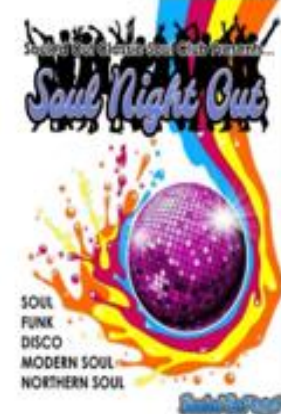


BURNHAM PARK HALL

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2029



Introduction and context

Our mission: 'To provide sustainable, accessible and high-quality spaces and events at the heart of our community'.

Welcome to Burnham Park Hall's Strategic Plan for 2025-2029.

Burnham Park Hall is a social enterprise owned by Burnham Parish Council, run by the Hall General Manager and their team for day-to-day operations, and overseen by the Parish Clerk and a committee of the Parish Council - the Burnham Park Management Committee.

The current Hall was opened in 2010, entirely replacing the original building dating from 1965. The design of the new building brought about a change in function, moving away from a traditional village hall model towards more flexible, multi-functional spaces, along with a café, bar, meeting rooms and offices. Since then, the hall has been used for events as diverse as 11+ tuition to reindeer petting, from filming TV series to sampling British drinks, and from VE days commemorations to wedding celebrations.

The previous strategic plan, written in 2020, looked ahead for ten years and set a wide ranging and ambitious set of goals and actions for that period. Given what was known then, and the stable team in place at the time, the plan made complete sense. Of course, nobody knew when the plan was being formulated that Covid 19 was about to completely change the climate for public venues, including several months of closures through two lockdowns. Nor did they know about the wider ranging social changes that would arise out of the pandemic around online meetings, home working and hospitality. In addition, in the years from 2020, the Hall experienced multiple key staffing and councillor changes, and less stability than it previously had. It is a sobering thought that one of the two key drivers of that 2020 document – Cllr Perry Davies – is no longer with us, and much as it is delightful to see the other – then Hall Manager Louise Hayday – flourishing as Town Clerk of Chesham.

That said, in 2025 we are starting to see more stability returning to the Hall – with a permanent Hall General Manager now in place for a year, and a new Parish Clerk for a little longer, not to mention the first full Council of nineteen councillors in some years. The backlog of maintenance work is reducing, events are building up again, and regular building use remains strong.

This is therefore the perfect time to write a new Hall Strategic Plan, and set out the vision and major actions for the coming years. Given the speed with which the world continues to change, a ten-year vision is perhaps a little too ambitious and uncertain. This strategy therefore builds on the strategy set out in 2020, and sets out our vision, values, and aims, together with our key objectives and actions for the next four years, to build a strong basis for the years beyond. This will take the Hall through the next council term through to 2029, meaning that it will be fully reviewed ahead of the currently building's 20th anniversary in 2030

In that time this plan will set the basis for building on Burnham Park Hall's many strengths, and moving on to offer even more and better to the community, in line with the key values of community, inclusivity and sustainability.

Burnham Park Council, September 2025

Burnham Park Hall In numbers

£200,000



Annual hall turnover from room hire, bar, café and other income.

1,500

Number of exercise, yoga, and dance classes, tuition, children’s activities, events and other activities on offer to the public each year.

4,000

Number of cups of tea and coffee sold each year in our café.



15

Number of staff, including permanent staff (Hall General Manager, Caretaker, Cleaner, and Bookings/Events supervisors), and a pool of zero hours staff for caretaking and events, supported by other Parish Council staff, the Management Committee and volunteer support at events.



1000

Estimated attendance at the 2024 Burnham Christmas Event.

20

Number of annual events organised by Burnham Park Hall in an average year, including live music, plays, pantomimes, festivals, cinema, markets, and much more.

1091

Number of vouchers issued by the Burnham Care and Share Foodbank, based in Burnham Park Hall, in 2024, helping a total of 2713 adults and children.

30

Average number of weddings and mehndis celebrated at the hall each year.



The plan process

Writing a plan such as this, which sets out both a vision and a series of actions over several years, needs input from lots of different people to succeed.

The key milestones in drafting this plan were:

- The process and timescales were agreed by the Burnham Park Management Committee (BPMC) and the Full Parish Council.
- There was an 'away' day of Councillors and Staff to review the previous strategy and brainstorm new ideas, which saw lots of great discussions, a group 'walk around' the hall, and dozens of awesome ideas for the future.
- From the away day, a draft mission statement and values were agreed for public consultation.
- Consultation included:
 - Writing to all our regular hirers for their views.
 - Putting out an online and paper survey.
 - Having discussions with the public at Parish Council stall during the 'Almost the Donkey Derby'.
 - A discussion at a staff lunch, including a range of Council staff across Hall, Grounds and Parish Office.
- A further discussion at BPMC to review the consultation and confirm the mission statement and values.
- A 'drafting day' where the Hall Manager and Parish Clerk turned all the above into detailed targets and actions.
- A further revision of the plan by BPMC before its submission for formal approval by Full Council.



