

To All Victoria Hall Community Users

Attached is the new Booking Form and the latest Booking Fees which were revised from 1st November 2011. Please read the conditions carefully especially with regard to cancellations and booking the complete time you need the Hall. Please will users make sure that we have a completed booking form for all your sessions. Do not presume that your booking is in the Hall's Booking Calendar just because you have used the Hall for years. We are not psychic and we need to get more income by letting the facilities when not in use. So if you are not sure, please contact Vivienne to check whether we have your up to date form. Please note this also applies to 2012 because we are already taking other bookings!

Do not panic though as the rates for community users, like yourselves, have not changed! The VHMC have attempted to make sure that the use of the Hall concentrates on making it as attractive as possible to the local community and keeping the charges as low as possible is part of that attempt. The other changes in the booking fees are to rationalise the number of headings, as it was becoming slightly confusing to hirers.

However the Hall does have to be run on an economic basis and although we do not need to make 'profits/surpluses' it is essential that we do break-even. As with the Community Council, the Hall has very limited income and if we are to keep our charges as low as possible, we must control our costs. For information we have attached a copy of the Hall's Income & Expenditure for the period 1st April to 30th October 2011, which was presented to this week's Community Council meeting. As you can see, we have been able to 'pay our way' so far this financial year (just!) but the costs cover the summer months and we can expect large increases in heating the Hall over this winter. It is essential that we take control of these costs. On the income side we will eventually receive a grant from the Highland Council (last year £1k) but in the current economic climate they are unlikely to be as generous as in previous years. On a positive note, users should be heartened by the £123 donations figure, which has come solely from the collection tin in the Bakery! Thanks to anyone who has contributed.

So how are we going to take control of our costs? Obviously we cannot control events like local vandals deciding it would be fun to trash the notice-board, but we should be able to get a greater control over our oil consumption. Users will now find that they do not have access to the boiler room. Although user access to the heating has, in the past, proved to be a popular arrangement, it cannot continue. The heating boiler is now set on a 7 day timer which is programmed to the Hall Bookings Calendar. To start off with there will be a learning curve until we get the timings right but, if users want to be able to have the Hall as a Community asset in the future, this has to happen so please bear with us. Also as we manage to let more of the Hall's calendar, some users may find that they are no longer able to gain access and set up a number of hours before their actual booking. If in doubt, contact Vivienne. Other than that, please will users just be sensible when using the Hall and when leaving. Has anything been left on? Kitchen or shower water heaters? Dish-washer? Lights? Have all the internal doors been closed? Has the stage curtain been closed (big help in keeping the hall warm)? Have I emptied the kitchen waste bin? It all helps.

Lastly (for the moment!), users will have seen that we now have blue recycling bins outside the kitchen. Please use them! Jeff does want to have to go through all the general refuse and have to take out all the recyclable items. In addition please do not put general rubbish in the blue bins. When you empty the kitchen rubbish bin, if the green bin is full, please take any extra with you at the end of your hire.

Many thanks and the Community Council through the VHMC look forward to a continuing successful partnership in providing the Victoria Hall for the benefit of the community.

VHMC