

Sampford Courtenay



***A community
with a heart..***



Sampford Courtenay Village Hall Business Plan 2022

1.0 Executive Summary

Sampford Courtenay is a vibrant community in the heart of West Devon in a picturesque setting just north of Dartmoor.

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall is a vital resource at the heart of this community and it serves it well with activities, entertainment and social activities that directly contribute to the health and well-being of the parish and local community.

Without the Village Hall and what it has to offer people would have to travel further to enjoy the events put on in the locality. There would be an increased risk of people becoming socially isolated. An important part of the village's history would be lost.

Losing the Village Hall would be a great sadness to many people in the community. The Village Hall trustees have therefore set out their strategy to maintain it in this document.

This document introduces the strategic plans in place to sustain and improve the Village Hall for generations to come. The detail and specifics underpinning the business plan may be found set out in the accompanying appendices.

2.0 Values

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall Committee of trustees was established to provide and maintain the Village Hall for the use of the inhabitants of the parish and its environs. The Village Hall is open for all to use but in reality its location dictates that it is mainly enjoyed by local residents.

The Hall is available to people of any background and any political or religious affiliation; the Committee will not discriminate on any of the grounds detailed in the Equal Opportunities Statement of Intent and related policy.

The Village Hall will be used to advance education and provide facilities in the interest of social welfare, recreation and leisure activities with the specific object of enhancing the lives of all concerned.

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall is a charitable community facility that is available to the public in the area for community-related recreational activities. Sampford Courtenay Village Hall is held on Trust to be used for purposes set out by the Recreational Charities Act 1958.

3.0 Aims and Objectives

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall Committee aims to provide and maintain the Village Hall for the use and enjoyment of those within the parish and local community to include opportunities for learning, recreation and leisure, with an overall view to support and improve the health and well-being of all participants.

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall trustees will:

- facilitate events to involve a wide cross-section of the community;
- ensure the maintenance and improvement of the Village Hall;
- ensure the financial viability of the Village Hall;
- monitor the dissemination and adherence with policies and procedures;
- maintain positive relationships with key stakeholders;
- receive appropriate and accurate reporting of management information including financial recording.

4.0 History: Background

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall was once the village school. In 1952 Devon County Council sold the building to the village for use as a community building. A Trust Deed was set up to 'provide recreational and mental development, entertainment or otherwise as may be found expedient for the benefit of the inhabitants of Sampford Courtenay and Honeychurch in the County of Devon and its immediate vicinity'. The hall has been a great asset, truly valued by the community ever since.

The Village Hall Committee has already had a number of repairs to complete. In the storms of December 2018, a section of the roof was badly damaged and rainwater inflow caused damp and staining to the internal walls. Repairs costing over £800 were made, but the buildings insurance company refused to repay trustees for the repairs as their survey found that the whole of the main roof was in a poor condition, which they said may have been a partial cause of the severity of the damage. The company recommended complete replacement of the roof.

In the intervening two years, the Committee of trustees has:

- funded short-term interim repairs on an ongoing basis, to enable the building to continue to serve the community, while seeking a more permanent solution;
- arranged an informal survey by a local architect to confirm the diagnosis of the insurance company. This confirmed that all felting, nails and batons and most slates needed replacement;
- determined that the cheapest solution is complete replacement of the roof;
- investigated the possibility of improving the insulation of the building at the same time;
- drawn up a schedule of the work needed;
- obtained three quotes from local builders;

- begun to raise funds towards the cost of the project.

5.0 Community Involvement: Fulfilling Potential

Since its establishment as a Trust in 1952 Sampford Courtenay Village Hall has been successful in running a wide variety of activities and events – recreational, social, entertainment and to aid ‘mental development’ – as enshrined in the Trust Deed.

A wide variety of community groups operate in the Village Hall and organisations such as the local Women’s Institute and the Flower Club are very successful and extremely well attended. Recent craft activities have provided a range of opportunities for skill development including willow weaving, dog training and Tai Chi.

The Village Hall Committee is committed to providing the kinds of events and activities that support individual and community growth and this has been informed by surveys and evaluations of events.

6.0 Equalities: Equal Opportunities Statement of Intent

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall Committee acknowledges that the United Kingdom is diverse in culture, race, beliefs and religion and believes that no individual or group of people should receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, age, colour, race, nationality, racial or national origins, cultural heritage, disability, marital status, social background, sexual orientation or geographical location.

The trustees acknowledge that members of these groups are often under-represented, exposed to prejudice and stereotyping, and suffer various disadvantages within our society.

