

Needingworth Village Hall Chairman of Trustees Annual Report May 2020

During the past year three members of our committee of trustees left, two new trustees joined and we presently have a committee consisting of nine trustees.

Last August we made an application with the Charity Commission to make an amendment to our governing document which was reviewed and approved by them. That means that we can now have a committee of trustees consisting of 6 elected members and not more than 5 co-opted members all of whom are eligible to vote at committee meetings.

A second application was also made with the Charity Commission in August 2019 to have the Village Hall Trust name changed from Holywell-cum-Needingworth Village Hall Trust to Needingworth Village Hall Trust. This was also reviewed and approved by them and we did that because for many years all of our documentation, licenses, etc. refer only to Needingworth Village Hall Trust. The Village Hall name itself remains the same although for ease just about everyone refers to the hall as Needingworth Village Hall.

We have continued with the strategy to replace all failed lighting with LED tubes and all outside lighting has been completed in this respect as well as the interior bar lighting.

The Pavilion internal walls have been painted with Dulux Endurance Diamond tough Emulsion and the skirting boards painted with Acrylic Eggshell white paint. The wall panels were painstakingly cleaned of almost all marks and do not require overpainting.

A new awning will be purchased to replace the one that was alongside the Pavilion and was irreparably damaged during strong winds last summer.

A number of table tops for tables in the Pavilion were purchased and used to replace damaged ones.

PAT testing has been carried out in all areas of the Village Hall including the Parish Council Office and Chatters Electrical items. This was done by a committee member who attended a PAT training course and subsequently has the PAT testing Certificate and was done with a PAT testing kit purchased by the Village Hall Trust.

The criteria for the testing of emergency lights working has recently changed and needs to be done once per month and will be done alongside the fire alarm testing. Endurance testing is required to be done annually.

Following a Parish Council Safety Audit of the Village Hall we have added Emergency Exit signs above the emergency exits on the outside of the building. We have also put extra emergency exit direction signs along both sides of the long corridor leading away from the main foyer.

The floors of the Main Hall, Corridor, Kitchen, Disabled Toilet, Ladies and Gents toilets have been stripped down and polished by Helen our cleaner and now look really impressive.

A sub-committee consisting of Councillor Roy Fountain, Trustees Andy Killoran and Patrick Quick are working with the Parish Council on plans for an extension to the Village Hall to accommodate a permanent stage and also with the possibility of a new Parish Council Office being attached to the extension.

The committee of trustees via our Vice Chairman Roy Fountain is presently working with the Parish Council to find a way to amend/correct the 2015 Village Hall lease so that we can successfully present it to the Land Registry for registration. Unfortunately, this was overlooked by both parties when the lease was drawn up 1995 and also 2015.

The Village Hall continues to be a busy community hub used by many local community groups on a regular basis and others from the surrounding areas.

We have not had as many functions such as birthday party celebrations and the like over the last two years for one reason or another and some of that can be put partly down to competition from other local venues with them offering special deals and their location. However, the Village Hall continues to make a financial annual surplus and we remain in a strong financial position.

From a fund raising view one event that proved to be a success once again was a Pop up Restaurant on 9th October provided by outside caterers Sandra Starling and Phil Boddy. This was our third Pop up Restaurant and this time it featured a Caribbean menu and a short quiz to test each team's knowledge on aspects of the Caribbean. The meal was excellent and we received many kind comments from our guests who thoroughly enjoyed the evening.

Unfortunately, owing to the Corona Virus pandemic we had to postpone the Pop up planned for 8th April which was to have been a Greek based menu. We are hoping that the tide will have turned by August so we can put on another Pop up evening.

The Wellworth Players put on another fantastic play "Murdered to Death" which ran for three days from 24th October. Although I personally was unable to attend their follow up Christmas Pantomime owing to other commitments I am told it was brilliant.

The annual Nfest Music Festival held in July 2019 was still a success even when taking into consideration the very wet weather on the Saturday. Sunday was a much better day weather wise but overall takings were considerably down on the year before. Unfortunately the Corona Virus outbreak has meant that Nfest 2020 which would have been the 25th anniversary of the event has had to be cancelled. All being well we can celebrate the 25th anniversary of this event in June 2021.

One of the highlights of the year was the annual Gardening Club show in August. Once again it did not fail to impress with some fantastic produce on display and beautiful flower arrangements to be seen. The cakes and bakes always look so scrummy and I managed to come second in the pickles. There were only two entries but that won't deter me and I will continue to pickle my walnuts, onions and shallots.

We held a band night on 6th December with the appearance and debut of a local group known as Eclipse – The Pink Floyd Tribute and they went down extremely well with the audience many of whom were and still are Pink Floyd fans. The evening was a great success and the music was brilliant.

In the New Year we put on a second band night and this time it featured the Outlaw Eagles, a very vibrant group and again they went down extremely well with the audience and another great evening was had by all who attended.

The annual Bazaar was once again held in the hall on 7th December and was as popular as always with an amazing selection of wares for sale including mouth-watering cakes and

bakes.

The annual Village Hall Quiz on 7th March was a great success and a thoroughly entertaining evening.

Unfortunately and in line with Government guidelines the Village Hall was closed to the general public on Saturday 21st March owing to the Corona Virus and it will remain so until otherwise advised by new government guidelines.

Along with many other charitable concerns this has had a financial impact on the income and running of the Village Hall. Fortunately owing to the careful financial management of the hall by the committee of trustees over the years we are in a position where we are able to absorb a certain amount of financial loss which is not the case for all Village Halls and other charitable concerns.

We have had to furlough our Village Hall cleaner as of 3rd May and pay her 80% of her wages which we will claim back from the governments furlough scheme but we the committee of trustees have agreed to top up her wages by 20% to give her the full salary for the time being.

We have approximately £600 worth of bar stock and we are hoping that we will not have to throw it away owing to it being out of date which depends on how long the lockdown will last.

We have received a rebate of £90 per month on our rates from HDC who also sent us an application form for the Retail Leisure and Hospitality Grant. This was duly completed and submitted and we have since received £10,000 into our bank account. This will help offset our losses to some extent which are currently in excess of £500 per month.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Village Hall Management Committee for all the good voluntary work that they put into making the hall run smoothly, the Parish Clerk, Assistant Clerk and the Parish Councillors for their co-operation during the year and of course all our regular users of the hall. This all helps us to provide a pleasant village centre point for the local community.

Stay well, keep safe and lets all hope that this present situation with the Corona Virus will soon be a thing of the past.

Best regards

Andy Killoran

Chairman,

Needingworth Village Hall Committee of Trustees