

Silsoe Drama Club Annual General Meeting
Silsoe Village Hall, 27 November 2025, 7.30pm

IN ATTENDANCE:

President: Yvonne Owen

Committee members: Rachel Gibson (Chair), Mick Platt (Treasurer/Secretary) Mark Thompson (Village Hall), Matt Gibson (Website & communications), Angela Ayres (Social), Joanna Holt (Health & Safety)

Other members: Simon Stranks, Bob Harrison, John Rickatson, Hilary Parks, Jennie Edwards, Chris Witherington, Elwyn Owen, Beverley Weller

OPENING REMARKS

The President, Yvonne Owen, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were noted from Committee members Mark Bracey (Youth Drama), Julian Sparrey (Youth Drama) and Karolina Piera-Harris (Safeguarding Officer).

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF LAST YEAR'S MEETING

It was noted that the list of attendees was inaccurate. Mick Platt agreed to update this prior to the minutes being signed by the President. No other issues were raised.

TREASURER'S REPORT

This was presented by Mick Platt. Mick noted that the accounts had once again been independently reviewed by Simon Sadler and the club's thanks to him was recorded.

The financial year being reported on is the year ended 30 April 2025. It was noted that the club had received £525 in subscriptions and had also received a one-off donation towards stage equipment from Silsoe Offers Support. Again the club's gratitude was noted. Subscriptions were increased during the year from £20 to £25.

During the year under review the club invested in new equipment, including a keyboard, stage paint, new legs for the stage and an amplifier. We also took control of and invested in our website. The club also subsidised a trip for members to see An Inspector Calls at Milton Keynes theatre.

The only show presented during the financial year under review was "Sleeping Beauty". This sold 373 tickets and was successful financially.

The club remains in a healthy financial position and in addition to the shows planned for the forthcoming financial year is looking into further investment, specifically in relation to lighting.

In response to a question regarding sponsorship the club confirmed that it welcomes sponsorship from all those who wish to be involved and will actively seek it in order to fund larger productions.

The President thanked the Treasurer/Secretary for his continued hard work on behalf of the club.

Proposed: Matt Gibson

Seconded: Mark Thompson

VILLAGE HALL REPORT

This was presented by Mark Thompson. It was noted that the hall has been redecorated during 2025 and paving has been added to the outside area. The club and the hall committee have also jointly invested in new curtains for the stage. An ongoing challenge for the club is that the hall now gets booked up well in advance and therefore we have to book shows further in advance if we are to obtain slots we want. It was noted that the hall committee has had complaints about noise from a neighbour and there is now a blanket ban on live music (although this wasn't an issue for the club's production of "Sleeping Beauty" in January 2025. The club noted that the hall committee continues to be very supportive to the club and the club's thanks was recorded.

The President thanked the Village Hall rep for his continued hard work on behalf of the club.

Proposed: Jennie Edwards

Seconded: John Rickatson

YOUTH DRAMA REPORT

No formal report was presented as the relevant Committee members had apologised for absence. The club Chair noted that for much of the year the youth club had been split into two age groups. In June 2025 the younger section presented "Alice in Wonderland" and the older section presented "Echoes" (written by two members of the section). It was noted that both shows were excellent and well-received by audiences.

A number of older students have now left the youth club as they exceed the age limit - as a result the club has re-combined into one. Steps are being taken to recruit new members. A number of students have now appeared in shows with the adult club and it is envisaged that this trend will continue.

CHAIR'S REPORT

This was presented by Rachel Gibson. The Chair reviewed the shows presented in 2025 – "Sleeping Beauty", the two youth drama productions "Alice in Wonderland" and "Echoes", and finally the adult production of "The Day The Internet Died/And Then There

Was One”, these last three marketed together as a summer festival of drama. Thanks and congratulations went to all involved with all the shows and to Charlie Abrahamson for her hard work running the youth section and enabling students to express themselves in a comfortable and safe environment.

The Chair commented on the link which is being formed between the youth and adult sections. Every show this year and the first show of 2026 involves people from both sections and it is good to see the next generation of club participants coming through.

Moving forward our next production is “Witness for the Prosecution” in March 2026 (which is already cast and in rehearsal). This will be followed in November 2026 by “Noises Off”, with auditions currently scheduled for 7 May 2026. As always anyone who wishes to get involved with either of these performances, particularly on the production side, can get in touch via the contact details on the club website.

As mentioned elsewhere we have invested in new equipment and made improvements to some of our staging. We have also been ensuring that our procedures for safeguarding are as robust as possible; all committee members have undertaken level 1 training and are in the process of getting up-to-date DBS checks. This has been driven by our safeguarding officer Karolina Piera-Harris and the club’s thanks to her for her work on this was noted.

Finally the Chair extended her thanks to everyone who had contributed to the club over the past year and especially to her fellow committee members.

The President thanked the Chair for her continuing hard work on behalf of the club.

Proposed: Mick Platt

Seconded: Angela Ayres

NOMINATION OF PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT

The Chair invited Yvonne Owen to continue as President and she accepted. Paul Jarvis has stepped down as Vice-President and the Chair invited John Rickatson to the role, which he accepted.

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

All existing committee members are continuing in post as none are up for re-election this year. In addition Sue Thorn (via the Chair), proposed by Simon Stranks and seconded by Joanna Holt, was invited to join the committee and accepted.

The President thanked all members of the committee for their contributions to the ongoing success of the club.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

In response to a question raised as to why we only do two performances of each show, the Chair explained this related to ticket sales. It was noted that three performances are presented where a larger audience is expected and that for the forthcoming production of “Witness For The Prosecution” a third show is being added as we are inviting local school to attend (with a discount for bulk purchases) as the play is on the GCSE syllabus.

It was suggested that a Saturday matinee production would attract those who do not wish to travel at night (this has proved relatively successful in Westoning) and the Chair agreed to discuss this with the Committee.

The Chair also invited suggestions on an ongoing basis as to how the club communicates. This issue was raised at the previous AGM and although the club has taken some positive steps to improve communications, the challenge is that the club has to cater for all age groups and their individual communication preferences. It was noted that the club will continue to work at this.

The meeting closed at 8:16pm.