

THE *chaotic* NEW MUSICAL COMEDY

# THE VILLAGE HALL

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PRODUCED BY **WOODHOUSE MUSICAL THEATRE COMPANY**  
AND **LAWRENCE BATLEY THEATRE**

*World Premiere*

**10 - 13 SEPTEMBER 2025**

LAWRENCE BATLEY THEATRE

Audition Pack  
**Frances Waring**

## **A very warm welcome to 'The Village Hall'...**

Thank you for your interest in being part of this unique show. As it's a premiere there aren't any reference points to go by when creating your character for the audition. Some find this 'freeing', some; find it 'utterly terrifying'. It's going to be staged in-the-round (see above 'freeing/terrifying' comment) with a 9-piece live orchestra and no click-tracks. It's as live, vibrant and exciting as we can make it and if its' predecessor 'By George' is anything to go by, the rehearsals and process of creating the residents of 'Cheeley Village Hall' will be hugely enjoyable. The entire production team are routing for you to give the best audition possible.



To help, you can find guide vocal files and backing tracks using this QR code, just view it through a smartphone camera and click the yellow link. You'll find a drive with an audition folder, a full script and demos. Please **download them before opening**. Any issues - contact rich@richsykes.com.

## **Précis**

Cheeley Village Hall and its committee are stretched to their limits when the keys disappear. A hasty rearrangement by determined committee treasurer Frances, sees the morning's missed activities scheduled alongside the afternoon's programme. Chaos and farce ensue, with battles for territory and power causing the villagers' secrets to be revealed – particularly when outsiders Helen and Ken stir things even further.

## **Cast of Characters**

<b>Rvd. Geoffrey Potts</b>	Cheeley Village church's vicar
<b>Melanie Potts</b>	The vicar's wife
<b>Frances Waring</b>	Committee treasurer and wife of Robert Waring
<b>Helen Gorsage</b>	Widow of Mollie
<b>Diana ('Di') Coombs</b>	Excitable secret partner of David
<b>David ('Dave') Goosham</b>	Excitable secret partner of Diana
<b>'Big' Ken Rushton</b>	Brash know-it-all from Stackworth,
<b>Jennifer Crump</b>	Lollipop lady for Cheeley Infants School
<b>Joan Blacker</b>	Dinnerlady at Cheeley Infants School

Other named characters include Gordon, Pam, Christine, Deidre, Dot, Freya and Carol. These will be part of multiple role company parts with a standard audition piece for all genders. If you'd like to be considered for a specific role, please let the panel know on the day of the auditions.

From all at LBT and Woodhouse Musical Theatre Company - the very best of luck.

## Frances

At first, we assume that Frances is the cool, calm centre around which the maelstrom of chaos and intrigue swirls. As the show hurtles on, we realise that Frances's world is far stormier than that of Cheeley Village Hall.

Frances immediately takes charge after the hall's key is 'lost' and tries to rescue the entire day. Again we assume that Frances is doing this to be stoic, but really she is feeling guilty because, in her mind, this is all her fault.

Before the events of the show's Saturday afternoon, Frances's husband Robert 'Bobo' Waring has realised that both hall keys are in the house. This is strictly against the hall's rules and Robert uses this accident to create havoc at the hall for which Frances will inevitably be blamed and removed from her position of authority; subsequently - be at home more, be more attentive and be firmly under his control.

Frances's well-kept secret is that her 'wonderful, sweet Bobo' is a calculating, controlling bully and her loving relationship is purely a show.

To ensure that Frances is blamed, Robert finds an ally in Ken - a recently removed, figure-fiddling treasurer from neighbouring Stackworth. Ken is looking to muscle in on the hall's committee. When Robert solicits him in Frances's demise, he sees his chance and turns up - with the missing keys as evidence - to twist the knife.

Frances's ability to get through this day from hell is further inhibited by the recent death of one of her most supportive friends, Mollie, and the appearance of her widow - Helen, who is keen to change things.

