

Village Hall: Annual Report

The village hall is in good form. After the major decorating and cleaning works the interior is sparkling, and we want to keep it that way; we have an ongoing schedule of repairs and maintenance, which means that hopefully there will be fewer surprises in the future. We know that the curtains will need replacing some time soon. If you can picture the number, size and shape of the windows you'll realise that this will not come cheap - in fact it's about £3,000; we'd like to get this done soon but will have to wait until we can better afford it.

Most of our income comes from hiring the hall to people from outside the parish. This involves a great deal of work but without it the hall would not be viable. We keep charges as low as possible, and parishioners benefit from lower rates than outsiders.

The current rates per hour have been increased by £1/hour as follows:

- Parish-based groups meeting in the hall; and fund-raising for charity £12/hour
- Other hire by parishioners: £13/hour
- Non-parishioners £17/hour.
- Regular users have negotiated individual rates.
- Free use for local one-off events open to all (see Shinfo, May 2018).

Ann, our treasurer has, with her usual efficiency, prepared our annual accounts soon after the end of our financial year and we will be submitting these as part of our annual report to the Charity Commission very shortly, as well as to HMRC for a Corporation Tax return which we've been asked to do for the first (and hopefully last) time.

We have benefitted hugely from having Louisa Nahhas on the committee as social secretary. She has brought energy and organising powers with her and we are very grateful. There have been regular meetings of the **mock pub**, which goes from strength to strength. **The arts weekend** was popular and successful. It will be repeated in 2020. We felt that because we are such a small community and want to keep it local, it is asking too much to make it an annual fixture. If you are a creative artist, this gives you two years in which to create something! We would like to thank all the willing helpers with both these, not least Adrian for maintaining the bar.

Halloween and **Christmas** were well and truly celebrated in the usual style. Father Christmas came to visit and had an uncanny way of knowing exactly what each child would like out of his sack. Thanks to Maggie and Adrian for all the hard work and organising.

Recent major expenditure has been on improving the heating. The under-floor system has not been satisfactory, partly on the ground of expense and partly because it was not a suitable system to have under a wooden floor, proving slow to heat up and difficult to control. It has therefore been disconnected and we have replaced two existing radiators with much larger ones. We're now waiting until the winter to be certain that they provide enough heat.

We have also installed a phone line and broadband so that we can control the heating remotely, via a smart Hive thermostat and phone app, meaning that Maggie, our bookings secretary, does not have to make so many visits to the hall. Kevin, who has been caretaker for many years, is not able to offer us as many hours as previously, since he is now working in Oxford at nights. We would like to thank him for his good-humoured help over the years.

As well as enabling remote control of the heating, the broadband is of course available as a new facility for hall users. The system has, just last week, been upgraded with a new network name and password - both these are on the notice board in the hall.

Recently we have had to spend a lot on unblocking the drains. Waste from the toilets had backed up in the drain outside the hall, and we had to call a plumber to rod the drains and clear them. Wet wipes are the major problem. All is well now, but please, please be careful what you flush away.

Future Events

A disco-style dance evening has been suggested for an event in the autumn - we'll see how much support there might be before going deciding whether to go ahead with this.

Dog show, as part of the fete. We have a keen organiser, who has a judge already lined up. We look forward to hearing more about it in due course.

The fete itself on Sunday 15th September.

Linda Slater, for the Village Hall Management Committee (Peter Rawcliffe, Maggie Rawcliffe, Ann Allsworth, Linda Slater, Louisa Nahhas).

28 May 2019