

**Brookthorpe Village Hall Committee
Annual Meeting 2022**

Secretary's Report

As stated in my report last year, this will be my last one as I am retiring from my role as secretary and stepping down from the committee.

Looking back over the 12 or so years I have been involved it has been interesting to participate in the many changes and developments during that time.

I have worked with 2 Chairmen – Don Harris (to 2015), a very long-serving committee member and Eric Hibbert (2015 to the present)

There have been a number of major works carried out to the building including the following:-

- Installation of roof insulation both in the roof and below the main hall floor
- Replacement of overhead heaters and installation of additional lighting
- Sanding & Polishing of the main hall floor
- Repair to the Kitchen Area
- Re-decoration of the interior and exterior

Also a number of new items have been purchased to enhance the facilities including:-

- New fencing erected to the rear of the building
- A workshop which acts as a storage area
- Installation of Broadband

The Committee has also carried out work on behalf of and funded by the Parish Council such as the refurbishment of the phone box to house the defibrillator (a lengthy task for Eric Hibbert and Paul Gaze), the planning of the Christmas Tree and the publication of a monthly newsletter.

Since 2017 the hall and grounds have been “looked after” by Paul Gaze which has meant the lawns and other amenities have always been kept clean and tidy. Our cleaner Alison Phillips has also been working since that time ensuring the hall is spic and span.

Events

Within the last few years a number of events have become established as regular occasions – Summer Fayres, Halloween Parties and Christmas Celebrations (including the Draw which remains the major fundraising activity) – all enabling people from the parish to come together.

A number of evenings have been arranged through the Air in G Rural Touring Scheme which have attracted locals as well as friends and those from neighbouring villages. Some of the acts featured have been Cate Cody, Movies & Musicals, the Carrivick Sisters plus latterly Tears of Laughter and not forgetting B Flats – the ukulele group including our own Bill Ellis.

Hire of the Hall

Over time the hall has been hired by a variety of groups and individuals. Many have used it regularly such as Jazz Friday, Gloucester Brass and Crazy K9s together with others on a one-off basis for family parties. For many years Eileen Browne ran a Yoga Class before she sadly died a year or so ago. We are pleased to welcome Annet Richards-Binns who is now holding a weekly Yoga group on Tuesdays. There is currently a Tai-Chi class on Thursdays and also periodic hiring from NTT Solutions. We had a first earlier this year when our MP Siobhan Baillie held one of her surgeries in the hall.

The advent of Covid has meant that times are challenging for all Village Halls and it has become more difficult to attract hirers. Many like those referred to earlier have either been looking for bigger venues, been a little hesitant over continuing or been forced to modify their activities.

The Parish Council continues to hold monthly meetings in the hall and we are indeed grateful for all its financial support.

The Hall Extension

Planning permission was obtained during 2020 to build an extension to the hall which would increase the capacity and allow the building to be adapted to make better use of the existing space. At the present time the project is somewhat on hold but Eric Hibbert may wish to expand on this during the meeting.

Committee

During the year Amanda Hendry stepped down – she had been a member since 2017 – so we thank her for her contribution over that period. Carrie Cooke, who had been elected at the last Annual Meeting, was unable to join us because of changed circumstances. Can I thank the present committee of Lauren Amon, Lynda King, Vicki Smart and Gill Richards (co-opted during the year) and also Paul Gaze (attending as Parish Council representative) for all their efforts; Annie Gaze who has become a very competent Treasurer and finally Eric Hibbert who continues to lead the committee with great enthusiasm. I am grateful to him particularly for taking over some of my duties during my enforced absence in the past six months.

Nigel Bone
Secretary
April 2022