



The Hall Get Involved Limited Directors' Report - 31st March 2018

Community in Action

5 years ago, on 8 August 2013, we became the proud owners of Exeter Street Hall. With your support and a huge amount of volunteer effort, we have made great strides towards achieving our vision – to transform the Hall into a vibrant and inclusive space, fit for the 21st Century.

Each year it's a balancing act to achieve the income we need to operate as a successful small business AND maintain our community ethos. We're delighted to say that we've achieved this again this year – despite some challenges with rising costs.

Our Hall fulfils such an important role in the community. It's more than just a building. It's a social hub, a space for people to engage with friends and neighbours, to learn new things, make new friends. A place to talk to people in what otherwise might be a lonely day. And these benefits spill out beyond the big grey doors of the Hall and onto our streets and into the community. The Hall is a remarkable resource – and thanks to you it's been saved for future generations to enjoy.

Please join us at the AGM at 7.30pm on Friday 28 September 2018 to have your say and to celebrate our special birthday.

The Directors present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2018.

Principal activities and Financial Review

1. We said we wanted to continue to be more financially sustainable by increasing our income from hirers. In 2017/18 income from hirers was £17132 – a modest increase of 3% on the previous year.
2. We said we would continue to be prudent with our operating costs. In 2017/18 operating costs were £14596 – an increase of 8% on the previous year. This is a result of increases in our costs for staff, energy and insurance.
3. We said we'd continue to raise funds. In 2017/18 we raised £48384. £36744 was awarded in grants; £36244k from Veolia to complete our 'Access for All' project and £500 from Aviva towards performance lighting. A further £11640k was raised by our awesome volunteers through events, donations and our first Crowdfunding project.
4. We spent more than our grants received (which was one of the grant conditions) on the refurbishment work in the year including 'Access for All'. This resulted in an overall deficit for the year, but we were expecting this.
5. We said we would continue with our restoration and development plan and in August 2018 we completed our access project, ensuring the Hall is a fully accessible space.

We're pleased to report on our achievements this year (2017/18) but there is much to do and we still need approximately £150k to 'finish' the restoration work. For our latest 3 Year Business Plan (2018-21), which sets out our ambitions for our finances, the restoration of the building and how we see the Hall developing, see www.exeterstreethall.org/policies. Do read it if you have time.

Please do continue to support us in whatever way you can, through coming to events, volunteering your time, or making a one-off or regular donation. We would urge everyone to get involved in whatever way they can.

We have been using the hall for our tai chi club for around 2 years now and we love the space. It's great value and no hassles at all. Thanks to you all for the hard work you do behind the scenes. (Ali, Albion Tai Chi)

Brick by brick - our building work

Last summer the Hall closed its doors to complete the 'Access for All' project. What a difference this has made! Complete with accessible toilet, access ramp, a corridor from the main door to the rear and a lobby, this really is a transformation and a major milestone completed. As a result, the Hall is fully accessible, warmer and safer.

Bookings for the Community Room, which now has direct access, are increasing and providing much needed income. In addition to being a cosy space for our Art Classes and Tea Club, it's being hired for a range of activities including Children's Writing Workshops, acting rehearsals and also business meetings.

Poor quality wi-fi has been an issue for some hirers, and we are delighted to report that our service has been upgraded to super-fast fibre by local provider xoomtalk.com - who provide this monthly service for free.

'A huge space that's community owned and in such a great location. The people behind it are really friendly and the facilities are amazing.' (Stuart, hirer)

Our Community Groups and Events

Our affordable community groups, run by our dedicated volunteers, continue to thrive. We now have two Art Classes, Table Tennis, Stay and Play, Tea Club and a Jobs Advice service. The Kids' Film Club will restart in October, when those winter months start drawing in. This year Elements First Aid delivered our first free Defibrillator Awareness Training for the community and this will continue each year.

Our events volunteers have pulled some corkers out of the bag. Who can forget Bastille Night with awesome food and the unique sound of Alan Clayson chansons? Or Mark Carey's skilful and charming performance of 'Into the Breach'. Prestonville History Night V2 was another sell-out and full of illuminating local facts. Who hope to run Little India night again, the fabulous food and Bollywood dancing made it a night to remember.