The purpose of this statement is to set out clearly and fully the positive action that Sampford Courtenay Village Hall Committee will take to combat direct and indirect discrimination in the management of the organisation, its relationships with other bodies and the services it provides to the community and individuals.

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall Committee is committed to providing equality of opportunity in all areas of its work. It aims to overcome discrimination on the grounds mentioned above. The Equal Opportunities Policy will ensure equality of provision in engagement, representation and service provision.

Our aim is to ensure that we become aware of discrimination and the problems it causes.

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall Committee will challenge practices, legislation and institutions seek that to discriminate against or deny the rights of individuals or groups in any form.

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall Committee will seek to take positive action to address the inequalities in our society.

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall Committee is committed to the equal opportunities set out in Appendix 1 and will work to develop, improve and monitor this approach.

7.0 Engagement

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall Committee engages actively with the local community throughout the parish. Information sharing is key to this and publicity surrounding events and activities is widely disseminated with the help of colleagues on the Parish Council and in particular a comprehensive data base of email contacts and almost daily updates on social media.

Events are also publicised in the local free publication, *Roundabout*, which is printed and distributed across the parish and surrounding towns and villages. Notices of events are posted throughout the village as a further means of keeping people informed.

We take the opportunity to publicise our activities and to raise the profile of the Village Hall through the local press and have succeeded in getting numerous articles published during the past couple of years.

Consultation is also key to our engagement activity; a major survey of the parish regarding residents' use of and participation in Village Hall activities has been undertaken. The survey resulted in a very positive response and a number of ideas for future activities for the Committee to consider.

Taking appropriate action in response to new ideas or concerns is a true test of engagement. One suggestion has already been responded to by engaging a local dog behaviour and training specialist to run a fully subscribed session which succeeded in attracting some new visitors to the Village Hall.

8.0 Environment

In a remote rural community like Sampford Courtenay community-based activities can be a lifeline for so many people. Many of the activities and events in the Village Hall provide real opportunities for social engagement, skill and personal development and good entertainment.

Public transport links include limited train and bus services; while both provide links to Exeter, the train requires transfer to the railway station five miles away at Okehampton. Without the Village Hall providing local activities and entertainment the number of car journeys would inevitably increase and those unable to access or drive vehicles would no longer be able to attend.

Without the Village Hall many residents would become more isolated, with a corresponding impact on their mental and physical health and well-being. The Village Hall is a vital resource at the centre of the community. Sampford Courtenay enjoys a strong community spirit that was much in evidence during the lockdowns imposed by the Covid 19 pandemic. Socially distanced events still ran under careful management and the local men's group improvised by meeting outside the hall, thus maintaining vital social contact during very challenging times.

The Village Hall Committee has worked hard to reduce the environmental impact of the building and has funded the replacement of the original large arched windows with double-glazed units custom made to be exact replacements. The renovation to the kitchen vastly improved the building overall and in particular the insulation of that side of the building. All quotes for the repairs to the roof are from local builders who were required to comply with appropriate building regulations regarding insulation and environmentally friendly working practices.

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall Environment Policy may be viewed in full at Appendix 2.

9.0 Market

Sampford Courtenay has traditionally provided a venue for events and activities for members of the local community. The scope of this has expanded over time and this is increasing use of the facility from people beyond the parish. There are a number of other village halls in the area including Winkleigh, Broadwoodkelly and Exbourne. Sampford Courtenay Village Hall considers the charges made by these and other venues when reviewing the rates of hire in order to remain competitive. The focus for Sampford Courtenay Village Hall Committee is to maintain current customer satisfaction and support while exploring new markets and revenue streams to support the Village Hall into the future.

Sampford Courtenay Village Hall does have a few unique features of its own that have proved attractive to hirers; trustees are exploring ways in which the hall could be improved to attract more custom in order to support its aims and objectives. A recent pricing strategy of running classes but paying the person running a course a set fee has enabled the Committee to meet its objectives of running events and sustaining the facility.

10.0 Sustainability

Our targets for the future are not only to maintain the existing infrastructure but also to improve it and to continue to engage, inform and consult the local community. Recent responses to planned activities have demonstrated our ability to attract new visitors, contributors and volunteers to the Village Hall. We have recently established and appointed to a new position of Children's Champion. The purpose of this new role was to help us engage with children and young families to ensure the continued viability of activities and events at the Village Hall.

While current activity is focused on securing the building and the vital task of renovating the roof there is other work planned for the future to further improve the building and to make it more appealing for a greater number and range of clients in the local area and beyond.

