

1. The History

The Friends of the King's Hall and Winter Garden (Friends of KH&WG) was formed in 2000 following concerns that the building complex might be lapsing into a rather neglected condition. It was hoped that the formation of an active Friends organisation would provide the necessary encouragement to promote work on the venue as an investment for the future.

A number of regular users decided to form a group that could work with the Council to improve the venue. A Committee was formed and quickly developed a close working relationship with representatives from Bradford Council. Variety and Music Hall Shows were staged by the Friends and played to full houses, indicating a strong level of local support for live entertainment at a professional level. Locally involved groups joined the committee, and there are currently representatives from the Airedale Symphony Orchestra, the Amateur Operatic Society, the Concert Club, the Civic Society, Ilkley literature Festival and Upstagers Theatre Group.

The Friends became a Registered Charitable Organisation on 3 October 2001, allowing it to obtain grants towards improvements from such as Ilkley Parish Council, the Lottery Fund and other local fund raising groups. This has enabled it to significantly boost the funds raised by its own events. With such active support and example from the Friends, Bradford Council was encouraged to look very positively at the future potential of Ilkley's prime entertainment facility. The result has been many hugely beneficial investments that have transformed all aspects of the appearance of the halls and the range and quality of the facilities that can be offered.

[Click here](#)

to see more detail on Bradford Council's website.

2. The Achievements

Ever since the formation of the Friends of the King's Hall & Winter Garden in 2000, there has been extremely close and effective co-operation between the committee and the officers from Bradford Council. There has always been open and constructive discussion as to the needs of the buildings, the priorities and the methods of funding - whether joint or solely from Council funds. The committee has been able to provide input from the users' viewpoint while the Council representatives have come from the point of view of the service provider. The result has been a stunning improvement in almost every aspect of the buildings, the facilities and 'customer' appreciation. **Projects that have been completed over the period include:**

King's Hall:

- New theatre-style chairs in the balcony.
- The chairs in the stalls have been refurbished and reupholstered.
- New amplified sound system for front of house.
- Installation of new modern stage lighting.
- Flexible auditorium lighting has been installed to provide maximum effect for a range of different functions.
- The original chandeliers have been restored.
- The dressing rooms have been refurbished.
- Complete redecoration of both the King's Hall & Winter Garden in sympathetic 'heritage' colour schemes.

Winter Garden:

- Complete replacement of the magnificent Edwardian lantern roof.
- Complete restoration of the unique art deco 'pea' lighting encircling the balcony and ceiling coving.
- High quality banqueting-style chairs have been provided.
- Complete modernisation of kitchen and catering facilities to manage weddings and banquets of up to 250 guests.
- Restoration and redecoration of the bar in an Edwardian style.
- Installation of a lift making the balcony area fully accessible for those with mobility problems.
- Provision of a portable bar for use at different locations on the ground floor.

Externally:

- Provision of colour-changing lighting to illuminate features on the fascia of the King's Hall.
- Provision of feature lighting on the canopy over the entrance to the Winter Garden.
- Provision of attractive new display cabinets outside both the King's Hall and Winter Garden.

3. The Officers and Committee

The present officers and committee members are listed below. Please feel free to contact anyone known to you if you wish to express a view about the Friends and/or the work of the Committee. Alternatively you can email us at fkhandwg@gmail.com .

John Thirwell (Chairman)
Tony Hudson (Vice-Chairman) (Representing Ilkley CC)

Councillor Anne Hawkesworth
David Pyett

John Oddy (Treasurer)
Geoffrey Mogridge (Secretary)
Alex Cockshot (Representing Ilkley Civic Society)
Gill Jackson (Representing the Upstagers' Theatre Group)
Councillor Jennifer Souter (Representing Ilkley Parish Council)

Miggy Bailey
Pauline Dixon

Jim Cocker (Representing the Upstagers' Theatre Group)
John Anderson (Representing Airedale Symphony Orchestra)
Mark Davies (Representing Bradford Theatres)
Councillor Mike Gibbons (Representing Ilkley Parish Council)
Rachel Feldberg (Representing Ilkley Literature Festival)
Sue Piper (Representing Ilkley Amateur Operatic Society)

4. Members of the Friends of KH&WG - Data Protection

The European Data Protection Regulation (**GDPR**) became applicable as of May 25th, 2018 in all member states to harmonize data privacy laws across Europe. The Friends of the KH&WG hold fairly minimal data about their members and have developed a GDPR Policy which can be accessed by [Clicking Here.](#)

5. The future

The aim of the Friends is to continue to work in close co-operation with Bradford Council to improve the appearance and functionality of the King's Hall and Winter Garden complex and to strive to improve the range and quality of the facilities available to users. In broad terms this will include:

- Continuing with the tried and tested fund raising activities, such as variety and musical performances - but always looking for new and innovative opportunities, particularly with younger audiences in mind.
- Look to expand the membership of the Friends, thereby increasing public awareness of the value of the venue to the local and surrounding community. Aim to encourage more younger people to support the Friends, join the Committee and become a working part of our support to Bradford Council.