how to safely stack.** • Icy toilets and kitchen - no heating in toilets or kitchen (raised by Jan Stanton). Whilst it was agreed that the facilities can be cold in winter, it was confirmed they have never been heated, and they can also be hot in summer. It was confirmed there is a fan heater in the kitchen if required. • Gigaclear in committee room. Nothing to report Francis to contact Clare the clerk at the Parish Council. • **ACTION 7: Francis to write to Clare at the Parish Council** • Fillers around front doors need redoing. **ACTION 8: Steve to action**
6.	**Renovation of the Hall (Francis Blake)** No movement to date other than the removal of the radiators which wasn't part of plan. Not successful with funding previously applied for so no resources to move this forward. Francis

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	has not followed up as there is a need to finalise the Sports and Social Club lease (the Club also needs new heating). He feels we are at the point of getting the Club on proper footing so need to try and revitalise renovation project. Need to do some research on grants from funding bodies with a view to starting the application process but Francis stated he currently does not have the time. Had previously costed this to be around £15000 – £20000 so need to look at fund raising. It could potentially be a big project including looking at solar panels, lighting and a lift. Jan asked if we would get planning for air source pump which Francis confirmed they had previously looked at with the energy audit people. **ACTION 9: Nicky to look to see what grant and funding bodies are available. Look at THRIVE see what advice they give.**
7.	**Hall bookings and Users (Jo Tudor) -** ***Hall management report included in papers*** Jo Tudor had provided a report in advance of the meeting which was circulated. She reported an influx of new regular users which represented an extra 9 new bookings a week. Steve said he had received feedback that some new users had seen the hall advertised online possibly via Facebook. The Pilates lady contacted Francis as had moved locally and this was now confirmed as a regular booking. Jan Stanton made the committee aware that there would be an art exhibition from the 29th - 30th May which would have an impact on the regular users for those two days. June Trask also indicated that there was now a new theatre group which is growing with more people contacting her showing an interest. June sent a letter to Combined Arts Society asking if they can join. The theatre group would be looking to put on an event which would probably be over at least 3 nights plus rehearsals so would need a whole week before. It was felt that people wouldn't mind forsaking their classes, but notice would be given once the dates were announced. June would very much like to get someone like James Purfoy to attend for some promotion and it was confirmed that his sister lived in South Petherton. June is very keen to try and raise money for extra lights which would be her long term plan. It was agreed that Jo Tudor would write to the regular users to advise them of the art exhibition and the theatre group putting a show/play in the future. **ACTION 10: Jo to advice users of art exhibition and potential theatre group show.** There had been a recent incident experienced by the table tennis group following an inebriated youngster making their way into the hall but this was dealt with at the time. There is an issue in that when users are in the hall the front door is often left open for access for users. Most classes are set times so the doors can be closed but the table tennis group come and go. The door can be put on the latch if necessary. The plan is to get a bell so if required the door can be locked and the bell can be used. Beryl did query as to whether the door should be locked as it is also the fire escape. **ACTION 11: Steve to organise a bell to link into the main hall** There was discussion about having a keysafe for a spare key that could be used as a one off or for anyone that has forgotten their key. This would be for exceptional use only. However it was felt that a keysafe could be open to abuse. Forms and Policies Update – Ongoing. The priority is to get the existing policies updated and on the website then look at further policies. Jo has sent policies to Stephen to action, possibly

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	with Oliver Coulson. **ACTION 12: Stephen to update policies on website and/or work with Oliver Coulson.** There is a spare kitchen cupboard if required. If no takers then the Art Group would make use of it. However the Drama Group are happy to share if the Art Group require more space. Could be used for cleaning cupboard, Steve indicated he has started to put things in as stuff is going missing or moved from current storage space. Keys can be cut for regulars if required. Retrieval of Keys from Reg Beales family ongoing.
8.	**Blake Hall Website and Promotion of the Hall** Hall promotion. Stephen Carp to set up meeting as per Action 17. This is outstanding and there is an urgency to address **ACTION 13: Stephen Carp to set up meeting with Chelsea Abbot and Oliver Coulson, then Francis to work with Chelsea and Oliver and other committee members on promotion of the Hall and new policies** Action 19 states as part done Nicky to check with Jo Tudor what has been done to date regarding information about TA13 magazine. Action 20 ongoing due to issue with Oliver's Facebook account. **ACTION 14: Nicky to check with Jo Tudor about TA13 and Facebook**
9.	**Sports & Social Club -** ***Draft lease included in papers*** A meeting had taken place with Angie Long on the 20th October 2025 to discuss the draft lease. The amended lease updated by the Parish Council was reviewed. Francis Blake has further updated following the meeting. The Club had an issue with the proposed rent following the valuation (from £600 to £900 per month). **It was agreed** to step up the increase over 3 years as agreed between Angie and Francis. Angie also stated that she was looking at future renovations. The payment date will need to be amended to 15th of each month. As this starts from 1st January 2026 there is a slight discrepancy with income. Francis Blake to amend dates. Opening times sent by Angie and now inserted into lease. Other issue is still with the toilets. Angie confirmed that the club get a small amount of cleaning funding from the Parish Council and that she is currently reviewing the invoicing costs. The Parish Council did increase the funding the year before last but this needs to be increased again. Angie to talk to Clare for increase in funding. She said there are still ongoing issue with toilet products going missing and with the drains especially in the disabled toilets. Francis has referenced in the lease the need for further agreement between the Club and the Parish Council. Toilets have to be open during public events and this causes major issues with a big increase in the volume of users. Angie is feeding this back to the Parish Council and is creating a portfolio of issues. **ACTION 15: Angie Long to talk to Clare at the Parish Council for increase in funding.** Angie stated she is happy with the Lease and Francis to send back to Parish Council for signing. **ACTION 16: Francis Blake to forward to the Parish Council to arrange signing of lease**
10.	**Committee Membership/ Admin Update**