As you can see, Frances is complex and pivotal. She has moments of strength, weakness, humour and poignancy - and has an enormous character arc to explore. The resolution is uncertain, but liberating. Her numbers include...

**And Breathe** - Frances explains how the day is going to be rescued whilst simultaneously ensuring everyone is organised correctly.

**My Bobo and Me** - a country-style ballad in honour of her husband.

**Ken's Here (reprise)** - After Ken outlines his threat to disgrace Frances, she reacts like a cornered wildcat and lets Ken know exactly who's in charge.

**This Is Why** - Helen and Frances have moments of realisation as they duet. Frances reprises My Bobo and Me with exactly the same lyrics, but now with a far more sinister undertone.

Frances is a majestic, meaty role. On a personal note, I love her to pieces.

## PIECE 1 - pg. 32-34

*Helen and Frances find themselves alone in The Village Hall after the line dancing group have pushed their 'Cheeley in Bloom hanging basket planting' trestle table ignominiously into a corner. Frances takes the group's tea break in the kitchen as an opportunity to regain some space.*

**Frances** *(whispering to Helen)* Quick. Grab your end.

*Frances and Helen lift the trestle and reclaim some hall space by moving it a couple of metres towards the middle.*

**Helen** But they need the space.

**Frances** They can whistle – so do we.

**Helen** Mollie told me about those two. *(glancing to the kitchen)*

*Frances drops the table in place suddenly.*

**Frances** *(deadly serious)* You mustn't let them know you know.

*Helen pauses – not understanding. Frances continues potting.*

**Frances** Lips. Sealed. David fell in love with Di while the ink was drying on his decree absolute. He didn't want anyone seeing them together so quickly after the divorce. Tongues would wag. So... it became their little secret. The problem was - they couldn't keep their hands off each other. So soon we all knew. Everyone knew. But this is England. So nobody said anything.

*With the hanging baskets now ready for final planting, a hanging basket stand is moved close to the trestle table.*

**Helen** But if everyone knows – what's the problem?

**Frances** Rule fourteen. "No fraternisation". Di and David have become rather rule obsessed – probably because they're breaking that one! But, they don't know everyone knows. And if they knew everyone knew – well heaven knows. All the secrecy might be the only thing keeping them together. So. Lips. Sealed.

*They exchange a smile.*

They aren't the only ones with secrets *(with a hint of barb)*, are they?

*Frances fetches a step ladder from the room and places it close to the hanging basket stand.*

**Helen** No. Mollie's decision. Not mine. We got the diagnosis and she said "I don't want to think about it. I don't want it to matter. I just want to be normal, for as long as I can." – so we chose Cheeley. What could be more normal than this? And we became 'normal' too. We went back to stolen kisses and hidden glances. That crackle when our little fingers touched came back. Can't deny – it was exciting. Maybe David and Di aren't as daft as they seem.

**Frances** I wish you'd felt safe enough to come and enjoy the hall with her. Everyone's invited.

**Helen** Being invited is different to being welcomed.

**Frances** She had such... energy. She'd brighten up the place, she really would. She could do everything... less and less over time... but... of course, now we know why. I've had to take on more and more. I've had to be here much more. Nowadays I'm either here or at home. No time for anything else. Don't tell anyone, but I rather love being here. It's very... freeing.

**Helen** Do you? Can you have secrets in a hall like this? I mean you're a part of everything. 'Taking on more and more.' 'Only here or at home.' It must be a strain.

*There's a hint that Frances might be about to say something further, but the line dancers – without Jenny and Joan – filter back from the kitchen led by Christine. Frances moves up the step ladder to tend a hanging basket.*

**Frances** No. I've got my rock. Fortunately, I've been with Bobo for so long everyone knows us. Everyone relies on us. You can set your watch by me and Bobo. Oh yes. Wonderful. Just wonderful.

