**GREAT WILBRAHAM ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 26TH MARCH 2024: Questionnaire**

**Questionnaire: Please return this form by email to** [**hilary.burton@greatwilbrahamparishcouncil.gov.uk**](mailto:hilary.burton@greatwilbrahamparishcouncil.gov.uk) **or to Sam Chambers Turner at clerk@greatwilbrahamparishcouncil.gov.uk by Tuesday 19th March. If you prefer to fill in the form by hand, please return it to Hilary Burton at 25 Frog End.**

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| Name of Organisation: Wilbrahams’ Memorial Hall & Recreation Ground Trustees | |
| Approximate number of members  Trustees: 6, 1 vacancy  Committee Members: 6, 1 vacancy for LW&SMBPC  Secretary, President.  Events Team: 48 on list for volunteering | |
| Are you able to attend the Annual Parish Meeting on 26th March 2024 at 7 pm? Yes/~~No~~ | |
| Please provide the name(s) of the representative who will be attending | Emma Adams Charles Raikes |
| 1. *ACHIEVEMENTS*   Please tell us about 3 (or more) achievements in the past year that you are most proud of. | |
| 1. We have developed a project to install approx. 60 solar pv panels on the road face of the hall roof, together with associated battery storage. From estimates, this should generate more electricity than we use over a year (ie. we will be operationally ‘net zero’). As well as self-consumption, we will be exporting surplus electricity to the grid. We estimate to make a saving on our electricity bills of £3-4,000 per annum. The electricity will be ‘green / renewable’ ie. not generated by burning fossil fuels. We have applied for and received planning permission for the project. We have applied for local and national grants for £45,000. We will get the results of these from April through to July. The project has also been supported by pledges from Ridge Clean Energy (£5,000); Great Wilbraham Parish Council (£2,000) and Little Wilbraham & Six Mile Bottom PC (£358). The Memorial Hall expects to use approx. £5,000 of our own funds for the project. 2. As part of the process of applying for solar panels, we undertook a community survey in November 2023. 142 households representing 35% of the residents responded. (Unfortunately, no one responded from Six Mile Bottom). This established that 97% of respondents supported the project, with the remaining 3% being maybes. We also took the opportunity to ask how often residents used the facilities, and for what activities. 25% of the respondents use the hall more than once per week, 20% use it once a week, and 45% visit it for special events / visit the markets. The opportunity to leave comments showed that the facilities are clearly appreciated by many in the community as a central focus of community life and we are keen to maintain and expand this. We counted up the bookings in November and estimate that there were 1500 individual visits and a further 210 involved in organised sports. That does not include users of the play area, which are many. A summary snapshot of November shows that the Hall was booked for 164 hours by 19 different user groups, a local art exhibition, an accordion concert, a farmers’ market, 6 private parties and a wake. We are proud of this diversity and reach. 3. We have taken the time in the last few months to consolidate management and update the policies of the Memorial Hall. These are all uploaded to our website. We are working towards the 3 levels of Cambridgeshire Acre Hallmark scheme for village halls, which is a recently launched accreditation scheme. 4. We are in the process of setting up a ‘100 club’ small lottery to provide additional funding for maintenance / running costs. This has been launched and ticket sales are going well. The first draw will be in May. If we sell 100 tickets, the Hall will retain £1000 in funding. 5. We continue to run the Farmers’ Markets in the Hall and on the Rec. These have proved very popular and are a great way for people to meet and shop on a Saturday morning, whilst supporting local businesses. The markets raise £3-3500 per year. | |
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| 1. *PLANS FOR 2024/5*   Please tell us 3 (or more) things that your organisation would like to achieve next year. | |
| 1. If the grants are successful, we hope to install solar panels in the last quarter of 2024. This will have a long-term financial benefit, eliminating the current income gap between rental income and the cost to run the hall (including periodic maintenance of the building). If this is achieved, we will be able to allocate fundraising to special projects. 2. Our next project would be to install a canopy to link the main hall to the Social Club, which would ease use during large events and parties. We will have to wait for more than 1 year from any successful grant applications to apply for further grants for this. 3. Our surveys have revealed what we had observed: that the hall is predominantly used by residents who are over 50. With the rebuild, and then the pandemic, the hall lost some regular groups that catered for children and teenagers. We understand that this is happening across many village halls and we would like to reverse this trend. We would like to work with Wellbrahams & PC to introduce more child orientated activities in the hall. | |
| 1. *PROBLEMS*   Please tell us 3 (or more) problems you face – and ideas for tackling them, including how the Parish Council, other organisations or residents could help. | |
| 1. The demographic of our committee is aging, and we would like to reach out to younger or middle-aged members of the community to get more involved in this important facility. It is a great opportunity to shape what happens in the villages! We plan to reach out to local residents at the Farmers’ Market and through social media. 2. Financial. We aim to keep rental rates low for local groups and residents, especially when people are struggling financially. However, electricity and other fixed costs are rising, and we have found over the last year that income from rents are not covering our running costs. We have been meeting this shortfall through fundraising (markets, whist drives, flower show, feast). However, we need to build up more income so that running costs and ongoing maintenance are covered, and fundraising can be directed at special projects. IF the solar is successful, then this will eliminate the current shortfall. The 100 club will also alleviate the situation. 3. The funding contribution to the maintenance of the Recreation Ground and Play Area from Gt Wilbraham Parish Council has lapsed. We are seeking to get this reinstated and to share some of the verge maintenance with the PC. We also need to make sure we have a pool of volunteer groundsmen and potentially some paid help to make sure the burden of maintenance doesn’t fall on too few people. | |