It goes without saying that the Prestonville Community Street Party (held as part of the Great Get Together) really did create some fabulous memories. This collaboration with St Luke's Church and the Prestonville Community Association was so successful again this year, we hope it will be a regular on the local social calendar.

In 2017/18 we also supported 'Phones for Refugees' which brought local MP and shareholder Caroline Lucas to the Hall to give a moving talk. Our FareShare food drop has now raised well in excess of the 1000 meals we aimed for – boosted massively by the innovative Halloween event which encouraged kids to drop off a tin as they passed the friendly werewolf on their sugar-fuelled round of the streets. This was another joint initiative with St Luke's Church and one we hope to run again.

Christmas was full of Christmas cheer whether it was the Christingle Ceilidh Collective outside the Chimney House, or the Christmas markets.

And just recently, we really must mention the success of the World Cup screenings. A massive shout out to our volunteers who threw their efforts into showing those at short notice. We'll be considering further screenings of big sporting events in the near future.

Ideas for further community uses are always welcome.

'Of the people, from the people, by the people.' (O Rocket, Google Review)

Attracting Exciting Hirers to the Hall

This year, for the kids, we've welcomed Ink Pots Writing Workshops for young writers; Stories, Poetry and Rhyme 'There was an old lady who lived in a Shoe' workshops; Comic Book and Animation Workshops. New additions for the grown-ups include a monthly 'Gong Bath' - perfect for some Friday de-stressing.

We'd also like to thank and celebrate our fabulous established hirers who continue to offer a range of classes; Yoga, Tap, Tai Chi, Ballet, Boys Brigade, Brownies, Fitness League and Pilates.

We look forward to gaining more regular hirers this year and to continue hosting our popular fundraising events.

'Thank you Exeter Street Hall for allowing me to teach a Community Yoga Class in such a soulful space that allows people to unite.' (Katherine, Community Hatha Yoga)

Our aim is to improve the Hall so that it is a great theatre venue and this year we hosted our 3rd Brighton Fringe events, with shows from Something Underground, Actors of Dionysus and the frank, funny and fearless 'Enter the Dragons' (A&E Productions). We're delighted that this went on to win them the 'Broadway Baby Bibby: Best in Brighton Fringe award.

'Everyone was so welcoming, and I think it really added to the feel-good atmosphere of the show and the warmth of the audiences.' (Emma, A&E Productions)

Ways to Help

Volunteer

We operate a 'guilt free policy'. Do as much or as little as you like. Regular or ad hoc. Come to our volunteer meetings, or keep a low profile. It's up to you.

Without our volunteers there would be NO HALL. Talk to us at the AGM or pop along to the Hall Action Group. We meet on the 2nd Tuesday monthly in the Community Room. It's great fun, and very rewarding.

'It makes me feel part of the community , doing something useful, enjoyable with lots of social contact you get a lot back'. (Jo, volunteer)

Friends of the Hall

No time to volunteer? Why not make a small, regular donation? It all counts. You can set up a standing order to:

The Hall Get Involved – Donate
Sort Code: 08 92 99 Account Number: 65590490

Your donations will attract Gift Aid, if this applies.

Tell your Neighbours

New neighbours? Help us spread the love and get them involved by telling them about our story or bringing them to an event. We'd love people new to the area to buy a share or two and play their part in the Hall's future.

Support our Events

We love to see a full house. It's great for the coffers but also shows you like what we do! Thanks for all your support this year and we hope to see you again in the autumn at events including the return of our hugely popular Music Quiz (22 September) and Book Sale (5 October). See you then!

Directors

The following people served as directors during the year:

Marianne Craig – appointed 6 September 2013, re-elected 6 October 2016
Susan Corlett (Chair) – appointed 4 July 2014, re-elected 6 October 2016 and 5 October 2017
Dave Fellows - appointed 17 July 2015, re-elected 5 October 2017
Norman Wright – appointed 6 October 2016
Jo Camplisson (Treasurer) - appointed 6 October 2016

Secretary

The following person served as Secretary during the period:

Louise McGowan - appointed 6 October 2016

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2018 available at:

www.exeterstreethall.org/our-rules/agm-2018/

This report was approved by the board on 10 August 2018 and signed on its behalf:



Susan Corlett
Chair