**Music Cue:  
My BoBo and Me (Frances)**

*The line dancers assemble into lines as the intro plays. They dance a Tennessee Waltz-style – slowly and deliberately. It's romantic, but – as with all line dances – nobody touches. Everyone moving in unison, like clockwork. Frances sings from the top of the step ladder. Helen removes the hanging basket stand through the fire door during the following song.*

**Christine** *(still attempting to sound like a cowgirl)* Now git on over here folks.  
This one's a slow drawl. So I want y'all to stay together. That's ri-right  
purty. Together.

**Frances** I LOOK IN HIS EYES  
I JUST MELT AWAY  
I FEEL LIKE A SAIL BOAT  
ADRIFT IN A BAY

MY ANCHOR. MY TETHER.  
MY LOCK AND MY KEY.  
I LOVE MY BOBO  
MY BOBO AND ME

HE HOLDS ME SO TIGHTLY  
IN HIS ARMS STRONG EMBRACE  
IT LEAVES ME SO BREATHLESS  
MY HEART STARTS TO RACE

JUST WATCH US. TOGETHER  
I'LL MAKE SURE THEY SEE.  
HOW I LOVE MY BOBO  
MY BOBO AND ME

WHEN I'M WEAK, HE CAN SOOTHE ME  
LIKE A DOLL IN HIS HAND  
HIS WORDS POUR STRAIGHT THROUGH ME  
AND I UNDERSTAND

TOGETHER FOREVER  
THAT'S WHERE I'LL BE  
'CAUSE I LOVE MY BOBO  
MY BOBO AND ME.

*The line dance group leaves through the main doors. Frances climbs  
down the step ladder. Fade to spot.*

TOGETHER FOREVER  
THAT'S WHERE I'LL BE  
ALONE WITH MY BOBO  
ONLY MY BOBO  
I LOVE MY BOBO  
MY BOBO AND ME.  
AND ME  
AND ME\_\_\_\_\_

*Frances walks off into the kitchen.*

## PIECE 1 - pg. 106-109

*Having attacked and silenced Ken, for now (he's tied up and gagged in the costume basket), Frances is close to breaking point and must now attempt to confront/reconcile with her husband over the phone.*

*Everyone quickly exits through both the fire exit and the main doors, except Frances, who is, once again, looking scared.*

### Scene 3: The Call

**Frances** I'll be in in a minute. I just need to call Bobo. He'll be wondering where I am.

*Frances dials, but slows down towards the end of the number sequence; dreading the call. The final number she dials to put the call through requires a deep breath. Throughout, Frances tries hard to retain a normal composed demeanour. Inwardly, she is crumbling.*

**Frances** Hello dear.

... yes...

... but Bobo ...

... yes... I know...

... but Bobo ...

*Helen emerges, unnoticed (not necessarily from the kitchen) and hears the conversation.*

... yes. I know it's been all day. But I've been so busy with a locksmith and a taxi and.... Well, it's been... Absolutely. My fault. But...

I mean, after last night. There really wasn't any emergency was there. And I can't be in two places at once... But the bedding plants...

... and why did you have to take both keys? It wasn't just me you hurt, was it? I've lied. To all my friends. All these people... but I couldn't tell them that you...

... yes. Ken's here.

*Frances turns to the basket, but doesn't see Helen who shrinks into the doorway.*

Why did you involve Ken? I mean, that was just c[ruel]...

... it was very...

... yes ...

... yes ...

*Frances tightly shuts her eyes. Listens for a moment – waiting for a pause. She opens them wide.*

I'll be there in an hour... after the committee meeting. There's ham and...

**Music Cue:  
This Is Why (Frances and Helen)**

*Frances's husband has hung up and Frances looks at her phone. Her eyes are dead. Frances can no longer convince even herself that any of this is true.*

**Frances** I LOOK IN HIS EYES  
I JUST MELT AWAY  
I FEEL LIKE A SAIL BOAT  
ADRIFT IN A BAY  
  
MY ANCHOR. MY TETHER.  
MY LOCK AND MY KEY.  
I LOVE MY BOBO  
MY BOBO AND ME  
  
HE HOLDS ME SO TIGHTLY  
HIS ARMS' STRONG EMBRACE  
IT LEAVES ME SO BREATHLESS  
MY HEART STARTS TO RACE  
  
BUT WHEN WE'RE TOGETHER  
I'LL MAKE SURE THEY SEE.  
HOW I LOVE MY BOBO  
MY BOBO LOVES ME



**Helen**     *(to Mollie)*  
SO THIS IS WHY.  
WHY YOU MADE ME COME HERE.  
WHY YOU KEPT THE TRUTH INSIDE.  
YOU SAW THE SIGNS

