

BRANDESTON VILLAGE HALL & RECREATION GROUND

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017

MEETING DATE MONDAY 12TH FEBRUARY 2018

Present: Sue Thurlow – Chairman
Jane Mitchell – Treasurer
Claire Burgess – Secretary
Together with 12 residents of Brandeston

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all to the 2017 AGM of the village hall.

Apologies for absence

Ruth & John Garratt, Michael Cousens, Nick & Ann Hayward, Rick & Pam Read, Peter Thurlow, Jackie Hounsell.

Minutes of the 2016 AGM

These were signed as being a true record.

Matters arising from the last Minutes

None were raised.

Chairman's Report

The 1st item on our meeting agenda is the financial report and Jane will cover all this shortly. I only need to say that our position is good and the hall is financially sound.

1. Bookings – Cara manages this and each spring we evaluate the hire costs. Cara does a survey of the rates charged by other hall locally and last year we decided not to increase fees after the rise in 2016. So, we have maintained competitive rates which has meant us keeping all the block bookings for classes except one – the Zumba. However, this has been replaced by a Yoga class so we now maintain this income. A

thank you must go to Cara for all her hard work in looking after all this and by managing to increase the total hire income by approx. £1,000.

2. Maintenance and Repairs – headed up by Terry Robinson has been a heavy role this year. There have been the normal wear and tear issues to get done – mending draws, organising the repair of the disabled entrance mechanism, filling potholes in the carpark, organising the sanding of the hall floor, testing and maintaining the hostess trolleys, inspecting the play equipment for faults every month etc. etc.

The big project this last year was the refurbishment of the children's play area. Each year we have an inspection by RoSPA (Royal Society for the Protection of Accidents) and in Nov. 2016 the inspector failed the junior swings as the support posts were rotting and they had to be put out of action immediately. He also put an amber warning on the post of the main tower and slide. We were already aware that the fencing needed replacing which was completed in Jan. 2017. This failure notice enabled us to review the whole play area as the committee have the responsibility under the constitution to not only maintain the hall but to improve facilities where possible. So, decided to invest in a basket swing as well as replacing the junior and toddler swings. The items did need to be rearranged as legislation has changed since the area was designed approx. 20 years ago. Now you have to have a 7 m. gap between the swings and other play items for safety reasons. So, quotes were sort and the project was given to Action Play - a local company near Diss. The new swings were in action again at the end of September. Then in November we had the repairs done to reinforce the posts on the tower so we now have a fully functioning play area. This was a costly exercise but we manage to find grant funding from SCDC, the Suffolk Community Foundation and our parish council amounting to 70% of the cost.

The second big expenditure was the replacement of the cooker in the kitchen. This was a domestic cooker which was fitted when the hall was opened in 2005 and was basically worn out. The committee decided to go for a commercial replacement giving a large oven capacity, better hob design and being more robust all round. Application was made to our 2 District Councillors for funding and we were very pleased to receive most of the cost from them.

3. Fundraising - Darryl Morgan was appointed fundraising co-ordinator at the end of 2016. He has put a lot of energy into this role for which we sincerely thank him for all his efforts. The aim of the programme for the year was to have variety of events to attract residents to take part and to bring people together to cement the community feeling of the village. Also, to support hall funds. Darryl has led many of the events this year including a very successful fete – almost the best ever. This is an important event for us as our share of the takings usually pays the insurance bill for the hall which is high because of public liability cover etc. and it's over £2,000 per year.

One of the new events has been People with a Passion with the speaker talking about his or her enthusiasm on the favourite topic. These have varied from London architecture, the core of the earth, the composer Mahler, the treasurers of Pompeii and many others. About 35 people have turned out each time – they have been interesting, fun and jointly raised about £750 for hall funds.

The other new thing we did this year was to provide refreshments for the cyclists of the Dunwich Dynamo event. It meant being on duty at 1.30 a.m. serving hot drinks, bacon rolls, pasta bakes and cakes to hundreds of very courteous cyclists. We were really surprised at the number who stopped – there were bikes and people all over the road and verges. It was a great atmosphere and we shall do it again this year.

Apart from this there was the tried and tested – the 100+ Club (which is about to kick off again) with our thanks to Paul Baker for running this, the Easter egg hunt, the summer garden party at the Mitson-Woods, the Apple fest, the trip to Southwold and many others. I would like to thank all those who have been involved in setting up these events, doing the cooking, being on duty on the day and importantly do the clearing up for all their hard work and enthusiasm to make things happen. Also a big thank you for everyone who attended these events to support our hall.

4. Thanks – I would now like to move on to say some other “thank yous”

Firstly, to the coffee morning for offering such a service to the village and those from afar as well i.e. the Ipswich Cycling Club who visit every 2 months or so. Special thank you has to go to Sue Etheridge for leading this and always making such lovely scones and cakes for the cyclists. In all the Coffee morning adds considerably too hall funds being the 2nd largest contribution after the fete so we thank all those involved and those who support it.

There are, of course, other clubs who contribute any surplus cash raised during the year to hall funds. There’s table tennis, the whist club and the film club. Also the community lunch contribute by buying equipment for the kitchen. This year they made a substantial contribution to the new cups and saucers. Thanks to all for your contributions.

Apart from the clubs I would like to mention a few other names. In the Autumn Pat Peck retired from doing the cleaning of the hall. We thanked her at the time, but she should be mentioned again for her dedication to the task and a job well done. Pat has been replaced by Karen Piper who has now taken on this role and thank her for stepping up to take this job on.

We must also remember people in the background who make this hall function properly like Paul Baker who cuts the grass around the hall and is often seen weeding, Ann Hayward to tends the terrace garden, Brian Smerdon for doing the weed control (he has now stepping down from this and Richard M-Ws will be taking it on in 2018).