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	Nicky Marks has now taken over the role of Jo Tudor who stepped down from this role but is staying on as bookings administrator. Steve Hill has taken over as Hall Manager following the resignation of Linda Bleadale. With regard to Action 1, Francis confirmed that he had emailed Kathy Vertannes who had responded and was not aware of the meeting. Nicky confirmed that the agenda and papers had not been circulated to her as there has been some misunderstanding about her role on the committee and Nicky will email her to apologise for the oversight: **ACTION 17: Nicky to email Kathy Vertannes** Anne Brown is currently changing the signatory of bank accounts following Jo's resignation. As this needed a proposal to substitute Nicky in place of Jo as signature on both the bank account and building society account this was proposed by Anne Brown and seconded by June Trask and agreed unanimously. **ACTION 18: Anne to complete changing of signatories**
11.	**Any other Business** Jan Stanton commented that the big downpipe outside building was flooding into catchment and flooding pavement. Could this possibly be due to a blocked drain. Steve to look into **ACTION 19: Steve to check drain by pavement outside building** Francis Blake said he has received some correspondence from Flood Group requesting to use hall as emergency centre if required. The committee room could be used as the emergency centre and for anyone having been evacuated to use the main hall. Facilities for hot drinks, blankets etc could be made available. The Blake Hall committee could be part of anything if needed and were happy to support. However we would need some written process so as to understand what using the hall as an emergency centre would entail. Jan Stanton said she has a contact who links in with her if there is a likelihood of potential issues. Need to ask Flood Group what they are wanting and how the decision making process works. **ACTION 20: Jo to contact the Flood Group with a positive response and request a policy and procedure** Francis Blake wanted to let the committee know that he would be moving to Crewkerne in around 12 months and as yet was not sure if he can stay on in his position as chair.
12.	**Date and time of next/ future meeting(s)** Date of next AGM: **6.30pm on Mon 27th April 2026 followed by the committee meeting**

The meeting finished at 8.30 p.m

UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM THE LAST COMMITTEE MEETING

Where required, the Chairman will deal with actions from the last meeting under the agenda items indicated.

	ACTION FROM LAST COMMITTEE MEETING 22nd September 2025	UPDATE ON ACTIONS AS AT 26th January 2026	OUTCOME
ACTION 1	Francis Blake to write to Kathy Vertannes regarding her membership of the Committee	Done, Kathy has been overtaken by a new job and shift work but is emerging on the other side and intending to become active again.	**COMPLETE**
ACTION 2	Stephen Carp to chase up issue of Gigaclear extending Wi-Fi coverage to the Committee Room with the Parish Council	No further information	**New Action 7**
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	Done	**COMPLETE**
ACTION 4	Jo Tudor to update the booking documents etc to reflect the increased hire costs	Done	**COMPLETE**
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	Done	**COMPLETE**
ACTION 6	Linda Bleasdale to check if filler was needed around the Hall's main doors to fill any cracks and improve insulation	Checked, it is needed, Steve to contact Eternal Kitchens	**New action 8**
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	Superseded – they were extremely heavy and of low value so it was decided to scrap them.	**SUPERSEDED**
ACTION 8	Francis Blake to lead on selling of the Hall's old radiators	Superseded – see above	**SUPERSEDED**
ACTION 9	Linda Bleasdale to obtain quote for decommissioning gas and boiler and to arrange for decommissioning and removal as appropriate	Done	**COMPLETE**
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	Done	**COMPLETE**

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	ACTION FROM LAST COMMITTEE MEETING 22nd September 2025	UPDATE ON ACTIONS AS AT 26th January 2026	OUTCOME
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	Done. They will keep the situation under review	**COMPLETE**
ACTION 12	Jo Tudor to seek a regular user wanting a kitchen cupboard	Kitchen cupboard still available – Steve will use as a cleaning cupboard or possibly the Drama Group and Art Group will consider using it	**COMPLETE**
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	Left message on answerphone but not responded yet	**PARTIALLY COMPLETE**
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	Done/superseded – some items had been removed	**COMPLETE**
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	Draft lease agreed with Angie, Francis to forward to the Parish Council	**New actions 15 and 16**
ACTION 16	Francis Blake to set up a special committee meeting if necessary to consider the lease with the Club	Done	**COMPLETE**
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	Not yet done	**New action 13**
ACTION 18	Francis Blake and committee colleagues to meet with Chelsea and Oliver regarding strategy and processes for promoting the Hall through social media	Part done	**New action 13**
ACTION 19	Jo Tudor to provide Chelsea and Oliver with information about TA13 and contact details for editor, Paula Yare	Part done	**New action 14**
ACTION 20	Jo Tudor to share admin rights for the new Facebook page with Chelse and Oliver	Oliver's FB account was set up when he was under 18 and his settings seem to prevent this and we are in ongoing correspondence trying to resolve it. Chelse has not responded yet for details of her account	**New action 14**
ACTION 21	Francis Blake and committee colleagues to meet to consider whether the Hall needs to adopt any further policies	Not yet done	**New action 13**

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	ACTION FROM LAST COMMITTEE MEETING 22nd September 2025	UPDATE ON ACTIONS AS AT 26th January 2026	OUTCOME
ACTION 22	Jo Tudor to set up meeting with Nicky Marks and Francis Blake regarding a handover of secretarial responsibilities to Nicky	Done	**COMPLETE**
ACTION 23	Committee to adopt a new third signatory for banking issues	Nicky to check with Anne Brown/Jo Tudor	**New action 18**