WITH A KISS

**Frances** TOGETHER

**Helen**     YOU DIED

**Frances** FOREVER

**Helen**     THE LIGHT YOU GAVE WAS GONE

**Frances** THAT'S WHERE I'LL BE

**Helen**     IT WAS LOST

**Frances** ALONE WITH MY BOBO

**Helen**     WITH THE WINTER SUN

**Frances** AND ME.

*Music segues. Helen re-centres herself, then enters warily. Frances notices her and snaps back into her usual mode.*

**Helen**     Do you want a tea?

*Frances turns and walks past Helen, exiting into the kitchen.*

# The Village Hall My Bobo and Me

Richard Sykes

♩ = 84

I look in his eyes. I

11

just melt a - way. I feel like a sail boat a - drift in a -

16

-bay My an - chor, my teth - er, my lock and my key.

21

I love my Bo - Bo, My Bo - bo and - m - e.

27

He holds me so close In his arms' strong em - brace. It

32

leaves me so breath - less my heart starts to race Just

36

watch us to - ge - ther I'll make sure they see, How I love my Bo-

41 C

- Bo, My Bo - bo and me When I'm weak, he can soothe me, like a

46

doll in his - hands His words pour straight through me and I un - der -

51 D

- stand. To - geth - er for - ev - er; That's where I'll be. 'Cause

56 E

I love my Bo - - My Bo - bo an - d m - e.

67 F

To - geth - er for - ev - er; That's where I'll be. A -

72

- lone with my Bo - Bo, On - ly my Bo - Bo, I love my Bo-

77

- Bo, My Bo - bo and - me and - me - -

83 *rall.*

- and me.

# This Is Why

♩ = 68

1

I look in his eyes, I just melt a - way. I

5

feel like a sail - boat a - drift in\_ a bay. My an - chor. My teth - er. My

8

lock and my key. Oh I love my Bo-Bo My Bo - Bo and me. He

12

holds me\_ so tight - ly. His arms' strong em - brace It

14

leaves me\_ so breath - less my heart starts to race. But

16

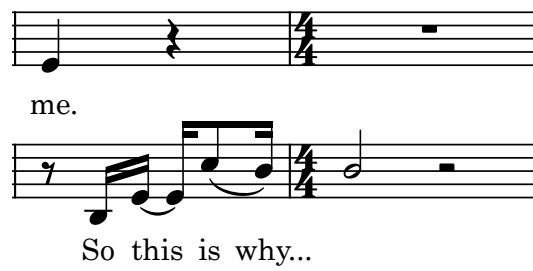
when we're to - geth - er, I'll make sure they see. How I love my Bo-bo. My

19

Bo - bo\_ loves

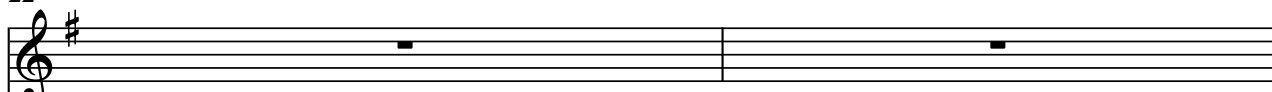
A


Here the song becomes a duet.  
Frances's line is the top line.



me.  
So this is why..


22


Frn. 

Hln. 

Why you made me come here. Why you kept the truth in - side.

24

Frn. 

Hln. 

To - geth - er For - ev - er  
You saw the signs with a kiss you died and the

26

Frn. 

Hln. 

That's where I'll be. A - lone with my Bo - Bo and me  
light you gave was gone. It was lost with the win - ter sun.\_