Whilst the above was going on, the day to day running of the hall continued without a break in pace, whilst the Council also had its four-yearly elections, and started work on the next year's budget!

This process will not end with the plan's formal adoption: it will be a 'living document' regularly referred to as part of budget setting and monitoring, committee discussions and staff appraisals, and it will be formally reviewed in committee at least once a year.

SWOT Analysis 2025

Strengths

People

- Councillor support.
- Staff: knowledge, energy, commitment and approachability.
- Friendly, welcoming and buzzing atmosphere.

Environment & location

- Modern building with good natural light.
- Clean/fresh environment.
- Location – a hub for the community.
- Historical value.
- Attractive and welcoming grounds.

Facilities

- Free convenient parking.
- Flexible space.
- Licensed and well-stocked bar.
- Free and reliable public Wi-Fi.
- Facilities available in a community crisis.

Business and reputational

- Competitive pricing.
- Few direct competitors with the same size and flexibility of rooms.
- Adaptability and willingness for change and improvement.
- Good reputation.

Activities and facilities

- Our events: regular free events and recent new events.
- Lots of good regular bookers.
- Variety of hired events and classes.
- Village project picture as a new 'draw'.

Weaknesses

Catering

- Under use of the kitchen with no regular hot food offer.
- Café feels like a long and draughty corridor.

Building

- The HVAC system is aging and unreliable.
- High overheads, especially as the building ages.
- Building maintenance backlog.
- Car park condition.

Communications

- Website in need of a refresh.
- Limited links with neighbouring towns and community groups.
- Lack of engagement with and from younger generation.
- Lack of media publicity.
- 'What's on board' at entrance is underused.

Events

- Lack of variety in past events.
- Lack of use of volunteers.

Opportunities

Building extensions and use of space

- Open-up the foyer and café and/or extend the café corridor to make an 'Orangerie'.
- Expand use of the courtyard, especially in the summer season, including at lunchtimes.
- Expand into the open space at the rear of the building.

Business

- Options for a remote working space.
- More commercial income – away days, training etc.
- Art on the walls as display, sales for local artists, and revenue generation.
- Grant opportunities.
- Expanded room hire following the redecoration of rooms.
- More sponsorship of events.

Bar and cafe

- Offer hot food in café based on market research.
- Increase use of the mobile bar.
- Afternoon tea.
- Have a catering concession run externally.

Events

- Theatre, pantomime and Am Dram.
- Wider variety of music.
- More culturally diverse events for Eid, Diwali etc. as well as May Day.
- More live events in the park.
- Events to tie in with 15th anniversary (2025) and 20th anniversary (2030).

Communications

- Expanding into other forms of social media (Tik Tok and others?).
- More cross-working between Hall & Parish Council Communications.

Other

- More eco projects, becoming a truly green venue.
- New councillors and staff providing new energy and ideas.

Threats

External and existential

- Global or national crisis: political, social, ecological or health.

People

- Small team: impact of key staff members leaving.
- Councillor changes potentially causing changes in policy.
- Lack of training.
- Loss of institutional memory as people leave.

Legal and reputational

- Changes to employment law.
- Introduction of Martyn's Law.
- Antisocial behaviour.
- Reputational risks from accidents, events etc.
- Community expectations about discounts and costs.

Business

- Competition with other venues for hiring and food.
- Losing business due to online meetings.
- Financial losses becoming unsustainable.
- Loss of major tenants or regular bookers.
- HVAC and other major maintenance issues.

Burnham Park Hall Values

1. **A part of our community:** working hand in hand with individuals and groups for the benefit of Burnham, listening to feedback, and being a good local employer.
2. **An inclusive and accessible space:** where all are welcome, from both Burnham and the surrounding area, and events and spaces cater for the needs and interests of different groups.
3. **A sustainable facility:** where we balance social, economic and environmental needs, giving good value to the taxpayer, and ensuring that the hall can continue to serve the area as a social enterprise.