The current maintenance and improvement schedule includes:

- improvements to both ladies' and gents' toilets to include cubicles and much improved hygiene;
- building external storage;
- improve electric meter area with storage;
- update of decor throughout;
- improve outside lighting;
- financial plans to sustain income: increased prices, how to afford maintenance and improvement schedule, generate operational surplus.

11.0 Management

11.1 People

Please see Appendix 3.

Skills and gaps

The success of the Village Hall and its position at the heart of the Sampford Courtenay community is due to the dedication and commitment of a small number of trustees and volunteers. In the Parish Survey the results show that while over 80 per cent of residents used or participated in Village Hall activities either regularly or infrequently, only 14 per cent helped to organise activities.

The Committee is mindful of the need for succession planning and often co-opts people to lead on specific projects or events. The Committee itself has recently had some changes in membership with some long-standing trustees standing down after many years of very valuable service and contributions to the community and Village Hall. It is expected that the current membership should remain stable for the foreseeable future but trustees are always on the lookout for volunteers.

11.2 Organisational Structure

The title to the Village Hall is held in the name of the original trustees, for the benefit of all residents of the parishes of Sampford Courtenay and Honeychurch.

The Charity is managed and administered on behalf of the original trustees, who are now deceased, by a Committee of trustees which comprises:

- six representative members: Parish Council, Parochial Church Council of Sampford Courtenay, Parochial Church Council of Honeychurch, WI, Young Farmers, Flower Club;
- five elected members nominated with a view to maintaining diversity of representation of age and experience, and in consideration of local business interests, local farming interests and residence in diverse areas of the parishes of Sampford Courtenay and Honeychurch;
- (up to) eight members co-opted by the above.

Committee meetings are held monthly. For further information on the governance of the hall and the roles and responsibilities of the trustees, please see Sampford Courtenay Village Constitution, Governance and Operating Procedures in Appendix 4.

12.0 Resources: Facilities and Equipment

By 2012, the single-storey kitchen building had deteriorated to such an extent that the hall was under threat of closure under HSE rules. Over the next four years the whole community worked extremely hard to raise almost £100,000 through fund- raising events, sponsorship and supporting grants and in 2016 a splendid new extension was opened, providing disabled facilities, a superb kitchen and a new meeting room.

This now has a reliable heating capability to support activities continuing safely in the depths of winter as well as being able to provide baby-changing facilities and upgraded water heaters in the toilets. New projection equipment is available to support events including public interest talks and other activities such as quizzes and bingo.

13.0 Finances

Costs and expenditure

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2021/22	2022/23 forecast
Advertising				108	120	130
Audit				40	46	55
Cleaning				223	44	100
DCT subscription					100	100
Electricity				511	566	620
Fire protection				57		
Grass-cutting				300	300	315
Insurance	884	922	925	1609	1648	1700
Maintenance	5281	8472	1913	1791	985	1200
Miscellaneous				234	177	200
Water				77	42	75
Heat, light and water	374	732	572			
Housekeeping	1479	1691	1443			
Totals	8018	11817	4853	4950	4028	4495

Main sources of income

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 forecast
Hire of hall	2095	2574	1146	771	610	1200
Dog Show	399	461				
Open Garden/Fete	1510	488				
Cream Teas			781			500
Skittles	112	414	146		50	150
Concert	102					300
Christmas Quiz	144		98			
Quiz/Puddin g Evenings	888	958	566		126	500
Curry/Chili Evenings				1525	1014	1500
Flower Show	922	400		172		250
Diving for Pearls Concert	434	429				500
Wine Tasting		260				
Easter Trail					288	300
Plant Stall				777		500
Pre-loved Sale				619		
Book Exchange				120		
Come, Buy and Chat					117	75
Pumpkin Trail					260	275

Christmas Cheer					400	
Willow Weaving					325	
Summer Ball						250
Film Night						100
BBQ						400
Tai Chi						176
Barn Dance						500
Totals	6606	5496	2737	3984	3190	7476

14.0 Health, Safety and Improvement

14.1 Managing Risk

In 2020 Sampford Courtenay Village Hall Committee approved a revised approach to risk management. This includes the maintenance of generic and event-specific risk registers which are reviewed regularly at Committee meetings. Please see Appendix 5 for examples of the risk register.

14.2 Lessons Learned: Continuous Improvement

A key component of Committee meetings is feedback from events to capture what worked well and to identify areas for further development or improvement. Customer satisfaction is a key element and we strive to gather evidence, to learn from it and to continue to improve how the Village Hall and its events are run.