Also thanks to Aaron Nobbs who fixes any electrical problems and installs new wiring etc., to Steve Williams who audits the books, Mary M-Ws who edited the Brandeston newsletter for the 1st half of the year and to Peter Thurlow who is now writing this again.

This is the end of my first year back as Chairman (I did a 3-year stint when the hall first opened) and I'd like to thank the other members of the committee for their support and enthusiasm to the task of making this hall such a success. I must also mention that we have had some changes on the committee during the year with Sally Western and Sally Baker stepping down – our thanks for their contribution to the committee. Michael Cousens from Friday Street stepped forward and joining us the autumn. We will, of course, be discussing the new committee for 2018 in item 7 of the agenda later on.

But the big “thank you” should go to the village for their support - whether visiting the coffee morning regularly or other fundraising events therefore ensuring that this hall has become one of the focal points of our vibrant community.

I shall stop there but would be very happy to answer any questions you may have. There will, of course, be time for more informal chats over the refreshments after the meeting.

Following Sues's report Les Cullen wanted to remind everyone that the mobile post office continued to visit the village hall every Thursday at the coffee morning, Sue said that she would send out a reminder.

Mark Hounsell said that he had noticed in past minutes that there had been an issue between Mr Hogan and the hall committee regarding the swings, he pointed out that when he was parish clerk there had been a discussion as to whether Laundry Cottage drainage ran onto village hall land. Sue said that the issue regarding the swings had been resolved.

Treasurer's Report

2017 ANNUAL Accounts:

In a nutshell, 2017 proved another excellent year for the village hall, with an operating profit of £6229.28 returned.

The bank account has been reconciled at 31 December, with a balance carried forward of £18459.50. The 'Improvements and Maintenance' account balance is £24110.82, giving us

cash assets of £42570.32. The tennis account retains £3648.25. To my knowledge this is the highest level of cash assets the hall has recorded.

The accounts have been audited and signed off by Steve Williams, to whom I extend my thanks. A copy will now be sent to the Charity Commission in line with our obligations.

Key Points:

- Accounts show an operating profit of £6229.28, a reduction of exactly a third on 2016, this was influenced by the following factors:
- Good news in that income was up by 18%, which equates to £4306. We obtained almost £3900 more grant this year; hire income was up 10%, just under £1000; events fundraising up 2% an additional £190 and the ever stoic coffee morning delivered 24% more income at a total of £1458.
- Equally good news is that expenditure rose by 51% to £21660. I say good news because we have a commitment under the constitution written when the hall and playing fields were gifted to the village, to continue to invest to keep the hall in good repair. It is also our wish to use funds raised by villagers to continually update and improve the facilities within the hall and grounds. To this end, we have already committed to provide a zip wire during this year at the far end of the field to extend the play options, particularly for older children. Major equipment purchased in year are new swings and safety improvements to remaining play equipment, and a new commercial cooker for the kitchen.
- On the nitty-gritty side of things you can see from the graph:
- Electricity up from £608 to £1629 largely due to fact we had to pay the long awaited ExtraEnergy invoice in amount of £682= outstanding for 15 months. This expense was incurred over 2015/2016 and when apportioned averages our usage at £9500 for the last three years. The committee will keep the supplier under review.
- Oil costs were up 30% to £1212 reflecting a general trend and the fact that we have retained the hall at a slightly higher temperature for the benefit of the morning hirers.
- Equipment costs were up massively from £204 last year to £10500 this. Largely attributed to the additional play equipment and the cooker, however grants were received of £8319.
- Repairs maintenance down 41% - largely happenstance – we did wood chips, painting, potholes and playground fencing in 2016. In 2017 we re-sanded the parquet floor, purchased new hostess trolleys and replaced all damaged or missing china and replaced all the cups and saucers. Basically, on a day to day basis this area of expenditure responds to demand, however we remain very aware of potential future

expenditure and the need to set aside funds. £3000 is invested from the profits into the repairs and maintenance fund year on year.

In 2018 the council will assess whether we continue to be eligible for the discretionary rate relief – we currently have 100% relief. This could incur several hundred pounds additional liability, but we hope to make representation to retain this valuable benefit.

Those of you who attended this meeting last year will recall that at the beginning of 2016 the committee adopted a new strategy of seeking to attract maximum grant support coupled with a strengthened focus on raising funds from events. For the second year this has proved most successful and is the key to delivering profits. I reiterate Sue's thanks to Darryl and would wish to record that as chairman she is also due credit for spearheading the grant applications. The real stars of this show however are villagers and others who persistently and consistently support the hall. At risk of repeating Sue, I cannot finish without mentioning Sue Etheridge and her team for the coffee mornings, no other hall activity requires work every single week of the year and Sue never lets us down. She gained wind of the fact that we may have presented her with some flowers tonight as a little thank you, and we were forbidden to do so. Fortunately, her ban did not extend to chocolates so.....

In conclusion, the accounts are available as a matter of public record and I am happy to answer any questions.

Jane Mitchell, Treasurer.

Following this there were a couple of questions from the floor:

Roger Cunliffe asked what the average turnover of the hall was, Jane replied that the latest income figure was £28000.

Brendan Baker asked how the projection of costs for the hall had been arrived at, Terry Robinson said that he had tried to envisage what sort of spending would need to be carried out over the next twenty years to keep the hall in its current condition; he had estimated that we save £3-4000 p.a.

There were no other questions.

Election of officers

Sue said that traditionally the committee had run with 12 members and that the current 11 were happy to carry on. There were no other offers to stand.

As there was no other business the meeting was declared closed at 8.50pm.