

**Brookthorpe Village Hall Committee
Annual Report 2020**

Secretary's Report

These are indeed strange times with the bulk of community buildings throughout the country closed because of COVID-19 and like many the village hall here has been out of action since mid-March.

The Annual Meeting should have taken place during April this year so this report is intended as a way of keeping everyone up-dated on developments and recounting the activities of the previous year.

Bookings

Can I begin by thanking our regular hirers who continue to use the facilities

Eileen Browne (Yoga Classes), Crazy K9s, Gloucester Brass, Jazz Friday, The Cameo Group, Keys Childcare, NTT Solutions and of course the Parish Council who continue to hold monthly and other planning meetings. In addition to this there have been about 20 bookings from individuals or groups for private meetings or parties.

The hall had also been used as a Polling Station for the European Elections in May.

In my previous report in 2019 I had mentioned some hirers failing to leave the premises in a tidy condition, leave electricity on or taps running or fail to secure the building. Sadly we did experience this on two occasions when those hiring the building for an all-day events seriously abused the facilities resulting in lengthy clearing-up operations by members of the committee. Following this the committee has reviewed the booking and hiring procedure for the Hall and a new set of Terms and Conditions put in place. These will able to be viewed on the website and implemented once the Village Hall re-opens. Thanks are particularly due to Vicki Smart for her work on this.

Events

Events held during the year have been as follows:-

- April 26th. B Flats
A sell-out once again for the ukulele group (including our own Bill Ellis) a sum of £400.00 was raised
- July 6th. Summer Fayre
Inclement weather had led to this being moved from its intended date of June 15th. Consequently there was a clash with other local events resulting in a lower than normal attendance. Nevertheless it was a successful occasion. A profit of £1,067 had been realised largely due to a grant from the Parish Council and the reduction in expenditure on outside entertainment. We were grateful to James and Jo Cooke for the donation of a Bouncy Castle for use at this and future events.
- October 26th.Halloween Party

This now annual event attracted 17 children and was thoroughly enjoyed by all

- December 14th. Christmas Fayre

This was again a great success with the usual attractions including of course Father Christmas who was busy seeing 30 children. The only dampener was the inability to hire the Helter-Skelter because of the windy conditions.

Unfortunately the event planned for the end of January through the Air in G Rural Touring Scheme had to be cancelled owing to the lack of tickets sold.

Other Developments

The following projects have been undertaken for and funded by the Parish Council.

- Newsletter

The parish newsletter has been in abeyance since Christopher Brent-Smith ceased editing it several years ago. Thanks to Eric Hibbert and Vicki Smart a template was produced and presented to the Annual Parish Meeting in May 2019. The first issue was circulated that month by email to all parishioners plus other interested parties with hard copies placed in various points within the parish. To date there have been another 5 issues published

- Phone Box Refurbishment

This has within the last few weeks been removed from its past position next to the Bus Stop opposite Fagins and placed within the village grounds where it will eventually rehouse the defibrillator and be a resource for the parish. Thanks are due to Eric Hibbert and Paul Gaze for carrying out the considerable task involved.

The Village Hall Extension

Work has continued slowly but surely in finally obtaining planning permission for the extension to the hall. One of the stipulations was to provide adequate parking space. In that regard thanks to assistance from the Parish Council and the Harescombe-with-Brookthorpe Parochial Church Council the car park at St. Swithun's Church in Brookthorpe is now available to the Village Hall for an overspill facility should the need arise. Efforts to secure funding have been put on hold somewhat during the pandemic.

Improvements, Repairs & Maintenance

Much work has been carried out during the year of a remedial nature including:-

- New joists, a pad and extra support had been fitted in the kitchen following investigative work
- Various repairs to the toilets including the fitting of self-closing taps and a new water-heater
- Repair and Renewal of Exterior Lighting

Grounds

Thanks once again to Paul Gaze who has continued to keep the grounds clean and tidy and clear of litter and other obstacles. Thankfully he has been on hand during this period with regular checks on the building and its contents.

Paul also is responsible for issuing Risk and Fire Risk Assessments and for all events which the committee plans – these are very necessary tasks required in particular to comply with insurance policies. He is not a Trustee of the Village Hall but does attend all meetings and contributes to the discussions

Cleaning

We are also grateful to Alison Phillips kept the inside of the Village Hall “spic & span” over the last year and who has shown a willingness to continue during lockdown.

Committee

Heather Coles, who has served the committee since 2008, most of the time as Treasurer, stepped down during the year. A small presentation was made to recognise her considerable contribution.

I would like to express my thanks as always to committee members Lauren Amon, Amanda Hendry, Lynda King (Parish Council Appointee), Vicki Smart and Lisa Smith, all of whom have contributed fully to the cause over the past year.

A special mention to Annie Gaze who has become a very efficient Treasurer since taking on the role just over a year ago; she has done much to improve the accounting procedures.

Finally can I pay tribute to Chairman, Eric Hibbert, for his continued inspirational leadership.

Nigel Bone
Secretary
July 2020