Targets for 2029

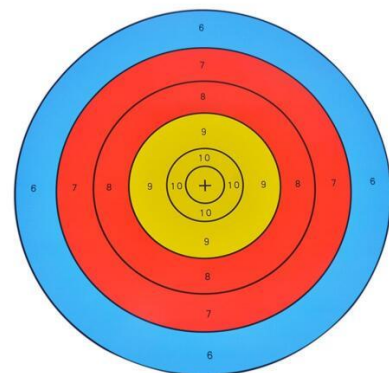
Quantitative:

1. At least a 10% increase in the number of regular classes, activities and events.
2. At least two Hall run events per month, one of which is free entry.
3. At least two large events per year, at least one of which is explicitly attracting more diverse communities.
4. Increased hall revenue by at least 25%, with 'real revenue' (excluding inflation) increased by at least 10%.
5. At least half of the village population reporting that they have used the hall at least once in the calendar year.



Qualitative:

1. An improved and renewed hall appearance for all rooms and spaces.
2. A stable and consistently well-trained staff.
3. A thriving and significantly expanded food offer.
4. A reduced environmental impact in terms of both waste and energy.
5. Stronger communications and publicity.



These targets are on top of our everyday operations and legal responsibilities – for health and safety, employment, food hygiene etc – all of which we will continue to meet.

Action plan

The action plan is by nature 'front-loaded', as actions in later years partly depend on what happens in the earlier years, and investigations inevitably lead to new possibilities requiring detailed work.

The years below run from the adoption of the plan in September 2025.

Year 1 (2025-26)

Communications

1. Refresh the hall website.
2. Expand the use of social media, especially that aimed at younger generations.
3. Institute a regular newsletter



Facilities

4. Confirm the plan and actions for the HVAC system to take it through the next four years.
5. Finish redecorating all of the hall rooms and spaces.
6. Install a water fountain in the hall.
7. Complete the clearing of the maintenance backlog.

Business

8. Run a marketing campaign aimed specifically at business use of rooms.
9. Review hall pricing.

Events

10. Hold monthly band nights in ten or eleven out of twelve months, with at least two other significant Hall-run events per quarter, including at least two events across the year explicitly accommodating more diverse communities.

People

11. Prepare for the implementation of Martyn's Law and the Employment Rights Act.

Year 2 (2026-27)

Facilities

12. Introduce the new hall catering offer, including hot food for at least one mealtime per weekday.
13. Carry out a detailed feasibility study for a building expansion.
14. Complete the move to 'anticipated maintenance' – where all hall maintenance issues are resolved before they reach a stage where they must be resolved.

People

15. Complete the implementation of Martyn's Law and the Employment Rights Act.

Events

16. Build up to at least two monthly events, one of which is free entry, with at least one large outdoor event attracting a diverse audience.

Business

17. Introduce a regular source of sales income, such as hall merchandise, or commission-based art sales.

Year 3 (2027-28)

Facilities

18. If agreed after feasibility study, begin work on a hall building extension.
19. Introduce an outside bar facility across the full summer season.

Maintenance

20. Formulate a four year forward maintenance programme.

Business

21. Hold a major business networking event at the hall.
22. Review the possibility on remote working provision at the halls, depending on employment patterns and needs at the time.

Year 4 (2028-29)

23. Move towards completion of all the plan targets; and begin preparing the next strategic plan.
24. Plan major celebrations for BPH20 in 2030.

I REGRET
TO INFORM YOU
THAT YOUR
TEENS
HAVE NOW...



Resourcing

As part of the plan, the Hall Manager and Clerk have looked in detail at the Hall's resourcing needs, especially around staffing and finance.

Staffing

With a tight knit, and in many cases long serving and experienced, team, it is not felt that any radical immediate change in the full staffing structure is needed. That said we are continuing to look at different parts of the picture, and as staff naturally turns over, we will keep the hall's evolving needs under review, particularly considering:

- The need for more internal maintenance capacity, to reduce the costs and delays of external services for minor matters.
- The potential for combining elements of different existing roles.
- The need for expanded communications capacity, with particular expertise in social media and communicating to a young audience, and the opportunities for cross-working with the Parish Office on this.
- The benefits of additional management capacity, and there being a designated 'Deputy Hall Manager' who can fully assume the Hall General Manager's responsibilities in their absence (this will only be as resourcing allows, and if justified by hall revenues).

Finance

Linked in with the above, the Hall Manager and Clerk, working with Finance Manager and Councillors, will continue to keep Hall Finances under close review – not only as part of budget setting, but in appropriate budget monitoring throughout the year. This will keep in mind that the hall is a 'social enterprise' and therefore always seeks to balance social, economic and environmental needs, giving good value to the taxpayer, and ensuring that the hall can continue to serve the area in a sustainable way.

