

CHAIR'S REPORT 05/01/24

The first thing to say is it takes a village to run a village hall. The aim of the management committee is to turn the village hall into a thriving community space by improving facilities and offering the parish ways of coming together. However, we realise that we cannot do this without the help and support of the local community, and so I want to begin by thanking everyone on behalf of the committee who has helped contribute to the success of the hall over the past 12 months. I am aware that many have given up their time to support it and that there is not space to mention all. But a huge thank you to everyone. The hall is run by volunteers and its success is dependent on positive community involvement.

I am glad to say it's been a busy year for the hall. In terms of improvements, we have a new PA system and projector and screen with help from a parish council grant. Thanks to a National Lottery grant, the Portakabin finished its renovation from redundant storeroom to heritage centre complete with a computer for people to discover their pasts. Much of the hall electrics have had to be rewired to modernise and bring them up to safety standards.

The hall has seen some great events over the past year attracting lots of people. To give you an idea, the heritage film afternoon had over 80 attendees, two Quiz nights were sold out, the Coronation Tea and Drag Bingo had over 60 people, 2 race nights and a murder night had over 40 people. All the stalls at the Christmas Bazaar were sold out and was well attended. These have taken a great deal of effort to organise and market so a big thank you to the entertainment committee of Rob, Angela, Jo and, earlier in the year, Christina, as well as Angela and Debbie for their work on the Bazaar.

Regular clubs have continued to play an important part of the hall's offer. Craft, dancing and yoga sessions can be found here regularly, but it would be great to have some more! The heritage centre has provided a way of the hall doing more with the school by providing classes with lessons on local history and it has been great to see more of the youngest generation here. The success of these sessions has led to the school using the hall for art exhibitions, Nativity services and soon plays. I would like to thank Angela and the heritage group for all their hard work in organising the Centre and also for giving up their time to talk to the children about our local history.

The weekly coffee morning and the bar on Fridays and alternate Sundays give the community the chance to come together and so are an important feature of Village Hall life. I would like to thank Lynsey and Ivan and their helpers for taking on the running of the coffee morning and to Alan and Angela for all their hard work behind the bar and keeping it well stocked and well run.

The management committee has spent time looking and revitalising its governance to make sure it can run smoothly and effectively. These have resulted in a set of policies that can be found on our website that should give confidence about the principles that guide the committee in its decision making. I would like to thank Debbie for her help in putting this together and for Nathan's support in finding constructive solutions.

Looking forward, there is much to be excited about. The funds have now been raised to repair the roof of the main hall and insulate it better. This is scheduled to happen at the end of March to coincide with the school holidays to reduce disruption. We also hope to revamp the bar area with new furniture and pictures. There are many more entertainments in the pipeline including the return of the Fete with other village groups and we hope shortly to open the hall as a Warm Space for the most vulnerable in our community. The entertainment committee has been taking soundings on what people would like in terms of events so expect plenty of fun but less band nights!

Thanks again to everyone who has helped over the past 12 months and given up their free time for nothing to support the hall, and I would particularly like to express my gratitude to the committee here. I would also like to thank Karrie who runs the administration of the hall so brilliantly alongside the many other things she has to juggle. Apologies to those not name checked but I can assure that all your work is really appreciated.

Ed Buscall

Chair